

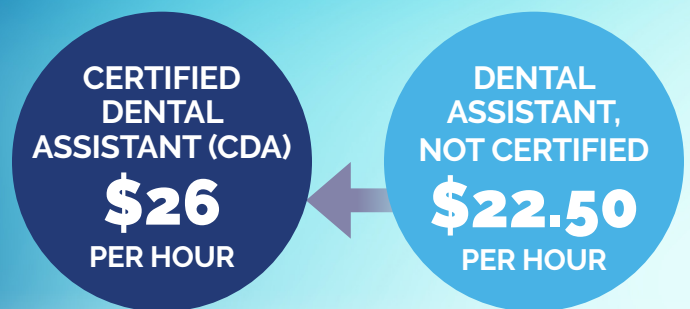


# 2024

## Dental Assistants Salary and Satisfaction Survey

“I’ve loved the challenges of working in dentistry over the years. There’s never a dull moment in dentistry, and no day is ever the same!”

### DENTAL ASSISTANT SALARY



**Certified Dental Assistants earn 15% more**  
(\$3.50 per hour) than dental assistants who aren't certified.

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# Value of Certification

Earning DANB's Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) certification is a meaningful achievement that can benefit your dental assisting career today and in the future.



**“Being a CDA has helped me advance in my career. I currently manage 12 assistants, and I encourage them to earn their CDA. It is important to help other assistants to advance in their careers!”**



## Why become a Certified Dental Assistant?

- **Personal achievement.** Earning certification is a big goal that you can be proud of!
- **Stand out.** Certification can help you stand out when applying for jobs.
- **Increased knowledge.** Earning certification helps you solidify your knowledge.
- **Greater confidence.** Certification can give you a confidence boost that you carry with you every day on the job.
- **More opportunities.** CDAs are more likely to be leaders in the office and take on new roles.

## CDAs are more likely to . . .

- Earn higher wages
- Have high job satisfaction
- Be a lead dental assistant
- Become office managers or educators

# Salary Trends

Across all years of experience, CDAs earn more than non-certified assistants.

**Certified Dental Assistants with 1-2 years of experience earn over \$5,000 more per year than non-certified assistants.**

**“I believe that being certified for over 25 years has benefited me throughout my career.”**



## SALARY AND YEARS OF EXPERIENCE



### Restorative dental assistants

Dental assistants who perform restorative functions have higher earnings.

#### Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)

- Performs restorative functions: **\$27 per hour**
- Doesn't perform restorative functions: \$26 per hour

#### Dental assistant, not certified

- Performs restorative functions: **\$23 per hour**
- Doesn't perform restorative functions: \$22 per hour

### Lead dental assistants

Lead dental assistants also have higher earnings.

#### Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)

