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Measuring Dental Assisting Excellence®

How to Use the Following Charts

Chart 1

View which job designations are used in your state.

Be sure to follow the legal requirements to perform dental radiographic procedures.

See which tasks are not permitted by state law.

View the education/training/credential required for each level of dental assisting.



Compare your state's job designations to those used as standardized job titles in the DANB/ADAA Core Competency Study.

Chart 2

Review all the allowable tasks for each level of dental assisting as published in the state practice act.




The numbers next to each task correspond to the 70 numbered tasks that were identified and used in the DANB/ADAA Core Competency Study. Tasks that are not numbered do not directly match one of the 70 tasks, yet are identified by the state in the practice act. A full list of those tasks follow your state's chart.

See Appendix A for more information about the task numbering system.



If your state's dental practice act specifically defines levels of supervision, the state-specific definition is noted in the template.

See Appendix B for more information about supervision.

Education/Training/ Credential Required	Job Title According to D.C.	Proposed Standardized National Job Titles (see below)	Radiography Requirements	Functions NOT Permitted by Dental Assistants in D.C.
<p>To be registered as a Level II Dental Assistant in the District of Columbia, one must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have graduated from high school or hold a general equivalency diploma <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Successfully complete a dental assisting education program approved by the D.C. Board of Dentistry or accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) <p>OR Hold current DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) certification</p> <p>OR Complete a dental assisting program approved by the D.C. Board of Dentistry</p> <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete a course in dental radiography training that the D.C. Board of Dentistry deems satisfactory (see "Radiography Requirements column" at right) <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Apply for a registration as a Level II Dental Assistant to the D.C. Board of Dentistry <p>An applicant who has been performing the duties of a dental assistant on July 15, 2011 may be granted a registration if he or she fulfills the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrate competency to perform the duties of a dental assistant to the satisfaction of the supervising dentist <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Apply for a registration as a dental assistant to the D.C. Board of Dentistry no later than 9/17/12 	<p>Level II Dental Assistant</p>	<p>Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA)</p> <hr/> <p>DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) or Registered Dental Assistant (RDA)</p>	<p>In order to legally operate dental x-ray equipment and perform dental radiographic procedures in the District of Columbia, a dental assistant <u>must</u>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pass DANB's Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) exam or DANB's Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) exam <p>OR Successfully complete a dental radiography training program approved by the D.C. Board of Dentistry</p> <p>AND Register as a dental assistant with the D.C. Board of Dentistry (see additional requirements in "Education/Training/Credential Required" column at left)</p> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete in-office training and demonstrate competency to perform the task to the supervising dentist's satisfaction <p>AND Register as a dental assistant with the D.C. Board of Dentistry no later than 9/17/12 (see additional requirements in "Education/Training/Credential Required" column at left)</p>	<p>The following functions shall not be delegated to dental auxiliaries:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. The charting of cavities during preliminary examination, prophylaxis, or polishing 9. The intraoral polishing of a tooth or a restoration 12,51. Placing, carving, or finishing of amalgam restorations 15. Temporary wire ligation 24. 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 29. Final positioning of orthodontic bonds and bands 33. Condensing, contouring or adjusting any final, fixed or removable prosthodontic appliance or restoration in the mouth 33. Placing and finishing of composite resin/silicate restorations 34. Application of cavity liners and bases 40. The application of pit and fissure sealants 46. Taking final impressions 47, 50. Placement of temporary restorations 59. Administering or monitoring nitrous oxide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing final diagnosis and treatment planning • Performing surgical or cutting procedures on hard or soft tissue • Prescribing or parenterally administering drugs or medications • Administering inhalants or inhalation conscious sedation agents • Authorizing work orders for any appliance or prosthetic device or restoration to be inserted into a patient's mouth • Operating high speed rotary instruments in the mouth • Performing pulp capping procedures • Orthodontic arch wire activation with the exception of minor adjustments to eliminate pain or discomfort • Taking impressions for master casts to be used for prosthetic restoration of teeth or oral structures • Final cementation of crowns, bridges, inlays, onlays, posts and cores, and insertion of final prosthesis • Placing sutures • Flushing root canals • The performing of a diagnostic screening to identify indications of oral abnormalities • A preliminary dental examination • A complete prophylaxis, including the removal of any deposits, diseased crevicular tissue, accretion, or stain from the surface of a tooth or a restoration • Administering or monitoring general anesthetics and conscious sedation • Administering or monitoring local anesthesia
<p>To be registered as a Level I Dental Assistant in the District of Columbia, one must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Have graduated from high school or hold a general equivalency diploma <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete a course in dental radiography training that the D.C. Board of Dentistry deems satisfactory (see "Radiography Requirements column" at right) <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Apply to the D.C. Board of Dentistry for registration 	<p>Level I Dental Assistant</p>	<p>Dental Assistant</p> <hr/> <p>Entry Level Dental Assistant</p>	<p>The ADAA/DANB Alliance developed a listing of standardized job titles (left) based on its national Core Competencies Study conducted from 2002-2005.</p> <p>The same study utilized a list of 70 job functions which were determined to be representative of a broad range of dental assisting core competencies.</p> <p>Functions in this state that relate to the national DANB/ADAA Core Competencies Study are numbered to the right, using language directly from this state's dental practice act. (The numbers correspond to the study's task numbering system.)</p> <p>Functions listed with bullets are part of this state's practice act but are not specific matches to DANB/ADAA research.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>These state templates reflect the work done by the ADAA/ DANB Alliance to support a uniform national model for one set of dental assisting tasks, levels and requirements, which will serve as a viable career ladder for dental assistants.</p> </div>	

