



REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTANT EXAMINATIONS INSTRUCTIONS

Completed applications with all required documents and fees must be postmarked by the final filing date. Any applications received after the final filing date will be returned.

Applicants for Registered Dental Assistant licensure in California must pass the practical, written and law and ethics exams, and undergo a criminal history investigation, prior to receiving a license. Temporary permits are not issued, and licensure in another state or country is not recognized.

GENERAL ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS B&P Code Section 1752.1

To qualify for examination and licensure on or after January 1, 2010, you must:

1. Be a graduate of a Board-approved Registered Dental Assisting program; OR
2. Have 15 months satisfactory work experience as a dental assistant for a dentist licensed in the U.S. by the date of application. Graduates of non-approved dental assisting programs, regional occupational centers or programs will be credited work experience on a week for week basis for classroom training and internships; AND,
3. Provide written evidence of completion of an 8 hour California Dental Board (Board)-approved course in Infection Control, a Board-approved course in the Dental Practice Act and a course in basic life support (CPR) offered by an instructor approved by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association.

Make checks payable to the Dental Board of California. Mail applications to the Dental Board of California, 2005 Evergreen Street, Suite 1550, Sacramento, California 95815

FIRST-TIME APPLICANTS First-time applicants must send the completed Application for RDA Examination and Licensure to the address above, **INCLUDING the fee of \$80** (\$20 application fee and \$60 practical exam fee.) You will pay an additional \$43 fee for the RDA written examination and \$23 for the law and ethics examination when you schedule your test with Psychological Services Inc (PSI). Once you have been accepted for the practical examination, a Candidate Handbook will be mailed to you by PSI with information regarding how to pay for and when to schedule your written examinations.

OUT-OF-STATE APPLICANTS Applicants located outside of California must **also** submit, two completed fingerprint cards **supplied by the Board**, and an additional fee of \$51 for processing of the fingerprint cards (a total fee of \$131). You will pay an additional \$43 fee for the RDA written examination and \$23 for the law and ethics examination when you schedule your test with Psychological Services Inc (PSI). Once you have been accepted for the practical examination, a Candidate Handbook will be mailed to you by PSI with information regarding how to pay for and when to schedule your written examinations.

PREVIOUSLY-QUALIFIED APPLICANTS If you took the written or practical exam **within** the last 2 years, you must submit a completed Application for RDA Examination and Licensure to the Board, checking one of the following boxes at the top of the Application, depending on which exam you wish to take. Fees must accompany the Application as follows:

1. Fee \$60 - Re-exam – practical only

2. Re-exam – written or law and ethics only (Applications submitted to Board for eligibility. You will pay an additional \$43 fee for the RDA written examination and \$23 for the law and ethics examination when you schedule your test with Psychological Services Inc (PSI). Once you have been accepted for the practical examination, a Candidate Handbook will be mailed to you by PSI with information regarding how to pay for and when to schedule your written examinations.)

If it has been more than 2 years since you last took either exam, you must re-apply for both exams as a **First-Time Applicant**, even if you passed one of the exams in the past. Passing scores are only valid for two (2) years from your last written or practical exam.

REFUND OF FEES: Fees are non-refundable.

If your application is rejected for any reason, only the exam fees will be refunded, which will occur about 8-10 weeks after the last exam.

You may withdraw from the exam by sending a written request to the Board. This request must be received in the office 15 business days prior to the first day of the scheduled exam. Only your exam fee will be refunded, not your application and fingerprint fees.

None of your fees will be refunded if you do not appear at your assigned examination. You must re-apply for a later exam and pay the required exam fee(s).

A \$25 fee will be charged for all returned checks.

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I APPLY? If you are not qualified, you will be mailed a deficiency letter, and your exam fees refunded. If you have not received a refund after 8-10 weeks please contact the Board.

If you are qualified, you will be sent a letter advising you of how to schedule your written exam (if you applied for that exam), and the steps you must take to be fingerprinted (if you are a First-Time Applicant.) You will also be provided more detailed information about the content of the exams at that time.

Approximately 30 days prior to the exam, you will be sent a letter giving you the date and time you are scheduled for the Practical Exam (if you applied for that exam).