- Lead assistant: **\$27.25 per hour**
- Not lead assistant: \$25 per hour

#### Dental assistant, not certified

- Lead assistant: **\$24 per hour**
- Not lead assistant: \$22 per hour

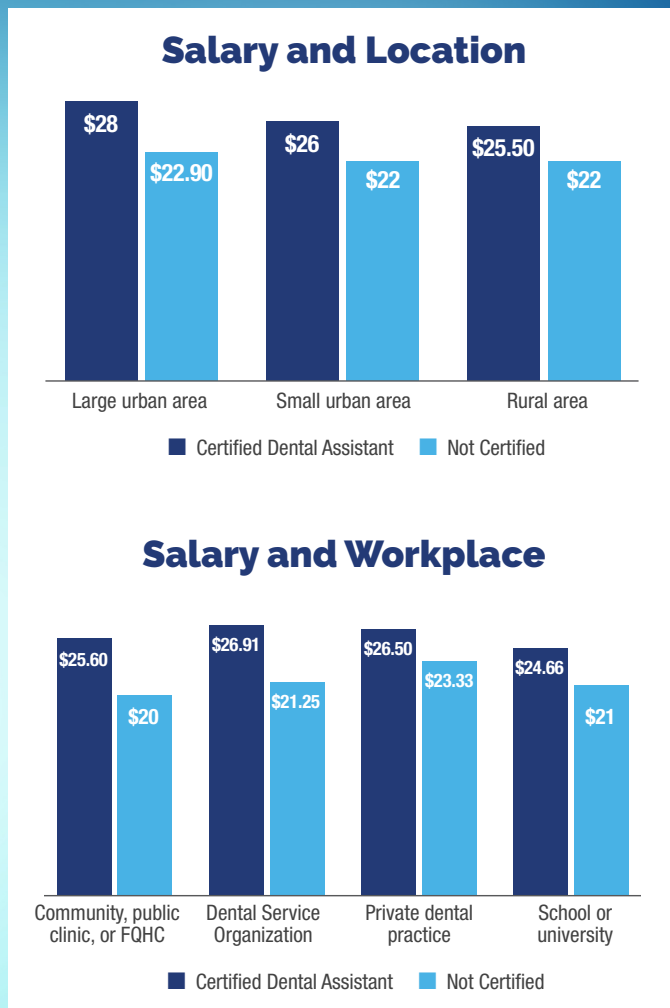
# Salary and work setting

Dental assistants' wages can vary depending on location and workplace. In all settings, Certified Dental Assistants earn more than non-certified assistants.

## Desired salary

What wages do dental assistants hope for? The difference between feeling fairly compensated and not is \$4 per hour.

Certified Dental Assistants say they feel fairly compensated at \$29 per hour. Dental assistants who are not certified report feeling satisfied with \$25 per hour.



## DO YOU FEEL FAIRLY COMPENSATED?

**CERTIFIED DENTAL ASSISTANT**

**YES**

**\$29**  
PER HOUR

**NO**

**\$25**  
PER HOUR

**DENTAL ASSISTANT, NOT CERTIFIED**

**YES**

**\$25**  
PER HOUR

**NO**

**\$21**  
PER HOUR

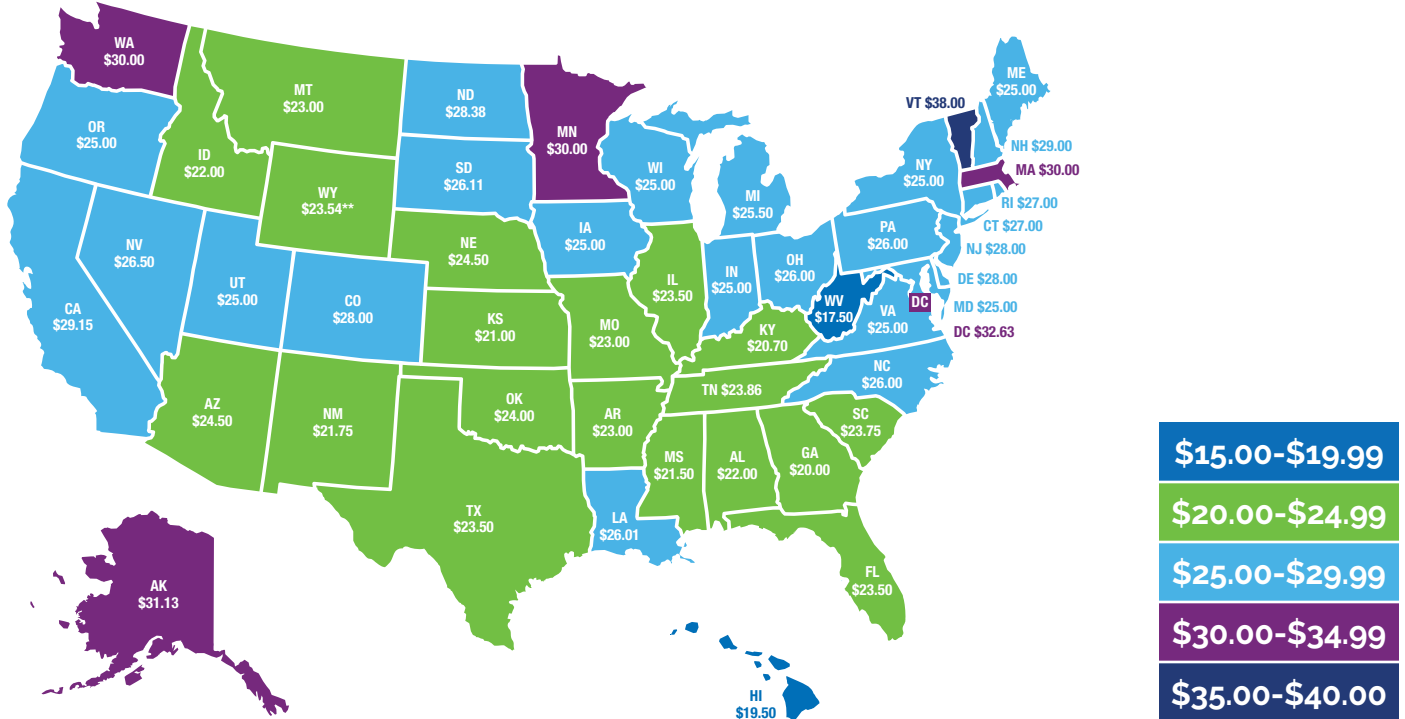
THE DIFFERENCE IN PAY BETWEEN DENTAL ASSISTANTS WHO FEEL FAIRLY COMPENSATED AND THOSE WHO DON'T IS \$4 PER HOUR.