Job Title
According to
D.C.

Allowable Functions
(Functions with numbers relate specifically to Core Competency designations;
functions with bullets are in this state's practice act but are not specific matches to DANB research)

Level II
Dental
Assistant

Under Direct Supervision*

- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 14. Drying a root canal 18. Applying topical fluoride 27. Placing or removing a rubber dam 35. Removing or placing a periodontal dressing (except placing the original periodontal dressing) 43. Preparing and fitting stainless steel crowns 44. Taking alginate impressions for intraoral appliances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45. Placing or removing a matrix band 47. Fabricating indirect restorations in a dental office 47. Preparing temporary crowns 49. Performing vitality tests 54, 61. Removing excess cement 55. Removal of temporary restorations without the use of a rotary instrument 64. Constructing athletic mouth guards on models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying desensitizing agents; • Etching • All functions permitted to Level I Dental Assistant |
|---|--|--|

Under Direct Supervision* of an Orthodontist

- 15. Placing and removing arch wires
- 29. Preparing and fitting orthodontic bands
 - Removing excess cement from around orthodontic bands
 - Cementing orthodontic bands, placing bonded attachments, or removing cemented or bonded orthodontic bands and attachments
 - Placing elastics and ligatures
 - Selecting headgear

Level I
Dental
Assistant

Under Direct Supervision*

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Placing retraction cord 13. Removing sutures 27, 45, 48. Placing or removing materials for the isolation of the dentition, provided that the material is not retained by the dentition 35. Placing periodontal dressings 44. Taking impression for study models or diagnostic casts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 45. Placing matrices 48. Rinsing and aspirating the oral cavity 48. Retracting the lips, cheek, tongue, and flaps 54, 55. Removing temporary restorations without the use of a rotary instrument 56. Applying topical anesthesia 64. Constructing athletic mouth guards in models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applying a medicinal agent to a tooth for a prophylactic purpose • Performing intraoral photography • Curing by the use of halogen light • Checking for loose bands • Whitening • Other functions as approved by the Board |
|--|--|---|

Under Direct Supervision* of an Orthodontist

- 15. Placing and removing arch wires
- 29. Preparing and fitting orthodontic bands
 - Removing excess cement from around orthodontic bands
 - Cementing orthodontic bands, placing bonded attachments, or removing cemented or bonded orthodontic bands and attachments
 - Placing elastics and ligatures
 - Selecting headgear

*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 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.

Appendix A: Numbering System for Dental Assisting Functions

The following list of 70 dental assisting tasks was developed by the ADAA/DANB Alliance as part of a study of dental assisting core competencies conducted between 2002 and 2005. These selected tasks were determined to be representative of a broad range of dental assisting core competencies.

The **numbered functions** listed in the preceding state charts correspond to functions that were included in the DANB/ADAA core competencies study and use language directly from the state's dental practice act. The numbers are provided to facilitate comparison between and among states. Functions listed with **bullets** in the preceding charts are part of the state's practice act but are not specific matches to the functions that were included in the 2002-2005 study.

