

**DISTRICT OF  
COLUMBIA  
MUNICIPAL  
REGULATIONS  
FOR DENTAL  
ASSISTANTS**

July 15, 2011

## CHAPTER 90 DENTAL ASSISTANTS

Secs.	
9000	APPLICABILITY
9001	REGISTRATION REQUIRED
9002	EDUCATION REQUIREMENT
9003	TERM OF REGISTRATION
9004	RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION
9005	SCOPE OF PRACTICE OF REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTANT
9006	RESPONSIBILITY OF SUPERVISING DENTIST
9099	DEFINITIONS

### **9000 APPLICABILITY**

- 9000.1 This chapter applies to applicants for and holders of a registration to practice as a dental assistant.
- 9000.2 Sections 4001, 4004, 4005, 4006, 4012 and 4013 of chapter 40 of title 17 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations supplement this chapter.

### **9001 REGISTRATION REQUIRED**

- 9001.1 No person shall perform or be permitted to perform any duties as a dental assistant without a registration issued by the Board.
- 9001.2 Notwithstanding subsection 9001.1, a person who is performing the duties of a dental assistant on the effective date of this chapter shall have twelve (12) months after the effective date of this chapter to obtain a registration.

### **9002 EDUCATION REQUIREMENT**

- 9002.1 No person shall be registered as a dental assistant unless they have graduated from high school, or have a general equivalency diploma.

### **9003 TERM OF REGISTRATION**

- 9003.1 Unless modified by the Director pursuant to subsection 4006.3 of this title, a registration issued pursuant to this chapter shall expire at 12:00 midnight of December 31 of each odd-numbered year.

### **9004 RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION**

9004.1 An applicant for renewal of a registration shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 40 of the District of Columbia Municipal Regulations pertaining to renewal.

**9005 SCOPE OF PRACTICE OF REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTANT**

9005.1 Subject to the restrictions set forth in this section 9005, a dentist may delegate to a dental assistant only those procedures which are:

- (a) Appropriate to the training and experience of the dental assistant and the practice of the supervising dentist;
- (b) Reversible; and
- (c) To be performed under the direct supervision of the dentist.

9005.2 Except as provided in subsection 9005.3 of this chapter, a dental assistant shall not place or expose dental x-ray film unless he or she has:

- (a) Satisfactorily completed a radiation course or examination recognized by the American Dental Association Continuing Education Recognition Program (CERP);
- (b) Been certified by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists;
- (c) Satisfactorily completed a radiation course and passed an examination given by the Dental Assisting National Board; or
- (d) Been grandfathered in pursuant to the following section.

9005.3 A dentist may permit an assistant who does not meet the requirements of subsection 9005.2 to place or expose dental x-ray film if:

- (a) The assistant has completed in-office training;
- (b) The assistant has demonstrated competency to perform the task to the supervising dentist's satisfaction; and
- (c) The assistant registers within twelve (12) months of the effective date of this chapter.

9005.4 Except as provided in subsection 9005.5 of this chapter, the following dental procedures shall only be delegated to a dental assistant who:

- (a) Has satisfactorily completed a training program approved by CERP-approved program, a training program or course recognized by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA); and

- (b) Performs the tasks under direct supervision with the supervising dentist checking and approving the completed task prior to dismissal of the patient from the office:
  - (1) Placement of retraction cord;
  - (2) Placement or removal of matrices;
  - (3) The application of a medicinal agent to a tooth for a prophylactic purpose;
  - (4) Placement of periodontal dressings;
  - (5) Removal of temporary restorations without the use of a rotary instrument;
  - (6) Removal of sutures; and
  - (7) Whitening.

9005.5 A dentist may delegate performance of a task set forth in subsection 9005.4 of this chapter to a dental assistant who does not meet the training requirements in subsection 9005.4(1), if:

- (a) The assistant had been performing the task on the effective date of these regulations;
- (b) The assistant has demonstrated competency to perform the task to the supervising dentist's satisfaction; and
- (c) The assistant registers within twelve (12) months of the effective date of these regulations.

9005.6 A dentist shall not delegate to a dental assistant any of the following procedures:

- (a) Those procedures excluded by 17 DCMR § 4215.1;
- (b) A preliminary dental examination;
- (c) A complete prophylaxis, including the removal of any deposits, diseased crevicular tissue, accretion, or stain from the surface of a tooth or a restoration;
- (d) The intraoral polishing of a tooth or a restoration;
- (e) The charting of cavities during preliminary examination, prophylaxis, or polishing, however a dentist may permit an assistant to record the charting of cavities as dictated by the dentist or dental hygienist during the course of a preliminary examination or dental procedure;

- (f) The instruction of individuals or groups of individuals in oral health care, unless it is in the dental office and done as instructed by the dentist;
- (g) The application of pit and fissure sealants;
- (h) Diagnostic screening to identify indications of oral abnormalities;
- (i) Administration of local anesthesia with board identified criteria and certification;
- (j) Administration of nitrous oxide with board identified criteria and certification;
- (k) Placement of temporary restorations; or
- (l) Taking final impressions.

**9006 RESPONSIBILITY OF SUPERVISING DENTIST**

9006.1 In all instances, the licensed dentist assumes ultimate responsibility for determining, on the basis of his or her diagnosis, the specific treatment the patient will receive and which aspects of treatment will be delegated to a dental assistant in accordance with this chapter and the Act.

**9099 DEFINITIONS**

9099.1 For the purposes of this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings ascribed:

**Act** - the District of Columbia Health Occupation Revision Act, effective March 15, 1986 (D.C. Law 6-99; D.C. Official Code §§ 3-1203.01, *et seq.*(2007 Repl.)).

**Board** - the Board of Dentistry.

**Dental assistant** - a person who is registered by the Board and is authorized to assist a licensed dentist in the performance of duties related to oral care under the direct supervision of a dentist.

**Direct supervision** - the dentist is in the dental office or treatment facility, personally diagnoses the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedures, remains in the dental office or dental treatment facility while the procedures are being performed by the dental assistant, and personally evaluates the performance of the dental assistant before dismissal of the patient.