**\$4** PER HOUR DIFFERENCE

# Salaries by state

## CERTIFIED DENTAL ASSISTANT

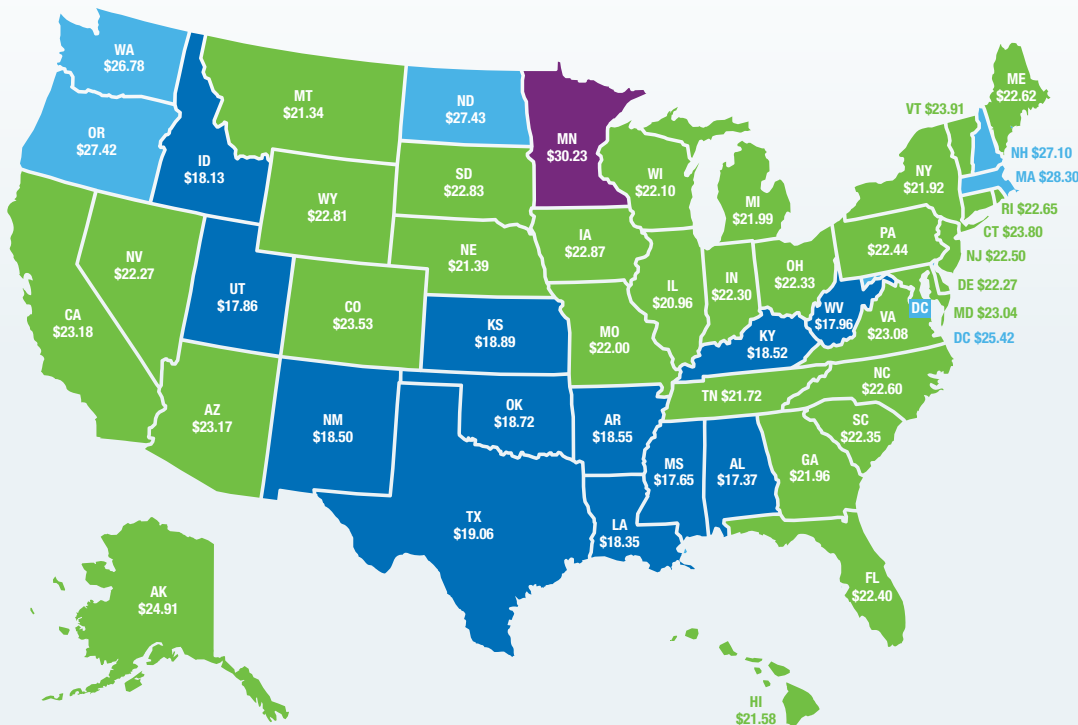
Certified Dental Assistants' wages can vary depending on state.



\*\*Figure for this state based on 2020 data.

## DENTAL ASSISTANT, NOT CERTIFIED\*

Dental assistants who are not certified also see their wages vary by state.



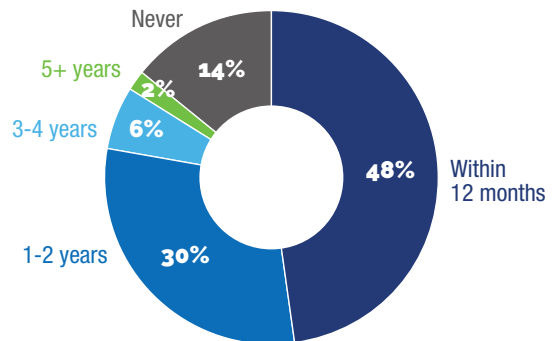
\*Figures from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics for all dental assistants.