1. Perform mouth mirror inspection of the oral cavity
2. Chart existing restorations or conditions
3. Phone in prescriptions at the direction of the dentist
4. Receive and prepare patients for treatment, including seating, positioning chair, and placing napkin
5. Complete laboratory authorization forms
6. Place and remove retraction cord
7. Perform routine maintenance of dental equipment
8. Monitor and respond to post-surgical bleeding
9. Perform coronal polishing procedures
10. Apply effective communication techniques with a variety of patients
11. Transfer dental instruments
12. Place amalgam for condensation by the dentist
13. Remove sutures
14. Dry canals
15. Tie in archwires
16. Demonstrate knowledge of ethics/jurisprudence/patient confidentiality
17. Identify features of rotary instruments
18. Apply topical fluoride
19. Select and manipulate gypsums and waxes
20. Perform supragingival scaling
21. Mix dental materials
22. Expose radiographs
23. Evaluate radiographs for diagnostic quality
24. Provide patient preventive education and oral hygiene instruction
25. Perform sterilization and disinfection procedures
26. Provide pre- and post-operative instructions
27. Place and remove dental dam
28. Pour, trim, and evaluate the quality of diagnostic casts
29. Size and place orthodontic bands and brackets
30. Using the concepts of four-handed dentistry, assist with basic restorative procedures, including prosthodontics and restorative dentistry
31. Identify intraoral anatomy
32. Demonstrate understanding of the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard
33. Place, cure and finish composite resin restorations
34. Place liners and bases
35. Place periodontal dressings
36. Demonstrate understanding of the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard
37. Take and record vital signs
38. Monitor vital signs
39. Clean and polish removable appliances and prostheses
40. Apply pit and fissure sealants
41. Prepare procedural trays/armamentaria set-ups
42. Place orthodontic separators
43. Size and fit stainless steel crowns
44. Take preliminary impressions
45. Place and remove matrix bands
46. Take final impressions
47. Fabricate and place temporary crowns
48. Maintain field of operation during dental procedures through the use of retraction, suction, irrigation, drying, placing and removing cotton rolls, etc.
49. Perform vitality tests
50. Place temporary fillings
51. Carve amalgams
52. Process dental radiographs
53. Mount and label dental radiographs
54. Remove temporary crowns and cements
55. Remove temporary fillings
56. Apply topical anesthetic to the injection site
57. Demonstrate understanding of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidelines
58. Using the concepts of four-handed dentistry, assist with basic intraoral surgical procedures, including extractions, periodontics, endodontics, and implants
59. Monitor nitrous oxide/oxygen analgesia
60. Maintain emergency kit
61. Remove permanent cement from supragingival surfaces
62. Remove periodontal dressings
63. Place post-extraction dressings
64. Fabricate custom trays, to include impression and bleaching trays, and athletic mouthguards
65. Recognize basic medical emergencies
66. Recognize basic dental emergencies
67. Respond to basic medical emergencies
68. Respond to basic dental emergencies
69. Remove post-extraction dressings
70. Place stainless steel crown

Appendix B: Levels of Supervision

An important consideration in the discussion of the delegation of tasks to dental assistants is that of supervision of dental assistants by their dentist-employers. The American Dental Association (ADA) has identified five levels of supervision for dental auxiliaries, including dental assistants, which it defines in its “Comprehensive Policy Statement on Allied Dental Personnel,” (2010: 505) which is part of its *Current Policies*, last updated in 2012. Note that “allied dental personnel” refers to dental assistants, dental hygienists, community dental health coordinators and dental laboratory technicians.

The five levels of supervision defined by the ADA are as follows:

Personal supervision: A type of supervision in which the dentist is personally operating on a patient and authorizes the allied dental personnel to aid treatment by concurrently performing a supportive procedure.

Direct supervision: A type of supervision in which a dentist is in the dental office or treatment facility, personally diagnoses and treatment plans the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedures and remains in the dental office or treatment facility while the procedures are being performed by the allied dental personnel and evaluates their performance before dismissal of the patient.

Indirect supervision: A type of supervision in which a dentist is in the dental office or treatment facility, has personally diagnosed and treatment planned the condition to be treated, authorizes the procedures, and remains in the dental office or treatment facility while the procedures are being performed by the allied dental personnel, and will evaluate the performance of the allied dental personnel.

General supervision: A type of supervision in which a dentist is not required to be in the dental office or treatment facility when procedures are provided, but has personally diagnosed and treatment planned the condition to be treated, has personally authorized the procedures, and will evaluate the performance of the allied dental personnel.

Public Health Supervision: A type of supervision in which a licensed dental hygienist may provide dental hygiene services, as specified by state law or regulations, when such services are provided as part of an organized community program in various public health settings, as designated by state law, and with general oversight of such programs by a licensed dentist designated by the state.

Furthermore, the ADA’s “Comprehensive Policy Statement on Allied Dental Personnel” stipulates that intraoral expanded functions should be performed by allied dental personnel “under the supervision of a dentist.”

Because the study of dental assisting core competencies undertaken by the ADA/DANB Alliance did not address the question of supervision, the ADA/DANB Alliance does not make any recommendations as to the levels of supervision that should be necessary for the delegation of the tasks included in the study to dental assistants. However, the ADA/DANB Alliance believes it is important to call attention to the fact that, while the ADA has defined supervision levels in the aforementioned policy statement, which governs the ADA’s own activities and the activities of its members, these definitions have not been uniformly adopted by the dental boards of every U.S. state or district.

For the purposes of the attached charts, if a state’s dental practice act specifically defines levels of supervision, the state-specific definition is noted in the footer of the second page of the state chart.



Measuring Dental Assisting Excellence®

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