

# Nevada

## 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 assistant in Nevada. 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 Function Dental Assistant (EFDA)

1 Dental Assistant

## State Radiography Requirements

The Nevada State Board of Dental Examiners does not license dental assistants in radiation health, safety, and administration. Rather, each licensed dentist must, with his or her application for license renewal, include a certified statement containing the name and position of each dental assistant who assists in radiographic procedures, the date each dental assistant began to assist in radiographic procedures, and a statement attesting that each such dental assistant is qualified to operate radiographic equipment and has received all of the following:

1. Adequate instruction in radiographic procedures

**AND**

2. Training in CPR at least every two years while employed

**AND**

3. A minimum of four hours of continuing education in infection control every two years while employed

**AND**

4. Before commencing performance of radiographic procedures, a copy of the Nevada statutes and regulations governing dentistry

## Functions NOT Permitted by Dental Assistants in Nevada

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

- The diagnosis, treatment planning, or prescribing of drugs or medicaments, or authorizing the use of restorative, prosthodontic or orthodontic appliances
- Surgery on hard or soft tissues within the oral cavity or any other intraoral procedure that may contribute to or result in an irremediable alteration of the oral anatomy
- The administration of general anesthesia, conscious sedation, or deep sedation except as otherwise authorized by regulations adopted by the Nevada State Board of Dental Examiners
- The performance of a task outside the authorized scope of practice of the employee who is being assigned the task



## 1

## Dental Assistant

## Requirements

**Education, Training and Credential Requirements**

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

A licensed dentist who owns a dental office or treatment facility must, on his or her application for license renewal, list the name and address of each dental assistant who assists in procedures for infection control, the date the dental assistant began to assist in infection control procedures, and a statement that each employee listed has received adequate instruction in infection control and is qualified to operate sterilization and other equipment, and to perform all other applicable activities, in compliance with CDC guidelines.

## 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 Supervision by a Dentist\***

6. Retract gingival tissue if the retraction cord contains no medications that have potential systemic side effects
9. Remove soft plaque and stain from exposed tooth surfaces, utilizing an appropriate rotary instrument with a rubber cup or brush and a suitable polishing agent; a licensed dentist or dental hygienist shall determine that the teeth to be polished are free of calculus or other extraneous material
13. Remove sutures
15. Place and secure an orthodontic ligature
18. Administer a topical fluoride\*\*
24. Train and instruct persons in the techniques of oral hygiene and preventive procedures
27. Place or remove a rubber dam and accessories used for its placement
29. Fit orthodontic bands and prepare teeth for orthodontic bands if the bands are cemented or bonded, or both, into the patient's mouth by the dentist who authorized the dental assistant to perform this procedure
- 35, 62. Place and remove a periodontal pack
40. Apply pit and fissure sealant to the dentition for the prevention of decay. This procedure must be checked and approved by the supervising dentist before dismissal of the patient from the office of the dentist.
44. Take the following types of impressions: those used for the preparation of counter or opposing models; those used for the fabrication of temporary crowns or bridges; and those used for the fabrication of temporary removable appliances, provided no missing teeth are replaced by those appliances
47. Fabricate and place temporary crowns and bridges. This procedure must be checked and approved by the supervising dentist before dismissal of the patient from the office of the dentist
48. Retract a patient's cheek, tongue or other tissue during a dental operation
48. Remove the debris which normally accumulates during or after a cleaning or operation by the dentist by using mouthwash, water, compressed air or suction
56. Administer a topical anesthetic in any form except aerosol
61. Remove excess cement from cemented restorations and orthodontic appliances; a dental assistant may not use a rotary cutting instrument to remove excess cement from restorations or orthodontic appliances

**Under Supervision by a Dentist\*, before the patient is examined by the dentist**

22. Expose radiographs (see "Radiography Requirements" on previous page)
44. Take impressions for the preparation of diagnostic models

**Under Direct Supervision by a Dental Hygienist with Public Health Dental Hygiene Endorsement**

9. Perform coronal polishing
18. Administer a topical fluoride\*
22. Take radiographs
24. Train and instruct persons in the techniques of oral hygiene and preventive procedures
24. Provide oral health education
40. Apply dental sealants
48. Retract a patient's cheek, tongue or other tissue during a dental operation
48. Remove the debris that normally accumulates during or after a cleaning or operation by the dental hygienist by using mouthwash, water, compressed air or suction

*Note: A dental assistant may assist a dental hygienist performing these tasks if the hygienist has received Nevada Board approval to perform services without supervision or authorization of a licensed dentist in schools and certain health facilities.*

*\*\*At its October 8, 2020 meeting, the Nevada State Board of Dental Examiners issued an advisory opinion that a dental assistant may administer silver diamine fluoride and that such administration is considered a topical fluoride permitted under their scope of practice.*

\***Supervision by a Dentist:** A dentist is physically present in the office where the procedures to be supervised are being performed, while these procedures are being performed, and is capable of responding immediately if any emergency should arise.