# Raises

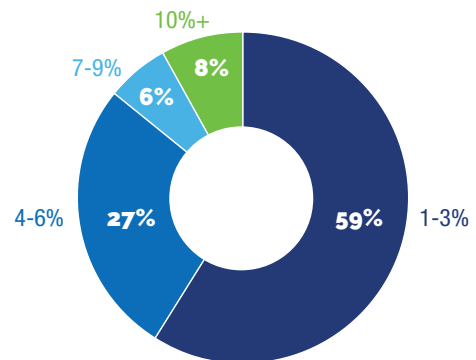
Nearly half of all dental assistants received a raise in the last 12 months. Most raises were 1-3%.



## Raise Received



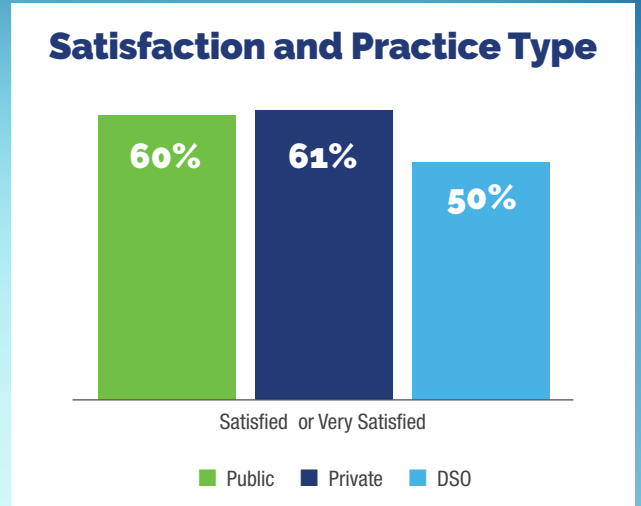
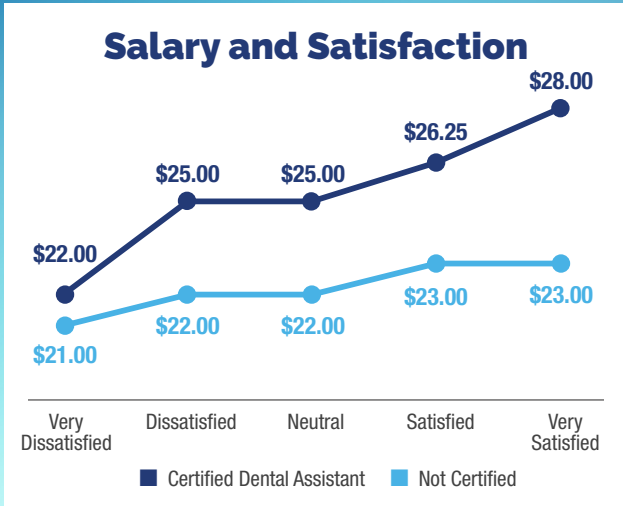
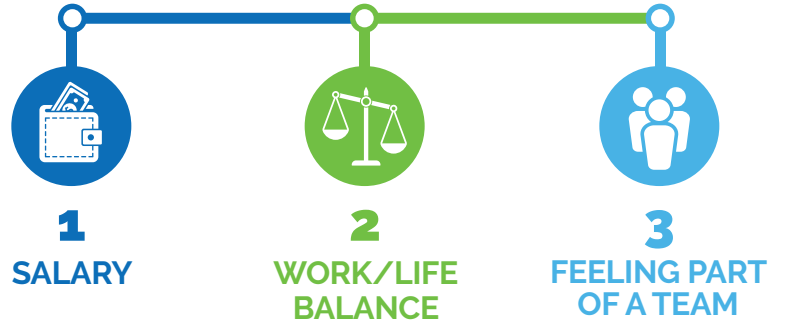
## Raise Amount



# Satisfaction

About 2 out of 3 dental assistants are satisfied or very satisfied with their current job.

