



DENTAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

2005 Evergreen St., Suite 1550, Sacramento, CA 95815

P (916) 263-2300 | F (916) 263-2140 | www.dbc.ca.gov



DENTAL BOARD OF CALIFORNIA DENTAL ASSISTING COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES May 13, 2026

In accordance with Government Code section 11123, subdivision (a), the Dental Assisting Council (Council) of the Dental Board of California (Board) met on Wednesday, May 13, 2026, at the following location:

Hilton Anaheim
777 W. Convention Way (Fourth Floor, Huntington Room)
Anaheim, CA 92802

Members Present:

Jeri Fowler, RDAEF, OA, Chair
De'Andra Epps-Robbins, RDA, Vice Chair
Jessica Gerlach, RDA, OA
Lilia Larin, DDS
Cara Miyasaki, RDA, RDHEF, MS
Rosalinda Olague, RDA
Carie Smith, RDAEF, OA

Staff Present:

Bryce W.A. Docherty, MPA, Executive Officer
Christy Bell, Assistant Executive Officer
Jodi Ortiz, Chief of Licensing and Examination Division
Wilbert Rumbaoa, Administrative Services Unit Manager
Brant Nelson, Legislative and Regulatory Specialist
Kaycee Hunter, Investigator
Mirela Taran, Administrative Analyst
Tom Tortorici, Investigator
Bryce Penney, Television Specialist, Office of Public Affairs, Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA)
Kenneth Swenson, Interim Board Counsel, Attorney III, Retired Annuitant, Legal Affairs Division, DCA
Tara Welch, Board Counsel, Attorney IV, Legal Affairs Division, DCA (Remotely)

Agenda Item 1: Call to Order/Roll Call/Establishment of a Quorum

Council Chair, Ms. Jeri Fowler, called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.; seven members of the Council were present, and a quorum was established.

Agenda Item 2: Public Comment on Items Not on the Agenda

Shari Becker expressed that the Dental Assisting Alliance is opposed to Senate Bill (SB) 1311 (Wahab, 2026) unless significantly amended. Their concerns include removal of the Board from regulatory process, replacement of course requirements with written examination only, elimination of hands-on training, and inconsistency between pathway options. She expressed that this bill would create multiple pathways to infection control certification that are not aligned or consistent with one another. She added that ironically the practical portion of the Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) examination was eliminated in 2018 largely because of concerns regarding inconsistency between testing locations and procedures. Yet now, certification pathways are being considered that vary significantly in both educational rigor and competency validation. Ms. Becker stated that one proposed pathway would eliminate all education and hands-on training requirements for infection control certification allowing dental assistants to become certified based solely on passing a written exam. However, answers to this national written exam are readily available online, and successfully passing a written test alone does not demonstrate that an individual can competently and safely perform critical infection control procedures in a clinical setting. In addition, Assembly Bill (AB) 1760 (Arambula, 2026) already includes substantial revisions in infection control certification requirements that directly address concerns related to the current coursework structure. As a result, the provisions proposed in SB 1311 are unnecessary. Ms. Becker conveyed that the Alliance respectfully urges the Board to change its position from support to oppose unless amended.

Agenda Item 3: Discussion and Possible Action on February 5, 2026, Meeting Minutes

Council Member Cara Miyasaki requested an amendment to the meeting minutes on page 8, Agenda Item 11.a., second paragraph, first line, to strike and replace “august” with “robust”.

Motion/Second/Call the Question (M/S/C) (Larin/Epps-Robbins) to approve the February 5, 2026 Meeting Minutes as revised.

Chair Fowler requested public comment before the Council acted on the motion. There were no public comments made on the motion.

Chair Epps-Robbins called for the vote on the motion. Ms. Mirela Taran took a roll call vote on the motion.

Ayes: Epps-Robbins, Fowler, Gerlach, Larin, Miyasaki, Olague, Smith.

Nays: None.

Abstentions: None.

Absent: None.

Recusals: None.

The motion passed and the Minutes were approved.

