

AS 23907:2023



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# Sharps injury protection — Requirements and test methods — Sharps containers (ISO 23907-2:2019, MOD)



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The following are represented on Committee HE-011:

- Australasian College for Infection Prevention and Control
- Australian College of Perioperative Nurses
- Australian Dental Association
- Australian Funeral Directors Association
- Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association
- Australian Medical Association
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- Queensland Health
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This Standard was issued in draft form for comment as DR AS 23907:2022.

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# **Sharps injury protection — Requirements and test methods — Sharps containers (ISO 23907-2:2019, MOD)**

Originated in part as AS 4031—1992.  
Originated in part as AS/NZS 4261—1994.  
Revised, amalgamated and redesignated in Australia as AS 23907:2023.

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## Preface

This Standard was prepared by the Australian members of the Joint Standards Australia/Standards New Zealand Committee HE-011, Safe Management of Sharps and Related Wastes, to supersede AS 4031:1992, *Non-reusable containers for the collection of sharp medical items used in health care areas* and its Amendment 1 (1996) and AS/NZS 4261:1994 *Reusable containers for the collection of sharp items used in human and animal medical applications* and its Amendment 1 (1997).

AS 4031:1992 and AS/NZS 4261:1994 will remain current for 12 months after the date of publication of this document and after this time they will be superseded by AS 23907:2023. Regulatory authorities that reference this document in regulation may apply these requirements at a different time. Users of this document should consult with these authorities to confirm their requirements.

The objective of this document is to specify requirements for single-use and reusable sharps containers intended to hold potentially hazardous sharps medical waste with or without sharps protection features, e.g. scalpel blades, trocars, hypodermic needles and syringes.

This document is applicable to sharps containers supplied as assembled units by the manufacturer and to those supplied as components intended to be assembled by the user.

This document includes design functionality and performance testing for user/handler safety for single-use and reusable sharps containers, and in addition, lifespan simulation, cleaning and decontamination, microbiological validation and quality monitoring for reusable sharps containers.

This document is an adoption with national modifications, and has been reproduced from ISO 23907-2:2019, *Sharps injury protection —Requirements and test methods—Part 2: Reusable sharps containers*.

The inclusion of national variations in boxed text above the relevant clauses in this modified adoption, was approved by the Standards Australia Production Management Group (PMG) on 21 January 2022, as a one-off exemption to the directives of [Clause A.3](#) in Standardization Guide 007: Adoption of International Standards.

In this edition, the design and testing requirements for single-use and reusable sharps containers for use in Australia have been updated and combined in one document.

To meet these requirements in an efficient manner, the requirements of the most recent ISO sharps container standard (ISO 23907-2:2019) have been adopted and specific clauses modified or added for application in Australia.

The major changes from AS 4031:1992 and AS/NZS 4261:1994 to this document are as follows:

- (a) Design:
  - (i) Increasing the number of definitions.
  - (ii) Increasing the safety requirements for apertures and closures.
  - (iii) Updating the colours required for sharps containers.
  - (iv) Recommending that needle-removal devices in sharps containers be prohibited.
  - (v) Requiring all sharps containers to have a temporary and permanent closure.
  - (vi) Requiring single-use sharps containers to have penetration requirement of 20N.
  - (vii) Redefining fill line capacity to allow greater flexibility in aperture design
  - (viii) Including cleaning, decontamination and process-validation for reusable sharps containers.

- (ix) Increasing the requirements for pre-test lifespan simulation for reusable sharps containers.
- (b) Testing:
  - (i) Decreasing the mass required in the strength of handle test.
  - (ii) Increasing the number of samples required in penetration test.
  - (iii) Decreasing the fluid volume and mass in the drop test.
  - (iv) Including a new spillage by toppling test.

The reasons for national modification are to —

- (i) enable single-use and reusable sharps containers to be included in one document;
- (ii) depict which clauses specifically apply to reusable sharps containers; and
- (iii) include changes required by Australia as follows:
  - (A) Include AS 3816:2018, *Management of clinical and related wastes*, in normative references.
  - (B) Definition of “manufacturers maximum allowable gross mass”.
  - (C) Recommendation that needle-removal devices in sharps containers be prohibited.
  - (D) Specify the colours of sharps containers according to their contents.
  - (E) Single-use containers to meet requirements of this document, as follows:
    - (1) 20 N penetration requirement.
    - (2) Six orientation drop test.
  - (F) Clarify grammar or sentence structure.

As this document has been reproduced from an international standard, a full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.

Australian or Australian/New Zealand standards that are identical adoptions of international normative references may be used interchangeably. Refer to the online catalogue for information on specific standards.

The terms “normative” and “informative” are used in standards to define the application of the appendices or annexes to which they apply. A “normative” appendix or annex is an integral part of a standard, whereas an “informative” appendix or annex is only for information and guidance.

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