

Louisiana

Allowable and Prohibited Duties for Dental Assistants

At-a-glance information includes a dental assisting career ladder and job titles, radiography requirements, education and exam requirements, delegable functions and supervision levels, and prohibited functions.

These data are presented for informational purposes only and are not intended as a legal opinion regarding dental practice in any state. DANB confers with each state's dental board annually or when changes occur regarding the accuracy and currency of this information. To verify, or if you have any questions, please contact your state's dental board.



INSIDE:

- State requirements and functions chart
- Appendix A: information about numbering system
- Appendix B: information about supervision levels for dental assistants



State Career Ladder

There are two recognized levels of dental assistants in Louisiana. See the following pages for details about requirements and allowed functions for each level. Numbers for each level are provided for internal reference and do not correspond to specific state designations.



2 Expanded Duty Dental Assistant (EDDA)

1 Dental Assistant

State Radiography Requirements

To legally operate dental x-ray equipment and perform dental radiographic procedures in Louisiana, a dental assistant must complete a course in x-ray function and safety approved by the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry within six months after employment by a licensed dentist and shall perform dental x-ray functions solely under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist who is on the premises of the dental office at the time.

Functions NOT Permitted by Dental Assistants in Louisiana

Functions with numbers correspond to functions included in a 2002-2005 study of dental assisting core competencies. See page 11 for more information.

The following functions are not permitted by any level of dental assistant:

20. The removal of calculus, deposits or accretions from the natural and restored surfaces of teeth or dental implants in the human mouth using hand, ultrasonic, sonic or air polishing instruments
29. Final placement of orthodontic bands or brackets except in indirect bonding procedures in which the dentist has either performed the final placement of the brackets on the model or when the dentist has written a detailed prescription to the laboratory for placement of the bracket
- 12, 33, 51. Placement or finishing of any final restoration
46. The taking of an impression for a final fixed or removable restoration or prosthesis
 - Periodontal screening and probing, or subgingival exploration for hard and soft deposits and sulcular irrigations
 - Root planing or the smoothing and polishing of roughened root surfaces using hand, ultrasonic or sonic instruments
 - Placement and removal of antimicrobial agents
 - Comprehensive examination or diagnosis and treatment planning
 - A surgical or cutting procedure on hard or soft tissue including laser and micro abrasion reduction of tooth material
 - Prescription of a drug, medication or work authorization
 - Final placement and intraoral adjustment of a fixed appliance
 - Final placement and intraoral or extraoral adjustment of a removable appliance
 - Making of any intraoral occlusal adjustment
 - Performance of direct pulp capping or pulpotomy
 - Administration of nitrous oxide inhalation analgesia
 - Administration of a local anesthetic, parenteral, Intravenous (IV), inhalation sedative agent, or any general anesthetic agent
 - Administration of Botox and dermal fillers
 - Utilizing air abrasion units



1 Dental Assistant

Requirements

Education, Training and Credential Requirements

A dental assistant in Louisiana may perform basic supportive dental procedures specified by the state dental practice act (see below) under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist.

There are no education or training requirements for this level of dental assisting.

Allowable

Allowable Functions

Functions with numbers correspond to functions included in a 2002-2005 study of dental assisting core competencies. See page 11 for more information.

Under Direct, On-Premises Supervision*

- 1, 2. Chart existing restorations and missing teeth, floss teeth and make preliminary inspections of the mouth and teeth with a mouth mirror and floss only
- 13, 69. Remove sutures, post-extraction dressing and surgical ligature ties
15. Place or remove ligatures, cut and tuck ligatures, remove tension devices and any loose or broken bands or arch wires
18. Apply topical fluorides following prophylaxis by a dentist or dental hygienist
- 22, 52. Take and develop dental radiographs and intraoral photographs (See "Radiography Requirements" on previous page)
24. Give intraoral instructions and demonstrations on oral hygiene procedures
27. Apply and remove rubber dams
30. Serve as the dentist's chair side assistant
37. Take and record pulse, blood pressure and temperature
39. Receive removable prostheses for cleaning or repair work
42. Place or remove temporary orthodontic separating devices
43. Place or remove preformed crowns or bands for determining size only when recommended by the dentist and only under his or her supervision
44. Make preliminary study model and opposing model impressions
- 47, 54. Fabricate and remove interim crowns or bridges (interim meaning temporary while permanent restoration is being fabricated)
- 54, 61. Remove cement from dental restorations and appliances, with hand instruments, limited to the clinical crown
56. Apply non-aerosol topical anesthetics
 - Apply desensitizing agents
 - Apply non-endodontic oxygenating agents
 - Make dental plaque smears
 - Place a removable retaining device in the mouth of a patient
 - Remove final impressions
 - Condition teeth prior to placement of orthodontics bands or brackets

***Direct Supervision:** A licensed dentist personally diagnoses the condition to be treated; personally authorizes the procedures; is in the dental office or treatment facility during the performance of the authorized procedures; and, before dismissal of the patient, evaluates the performance of the dental assistant, expanded duty dental assistant, or dental hygienist.



2 Expanded Duty Dental Assistant

Education, Training and Credential Requirements

To perform expanded functions under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist in Louisiana, a dental assistant must earn status as an Expanded Duty Dental Assistant (EDDA).

To qualify, one must:

1. a. Complete an expanded duty dental assisting program approved by the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry **OR**
b. Graduate from a CODA-accredited dental assisting program, providing documentation that training was provided in all functions which EDDAs are allowed to perform (If a dental assistant's training is deemed inadequate, the assistant must undergo remediation in a Louisiana board-approved program.)

AND

2. Complete a Louisiana State Board of Dentistry-approved radiography course (see "Radiography Requirements")

AND

3. Hold current approved BLS certification

AND

4. Apply to the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry for confirmation of EDDA certification.

The Louisiana State Board of Dentistry only recognizes the Expanded Duty Dental Assistant (EDDA) Certificate earned from completing coursework from one of the following programs: Louisiana Dental Association, Louisiana State University School of Dentistry, the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and Southern University at Shreveport.

Note: A dental assistant who has been employed by a licensed, practicing dentist and has worked as a dental assistant prior to July 30, 1992, may continue performing the following expanded duties (under the direct, on-premises supervision of the dentist) without registering as an EDDA:

6. Place and remove retraction cords
34. Apply cavity liners, excluding capping of exposed pulpal tissue
- 35, 62. Place and remove periodontal dressings
45. Place, wedge or remove matrices for restoration by the dentist

Allowable Functions

Under Direct Supervision*

- Any chairside dental act that a licensed dentist deems reasonable, using sound professional judgment. Such act must be performed properly and safely on the patient and must be reversible in nature.

***Direct Supervision:** A licensed dentist personally diagnoses the condition to be treated; personally authorizes the procedures; is in the dental office or treatment facility during the performance of the authorized procedures; and, before dismissal of the patient, evaluates the performance of the dental assistant, expanded duty dental assistant, or dental hygienist.

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.

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

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 allied dental personnel, 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 2020. Note that “allied dental personnel” refers to dental assistants, dental hygienists 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 ADAA/DANB Alliance did not address the question of supervision, the ADAA/DANB Alliance has not made 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 ADAA/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 template.

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