

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

## CHAPTER 90 DENTAL ASSISTANTS

Secs.	
9000	GENERAL PROVISIONS
9001	REGISTRATION REQUIRED
9002	TERM OF REGISTRATION
9003	EDUCATION REQUIREMENT
9004	SCOPE OF PRACTICE
9005	RADIOGRAPHY REQUIREMENTS
9006	RESPONSIBILITY OF SUPERVISING DENTIST
9099	DEFINITIONS

### **9000 GENERAL PROVISIONS**

- 9000.1 This chapter applies to applicants for and holders of a registration to practice as a dental assistant.
- 9000.2 Chapters 40 (Health Occupations: General Rules) and 41 (Health Occupations Administrative Procedures) 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 obtain a registration no later than September 17, 2012.

### **9002 TERM OF REGISTRATION**

- 9002.1 Subject to § 9002.2, a registration issued pursuant to this chapter shall expire at 12:00 midnight of December 31 of each odd-numbered year.
- 9002.2 If the Director changes the renewal system pursuant to § 4006.3 of chapter 40 of this title, a registration issued pursuant to this chapter shall expire at 12:00 midnight of the last day of the month of the birth date of the holder of the license or other date established by the Director.

### **9003 EDUCATION REQUIREMENT**

- 9003.1 No person shall be registered as a Level I Dental Assistant or Level II Dental

Assistant unless he or she has graduated from high school or have a general equivalency diploma.

9003.2 Except as provided in § 9003.3, an applicant for registration as a Level II Dental Assistant shall provide satisfactory evidence to the Board as to the following:

- (a) That the applicant has successfully completed and graduated from an educational program for dental assistants approved by the Board or the American Dental Association's (ADA) Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA);
- (b) That the applicant possesses a current and valid certification as a Certified Dental Assistant from the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB); or
- (c) That the applicant has completed a dental assisting program approved by the Board.

9003.3 Notwithstanding the requirements of § 9003.2, an applicant for registration as a Level II Dental Assistant may be granted registration if the applicant registers no later than September 17, 2012 and provide the following evidence satisfactory to the Board:

- (a) The applicant has been performing the duties of a dental assistant on the effective date of this chapter; and
- (b) The applicant has demonstrated competency to perform the duties of a dental assistant to the satisfaction of the supervising dentist.

9003.4 As a prerequisite to registration, a dental assistant shall present proof to the Board that he or she has completed a course in dental radiography training program that the Board deems satisfactory.

#### **9004 SCOPE OF PRACTICE**

9004.1 Subject to the restrictions set forth in this section, a dentist may delegate to a registered 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.

9004.2 Level I Dental Assistant may perform the following functions under direct

supervision of a dentist:

- (a) Placing retraction cord;
- (b) Placing or removing matrices;
- (c) Applying a medicinal agent to a tooth for a prophylactic purpose;
- (d) Placing periodontal dressings;
- (e) Removing temporary restorations without the use of a rotary instrument;
- (f) Removing sutures;
- (g) Taking impression for study models or diagnostic casts
- (h) Rinsing and aspirating the oral cavity;
- (i) Retracting the lips, cheek, tongue, and flaps;
- (j) Placing or removing materials for the isolation of the dentition, provided that the material is not retained by the dentition;
- (k) Applying topical anesthesia;
- (l) Constructing athletic mouth guards in models;
- (m) Performing intraoral photography;
- (n) Curing by the use of halogen light;
- (o) Checking for loose bands;
- (p) Whitening; and
- (q) Other functions as approved by the Board.

9004.3 Level II Dental Assistant may perform the following functions under direct supervision of a dentist:

- (a) All functions permitted to Level I Dental Assistant, as enumerated in § 9004.2;
- (b) Performing vitality tests;
- (c) Taking alginate impressions for intraoral appliances;

- (d) Applying topical fluoride;
- (e) Applying desensitizing agents;
- (f) Placing or removing a rubber dam;
- (g) Etching;
- (h) Fabricating indirect restorations in a dental office;
- (i) Placing or removing a matrix band;
- (j) Drying a root canal;
- (k) Preparing and fitting stainless steel crowns;
- (l) Preparing temporary crowns;
- (m) Removing excess cement;
- (n) Removing or placing a periodontal dressing (except placing the original periodontal dressing); and
- (o) Constructing athletic mouth guards on models.

9004.4 Level I or II Dental Assistant working under the direct supervision of an orthodontist may also perform the following functions:

- (a) Preparing and fitting orthodontic bands;
- (b) Removing excess cement from around orthodontic bands;
- (c) Placing and removing arch wires;
- (d) Cementing of orthodontic bands, placement of bonded attachments, or the removal of cemented or bonded orthodontic bands and attachments;
- (e) Placing elastics and ligatures; and
- (f) Selecting headgear.

9004.5 A dentist shall not delegate to a dental assistant any of the following procedures:

- (a) Those procedures excluded by 17 DCMR § 4215.1;
- (a) 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.

## **9005 RADIOGRAPHY REQUIREMENTS**

9005.1 Except as provided in § 9005.2, a dental assistant shall not place or expose dental x-ray film unless he or she has:

- (a) Successfully passed the Dental Assisting National Board's (DANB) Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) examination or Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) examination;
- (b) Successfully completed a dental radiography training program approved by the Board.

9005.2 Notwithstanding § 9005.1, a dentist may permit an assistant 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 no later than September 17, 2012.

## **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.

**Director** – the Director of the Department of Health or the Director's designee.