First-Time Applicant Checklist - Did you remember to:

- ◇ Complete all sections of the Application, and sign and date the Application?
- ◇ Enclose a copy of your diploma, or have your school certify program completion on page 2, or Enclose original signed certifications (page 2 of the Application) from licensed dentists of at least 15 months work experience?
- ◇ Include copies of the 8 hour Infection Control certificate, 2 hour Dental Practice Act certificate and CPR card?
- ◇ Send the Application to the DBC with the required fee?
- ◇ Enclose completed postcard and affix postage stamp? (the Board will mail it back to you to confirm receipt of your application.)

COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Many applications are rejected because they are incomplete or completed incorrectly - read all of the materials sent to you and complete **ALL** parts of the Application fully, truthfully, and accurately.

You must provide all of the information requested. Be sure to **clearly print** or type.

If you have not graduated by the final filing date, but your school expects you to complete 30 working days or more before the first published practical examination date, the school may certify on the Application that you will complete by a specified date.

However, it is your responsibility to make sure that the school also certifies, not less than 30 working days before the first published practical exam date that you did in fact successfully complete.

If the Board does not receive proof of actual completion and graduation by this date, you will **not** be allowed to take the exams and you will have to re-apply as a First-Time Applicant during a later exam cycle.

If you are qualifying by work experience, a certification that you have 15 months of experience as a dental assistant with a dentist licensed in the United States must be supplied by obtaining the signature of EACH employer. The entire 15 months must be obtained prior to the date of application.

The 15 months of experience will be calculated as follows: Working 20 hours or more per week will be calculated weekly and must equal at least 64 weeks.

Working 19 hours or less per week will be calculated as hourly and must equal at least 1,280 hours.

The work experience will be considered qualifying **only** if the experience was comprised of performing duties specified in Business and Professions (B&P) Code 1750.1 (a) and (b) for a majority of the experience hours (see pages 4 and 5).

This page of the Application may be photocopied if you need additional copies. However, all certifications must contain original signatures and be submitted with your Application. Be sure that all parts of Section 10 are completed accurately by the employing dentist.

Per B&P Code Section 1752.6 A registered dental assistant licensed on and after January 1, 2010, shall provide evidence of successful completion of a board-approved course in the application of pit and fissure sealants prior to the first expiration of his or her license that requires the completion of continuing education as a condition of renewal. The license of a registered dental assistant who does not provide evidence of successful completion of that course shall not be renewed until evidence of course completion is provided.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

If your religious beliefs preclude you from being examined on Saturday or Sunday, you must include a note indicating the day on which you cannot take the exam and the reason why.

If you have a disability and may require special accommodations, call the Board to request a special accommodations packet. Completed special accommodation packets **MUST** be submitted **WITH** your Application. It is not possible to make special arrangements for certain applicants to be scheduled together.

GENERAL NATURE OF THE EXAMINATIONS

The Written Exam is a 3-hour, computer based, multiple-choice exam. It is administered in a computerized test center at various sites in California. If you qualify and your application is accepted, you will be sent information about how to register for this exam.

The Practical Exam requires that you acceptably perform three (3) designated procedures to minimum competence on a typodont. The exam is approximately 5 hours from start to finish. You will be assigned to either a morning, mid-day or afternoon session, on Saturday or Sunday, at a location in Northern or Southern California nearest to you.

The Law and Ethics Exam is a 1-hour, computer based, multiple-choice exam. It is administered in a computerized test center at various sites in California. If you qualify and your application is accepted, you will be sent information about how to register for this exam.

Once your application has been accepted, you will be sent specific information concerning the content of the examinations. Be sure to read it carefully.

Allowable DA and RDA Duties

IT IS A CRIMINAL OFFENSE TO PRACTICE AS A REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTANT WITHOUT FIRST RECEIVING A LICENSE.

Therefore, be sure to become familiar with the duties that the various categories of assistants are allowed to perform in California, as contained in the following laws and regulations.

Section 1750 & 1750.1. Dental Assistants; Allowable Duties

1750. (a) A dental assistant is an individual who, without a license, may perform basic supportive dental procedures, as authorized by Section 1750.1 and by regulations adopted by the board, under the supervision of a licensed dentist. "Basic supportive dental procedures" are those procedures that have technically elementary characteristics, are completely reversible, and are unlikely to precipitate potentially hazardous conditions for the patient being treated.

(b) The supervising licensed dentist shall be responsible for determining the competency of the dental assistant to perform the basic supportive dental procedures, as authorized by Section 1750.1.

(c) The employer of a dental assistant shall be responsible for ensuring that the dental assistant who has been in continuous employment for 120 days or more, has already successfully completed, or successfully completes, all of the following within a year of the date of employment:

(1) A board-approved course in the Dental Practice Act.