**Direct Supervision:** This term is currently undefined in Nevada dental statutes and rules.



## 2 Expanded Function Dental Assistant

### Education, Training and Credential Requirements

To be eligible for licensure as an expanded function dental assistant, an applicant must:

1. Be over 18 years of age **AND**
2. a. Graduate from an accredited program for dental assisting with expanded functions **OR**  
b. Successfully complete a course of training for EFDAs and either:
  - i. Graduate from an accredited program for dental assisting without expanded functions **OR**
  - ii. Be employed as a dental assistant full-time for at least 2 years or part-time for at least 4 years and pass the DANB CDA exam**AND**
3. Hold a current certification in the techniques of administering cardiopulmonary resuscitation **AND**
4. a. Pass the written and clinical examination offered by the American Board of Dental Examiners for expanded function dental auxiliary; **OR**  
b. Pass the written examinations offered by the Dental Assisting National Board for certification as a Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant and a Certified Restorative Functions Dental Assistant  
**AND**
5. Pass a written exam given by the Board on Nevada EFDA laws and regulations

For licensure by **endorsement**, an applicant must:

1. Provide proof of current licensure as an EFDA in another state or territory of the United States, or the District of Columbia **AND**
2. a. Graduate from an accredited program for dental assisting with expanded functions **OR**  
b. Be employed as a dental assistant or an EFDA full-time for at least 2 years or part-time for at least 4 years  
**AND**
3. a. Has passed all of the written examinations offered by the Dental Assisting National Board for certification as a Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant and a Certified Restorative Functions Dental Assistant **OR**  
b. Has successfully completed a course on restorative dental assisting that is approved by the Board  
**AND**
4. Pass a written exam given by the Board on Nevada EFDA laws and regulations

### 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 Authorization of a Dentist\*

- 12, 33. Placing, condensing, contouring, adjusting, curing and finishing restorations that are made of a direct restorative material, including, without limitation, amalgam, resin-based composite and glass ionomer.
18. Placing topical fluoride.
34. Placing desensitizers, liners and bases.
45. Placing and removing matrices and interproximal wedge devices.
46. Taking final impressions for indirect restorations, including, without limitation, crowns, bridges and veneers and removable prostheses, including, without limitation, dentures.
  - Adjusting a removable prostheses extraorally.
  - Cementation of permanent restorations, including, without limitation, crowns, bridges and veneers, if the authorizing dentist evaluates and approves each permanent restoration before the cementation is final and inspects each permanent restoration before the patient leaves the premises where the cementation occurred.
- Administering a hemostatic agent.
- Applying agents for bleaching teeth.
- Using an ultrasonic scaling unit only for the removal of bonding agents. This subsection does not authorize an expanded function dental assistant to use an ultrasonic scaling unit on any natural tooth

#### Under Direct Supervision by a Dental Hygienist with Public Health Dental Hygiene Endorsement

9. Perform coronal polishing
18. Apply topical fluoride
22. Take radiographs
24. Provide oral health education
40. Apply dental sealants

Note: *Per Chapter 631 of NAC Section 5*, 1) A dentist may supervise not more than two expanded function dental assistants at one time. 2) A dentist who supervises an expanded function dental assistant shall develop and implement written protocols for the expanded function dental assistant to follow if a medical emergency occurs.

*Per Chapter 631 of NAC Section 7*, Before a dental hygienist who holds a special endorsement to practice public health dental may authorize a dental assistant or expanded function dental assistant to perform tasks under his or her direct supervision, the supervising dental hygienist and the dental assistant or expanded function dental assistant, as applicable, must enter into a signed written practice agreement prescribing the tasks which the dental assistant or expanded function dental assistant is authorized to perform.

**\*Authorization of a Dentist:** Except as specifically required by a regulation adopted by the Board, the authorizing dentist of an expanded function dental assistant is not required to be present during the provision of services by the expanded function dental assistant.

**Direct Supervision:** This term is currently undefined in Nevada dental statutes and rules.

# 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                                                  | 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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