

**Department of Health
Health Systems Quality Assurance
Office of Health Professions**

Guideline

Revised – 10/24/2020

Title:	Nitrous Oxide Sedation	Number: OP20-02
References:	WAC 246-853-650 Safe and effective analgesia and anesthesia administration in office-based settings	
Contact:	Tracie Drake, Program Manager	
Phone:	360-236-4766	
Email:	Tracie.Drake@doh.wa.gov	
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Approved By:	Rodger Ludwig, DO, chair	

The Board of Osteopathic Medicine and Surgery (board) is aware that nitrous oxide sedation administration is being performed in office-based settings. The board has been asked to clarify the level of sedation listed in [WAC 246-853-650](#) that nitrous oxide would fall under.

[WAC 246-853-650](#) (2)(f) states as follows:

(f) "Minimal sedation" or "analgesia" means a drug-induced state during which patients respond normally to verbal commands. Although cognitive function and coordination may be impaired, ventilatory and cardiovascular functions are unaffected. Minimal sedation is limited to oral or intramuscular medications, or both.

Emphasis added.

Nitrous oxide sedation is not administered via oral or intramuscular routes, which is required in order to be categorized as minimal sedation. Nitrous oxide sedation falls under moderate sedation, deep sedation or general anesthesia.

Osteopathic physicians who perform office-based surgery employing nitrous oxide sedation must follow the requirements listed in [WAC 246-853-650](#). These requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Facility accreditation and certification
- Competency requirements
- Resuscitative preparedness
- Separation of surgical and monitoring functions
- Emergency care and transfer protocols
- Medical records requirements