Agenda Item 4: Council Chair Report

Chair Fowler reported that Board staff have continued their efforts to review the statutes and regulations regarding the duties of the dental assisting profession by meeting with working groups and stakeholders. She indicated that Council Members Rosalinda Olague and Jessica Gerlach were assigned to the Dental Assistant (DA) and RDA Working Group, while Council Member Gerlach and herself were assigned to the Orthodontic Assistant Permit (OAP) Working Group. Additionally, Council Member Carie Smith and herself were assigned to the RDA in Extended Functions (RDAEF) Working Group. Chair Fowler conveyed that at the February 5, 2026 Dental Assisting Council meeting, the Council moved to support the proposed recommendation as revised from the DA and RDA Working Group to amend Business and Professions Code (BPC) sections 1675.5, 1741, 1750, 1750.1, and 1752.4 regarding dental auxiliaries. On March 4 and March 25, 2026, Council Member Gerlach and herself met with Board staff to discuss amendments to BPC section 1750.3, which outlines the allowable duties of the Orthodontic Assistant (OA). The proposed revisions were intended to align this section with the changes introduced in the February legislative proposal regarding DA and RDA duties and to ensure that supervision levels are consistent for duties performed by both RDAs and OAs. The legislative proposal was subsequently shared with stakeholders to gather feedback. Chair Fowler noted that on March 27 and April 23, 2026, Council Member Smith and herself met with Board staff to review proposed amendments to BPC sections 1753.5, 1753.51, 1753.55, and 1753.6, which govern the allowable duties of RDAEFs. She voiced that discussions focused on ensuring that the duties listed in California Code of Regulations (CCR), title 16, section 1087 are fully incorporated into statute and that appropriate supervision levels are clearly identified. Chair Fowler verbalized that Board staff also met with stakeholders on April 23, 2026, to discuss the anticipated changes associated with this legislative proposal. She noted that the long-term goal is to consolidate all RDAEF duties into a single statutory section. Additionally in April, Board staff drafted similar amendments to BPC section 1750.5 related to the allowable duties of dental sedation assistants (DSAs) to align this section with the updated DA, RDA, and OA duties. This legislative proposal was also shared with stakeholders for their feedback. Chair Fowler expressed that a lot of great work is happening across all categories, and the Working Groups are hopeful that these legislative proposals will be ready for review at one of the upcoming Board meetings this year.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 5: Executive Officer Report

Bryce Docherty reported that over the past quarter, the Board has continued to prioritize improvements in communication, transparency, and accessibility to better serve the Board's licensees, stakeholders, and the public. Several key initiatives have been implemented to expand outreach, enhance user experience, and modernize interactions with the Board. With regards to an expanded social media presence, the Board has launched a new Facebook page, complementing its existing social media presence on

X. This expanded platform allows the Board to reach a broader audience and engage more proactively in public-facing events. Recent examples of postings include participation in Dental Assistants Recognition Week in March and National Smile Month in May and June. These social media channels offer real-time updates and improved visibility for Board activities. Mr. Docherty verbalized that there have also been a number of website enhancements to clarify and ease of use. The Board's website has been refreshed with clearer language, improved organization, and new visual application widgets designed to simplify navigation for licensing applicants. These updates aim to reduce confusion, streamline access to information, and create a more intuitive experience for all the users. To enhance language accessibility and translation integration, a new Google Translate feature has been added to the top of the Board's website, allowing visitors to view content in nearly 150 different languages with a single click. This enhancement reflects the Board's ongoing commitment to accessible communication and serves as an important step in ensuring that the public it protects can readily access essential information and services. He noted that the Board has also added new Contact Us and email subscription features. To further strengthen communication with applicants, licensees, stakeholders, and the public, the Board has introduced an updated Contact Us and new Join our Email List subscription option. These tools provide a more direct and efficient way for the public to reach the Board, receive timely updates, and stay informed on key announcements, regulatory changes, and outreach efforts.