(2) A board-approved course in infection control.

(3) A course in basic life support offered by an instructor approved by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association, or any other course approved by the board as equivalent and that provides the student the opportunity to engage in hands-on simulated clinical scenarios.

(d) The employer of a dental assistant shall be responsible for ensuring that the dental assistant maintains certification in basic life support.

(e) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2010.

1750.1. (a) A dental assistant may perform the following duties under the general supervision of a supervising licensed dentist:

(1) Extra-oral duties or procedures specified by the supervising licensed dentist, provided that these duties or procedures meet the definition of a basic supportive procedure specified in Section 1750.

(2) Operate dental radiography equipment for the purpose of oral radiography if the dental assistant has complied with the requirements of Section 1656.

(3) Perform intraoral and extraoral photography.

(b) A dental assistant may perform the following duties under the direct supervision of a supervising licensed dentist:

(1) Apply nonaerosol and noncaustic topical agents.

(2) Apply topical fluoride.

(3) Take intraoral impressions for all nonprosthodontic appliances.

(4) Take facebow transfers and bite registrations.

(5) Place and remove rubber dams or other isolation devices.

(6) Place, wedge, and remove matrices for restorative procedures.

- (7) Remove post-extraction dressings after inspection of the surgical site by the supervising licensed dentist.
 - (8) Perform measurements for the purposes of orthodontic treatment.
 - (9) Cure restorative or orthodontic materials in operative site with a light-curing device.
 - (10) Examine orthodontic appliances.
 - (11) Place and remove orthodontic separators.
 - (12) Remove ligature ties and archwires.
 - (13) After adjustment by the dentist, examine and seat removable orthodontic appliances and deliver care instructions to the patient.
 - (14) Remove periodontal dressings.
 - (15) Remove sutures after inspection of the site by the dentist.
 - (16) Place patient monitoring sensors.
 - (17) Monitor patient sedation, limited to reading and transmitting information from the monitor display during the intraoperative phase of surgery for electrocardiogram waveform, carbon dioxide and end tidal carbon dioxide concentrations, respiratory cycle data, continuous noninvasive blood pressure data, or pulse arterial oxygen saturation measurements, for the purpose of interpretation and evaluation by a supervising licensed dentist who shall be at the patient's chairside during this procedure.
 - (18) Assist in the administration of nitrous oxide when used for analgesia or sedation. A dental assistant shall not start the administration of the gases and shall not adjust the flow of the gases unless instructed to do so by the supervising licensed dentist who shall be present at the patient's chairside during the implementation of these instructions. This paragraph shall not be construed to prevent any person from taking appropriate action in the event of a medical emergency.
- (c) Under the supervision of a registered dental hygienist in alternative practice, a dental assistant may perform intraoral retraction and suctioning.
- (d) The board may specify additional allowable duties by regulation.
- (e) The duties of a dental assistant or a dental assistant holding a permit in orthodontic assisting or in dental sedation do not include any of the following procedures unless specifically allowed by law:
- (1) Diagnosis and comprehensive treatment planning.
 - (2) Placing, finishing, or removing permanent restorations.
 - (3) Surgery or cutting on hard and soft tissue including, but not limited to, the removal of teeth and the cutting and suturing of soft tissue.
 - (4) Prescribing medication.
 - (5) Starting or adjusting local or general anesthesia or oral or parenteral conscious sedation, except for the administration of nitrous oxide and oxygen, whether administered alone or in combination with each other and except as otherwise provided by law.
- (f) The duties of a dental assistant are defined in subdivision (a) of Section 1750 and do not include any duty or procedure that only an orthodontic assistant permit holder, dental sedation assistant permit holder, registered dental assistant, registered dental assistant in extended functions, registered dental hygienist, or registered dental hygienist in alternative practice is allowed to perform.
- (g) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2010.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Passing the RDA examinations does not allow you to use an ultrasonic scaler or perform placement of sealants.

You must FIRST satisfactorily complete a course approved by the Dental Board of California in these functions, and provide certification of having done so to the Board after you have received a Registered Dental Assistant license.

Performance without proper certification is a violation of the California Dental Practice Act.

For regulations regarding DA and RDA duties effective January 1, 2010, please visit the Board's Web site at <http://www.dbc.ca.gov/lawsregs/laws.shtml>

Refer to the California Business and Professions Code, Article 7, Sections 1740-1777.