## THE TOP 3 FACTORS THAT IMPACT DENTAL ASSISTANT JOB SATISFACTION ARE:



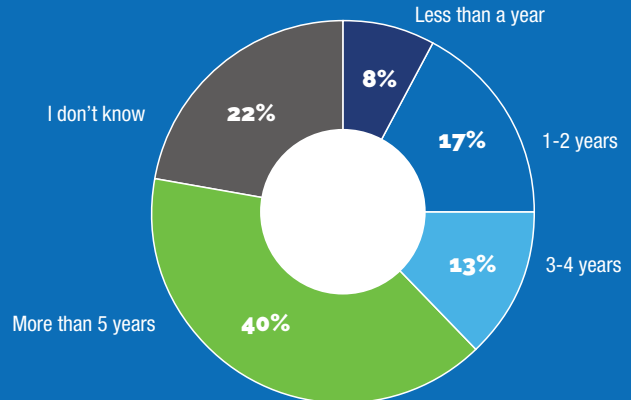
**Dental assistants who earn higher wages are more likely to report high job satisfaction.**



“I love to be an advocate for our patients. It’s rewarding giving people confidence with a nice smile, and fun to always work as a team!”

## Entry-level dental assistants' plans to stay in the profession

Among dental assistants with less than 2 years of experience, nearly half said they planned to stay in dental assisting for more than 5 years. About one-quarter were not sure how long they would stay in the field.



**“I really love my job and that we can help patients to understand the importance of dental care.”**

## Higher pay was the biggest factor in dental assistants staying in the profession.

What would encourage you to stay in the field longer?

- Higher pay **85%**
- More career growth opportunities **43%**
- More benefits **40%**

## Certified Dental Assistants are less likely to change jobs.

Dental assistants who changed job within the last year:

- Certified Dental Assistant **14%**
- Not certified **24%**

# 71%

OF DENTAL ASSISTANTS VIEW DENTAL ASSISTING AS A CAREER, NOT JUST A JOB, BUT LESS THAN HALF (49%) FEEL VALUED BY THEIR EMPLOYER.

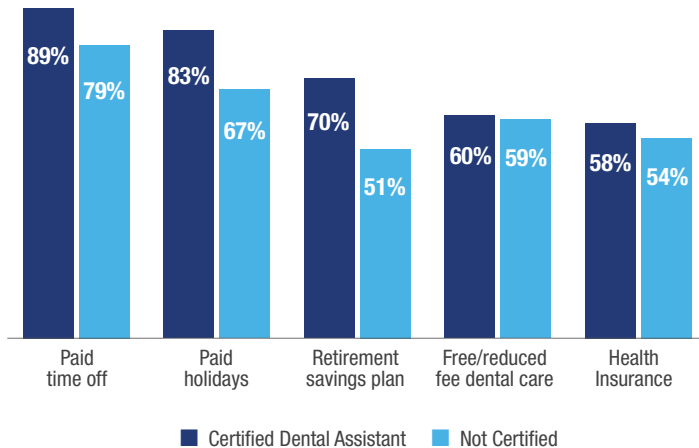




# Workplace benefits

The most common benefits dental assistants receive are paid time off, paid holidays, retirement savings plan, dental care, and health insurance.

## Workplace Benefits



# 60%

OF DENTAL ASSISTANTS SAID THEIR CURRENT WORK ENVIRONMENT WAS VERY FRIENDLY

# 41%

OF DENTAL ASSISTANTS SAID THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED HOSTILITY OR ABUSE AT WORK

# 42%

SAID THEIR CURRENT WORK ENVIRONMENT WAS VERY RESPECTFUL AND VERY COOPERATIVE

# 55%

OF DENTAL ASSISTANTS SAID THEIR PRACTICE HAS A STATEMENT ON VALUES OR CULTURE FOR EMPLOYEES, WHILE 24% WERE NOT SURE.



## About the survey

DANB's 2024 Dental Assistants Salary and Satisfaction Survey was conducted in May 2024. The findings in this report are based on a 6% total response rate from survey invitations sent to nearly 50,000 dental assistants. Survey researchers consider this response rate sufficient to generalize the results to the dental assistant population. Salary figures are reported as the median response (the median is the point in a data set at which about 50% of the responses fall above and 50% fall below). Salary figures are reported as hourly wages, without including the dollar value of any employee benefits. DANB has conducted a salary survey every two years since 2004. The consistency of data over these years supports the conclusion that these results are representative of the population.