Mr. Docherty conveyed that the May issue of the Board Matters biannual newsletter was recently released and successfully distributed announcing the Board's new President and new Executive Officer among many other items. This biannual communication vehicle continues the Board's efforts to keep stakeholders informed of leadership updates and organizational priorities. He indicated that the Dental Unit has fully transitioned from mailing hard copy communications and that all correspondence is now issued electronically. This modernization ensures faster delivery, improved tracking, and reduced administrative costs. Mr. Docherty expressed that the Board now offers courtesy email notifications for renewals. In April, the Board implemented courtesy email notifications for license renewals. This added communication channel helps ensure licensees receive timely reminders and are less likely to miss their renewal deadlines. He communicated that the Board has also implemented the Psychological Services Incorporated (PSI) testing updates for the dentist and dental assistant Law and Ethics Examination. PSI's examination process has been updated to collect examinee's email addresses and phone numbers. This enhancement allows for more efficient communication regarding exam scheduling, location changes, or testing site closures, improving the overall experience for candidates. Mr. Docherty indicated that as part of the Board's paperless project, a secure online portal for complaints has been established. The Enforcement Unit now accepts dental records submissions through a secure online portal. This improvement reduces the need for mailing large physical documents and provides a more efficient and accessible way for the public to file complaints.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 6: Update on Dental Assisting Examination Statistics

Christy Bell provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 7: Update on Dental Assisting Licensing Statistics

Ms. Bell provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Council Member Smith inquired whether there is a date that testing will begin again for the RDAEF. Ms. Bell responded that Board staff is anticipating at the end of July.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 8: Update and Discussion on Registered Dental Assistant and Registered Dental Assistant in Extended Functions Educational Programs and Courses Application Approvals and Re-Evaluations

Ms. Bell provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Council Member Lilia Larin pointed out that on page 31 of the meeting materials, she noticed an almost 70% increase in RDA and RDAEF educational program applications that were approved. She inquired whether there is a trend of private dentists opening their own schools. Ms. Bell responded that the Board has received an increase in applications overall, and based on the withdrawals of the re-evaluations, the courses and programs are re-applying once they correct the deficiencies. She added that the Board has had an increase in applications over the last two years.

Mr. Docherty mentioned that the Board receives about 15 to 20 new course or program applications a month.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. There were no public comments made on this item.

Agenda Item 9: Update and Discussion on Proposed Regulations

Agenda Item 9.a.: Update on Rulemaking to Amend California Code of Regulations, Title 16, Section 1005 Regarding Minimum Standards for Infection Control

Brant Nelson provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Ms. Becker, representing herself, inquired whether the 45-day comment period has passed for the Infection Control Rulemaking. Mr. Nelson responded that at this time, this particular regulation or rulemaking package is being approved by DCA. Therefore, the comment period had not yet arrived. He noted that a notice will go out regarding the comment period and added that at the moment, the Budget Office and everyone is reviewing it to make sure that everything is copacetic.

Ms. Becker inquired where that notification will be coming from. Mr. Nelson responded that it will be on the Board's website and expressed that the Office of Administrative Law dictates how that is done and noted that it is published in an actual publication.

Agenda Item 10: Update and Discussion on Legislation

Mr. Nelson provided the report, which is available in the meeting materials.

Tara Welch mentioned that on May 6, 2026, AB 1760 was double referred to the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee and the Senate Judiciary Committee and inquired if Mr. Docherty knew why it was doubled referred by the Senate Rules Committee. Mr. Docherty responded that there is a section in AB 1760 that deletes a duplicative malpractice insurance requirement for licensure candidates completing a hands-on practicum on live patients. He added that the malpractice insurance requirement for these licensure candidates is duplicative because malpractice insurance is now provided by the course provider for that portion of the exam. Mr. Docherty mentioned that provision was also flagged by the Assembly Business and Professions Committee and the Consumer Attorneys of California. He stated that Board staff clarified the intent of that provision and mentioned that it is not eliminating any malpractice liability coverage requirement but merely removing duplicative coverage.

Chair Fowler requested public comment on this item. The Council received public comment.

Ms. Becker, representing the Alliance, verbalized that regarding AB 873, the Alliance will take a watch on that bill, and they are pleased to support AB 1760. She mentioned that over the past several years, the dental assisting community working collaboratively with key stakeholders has made significant efforts to strengthen infection control standards, and noted that they believe the provisions outlined in this bill are practical, well balanced, and in the best interest of patient safety, the dental workforce, and the public. Regarding SB 1445, Ms. Becker expressed that they will continue to watch that bill.

Agenda Item 11: Adjournment

Chair Fowler adjourned the meeting at 9:14 a.m.