



2022

Dental Assistants Salary and Satisfaction Survey

DANB



Since 2004, the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) has conducted its biennial Dental Assistants Salary and Satisfaction Survey to examine key factors impacting the profession. This report highlights current data and trends to help inform career and workforce decisions, while looking toward the future of dental assisting.

The 2022 Dental Assistants Salary and Satisfaction Survey results show that DANB certification can offer benefits in a changing professional landscape, such as:

- Earning higher hourly wages.
- Viewing dental assisting as a career and feeling valued by their employer.
- Increased job satisfaction.



“I do what I love, and love what I do. I do it with pride, dedication and enthusiasm.”

Dental Assistant Salaries

MEDIAN HOURLY PAY

\$19.93

Dental assistants who are not certified

\$24

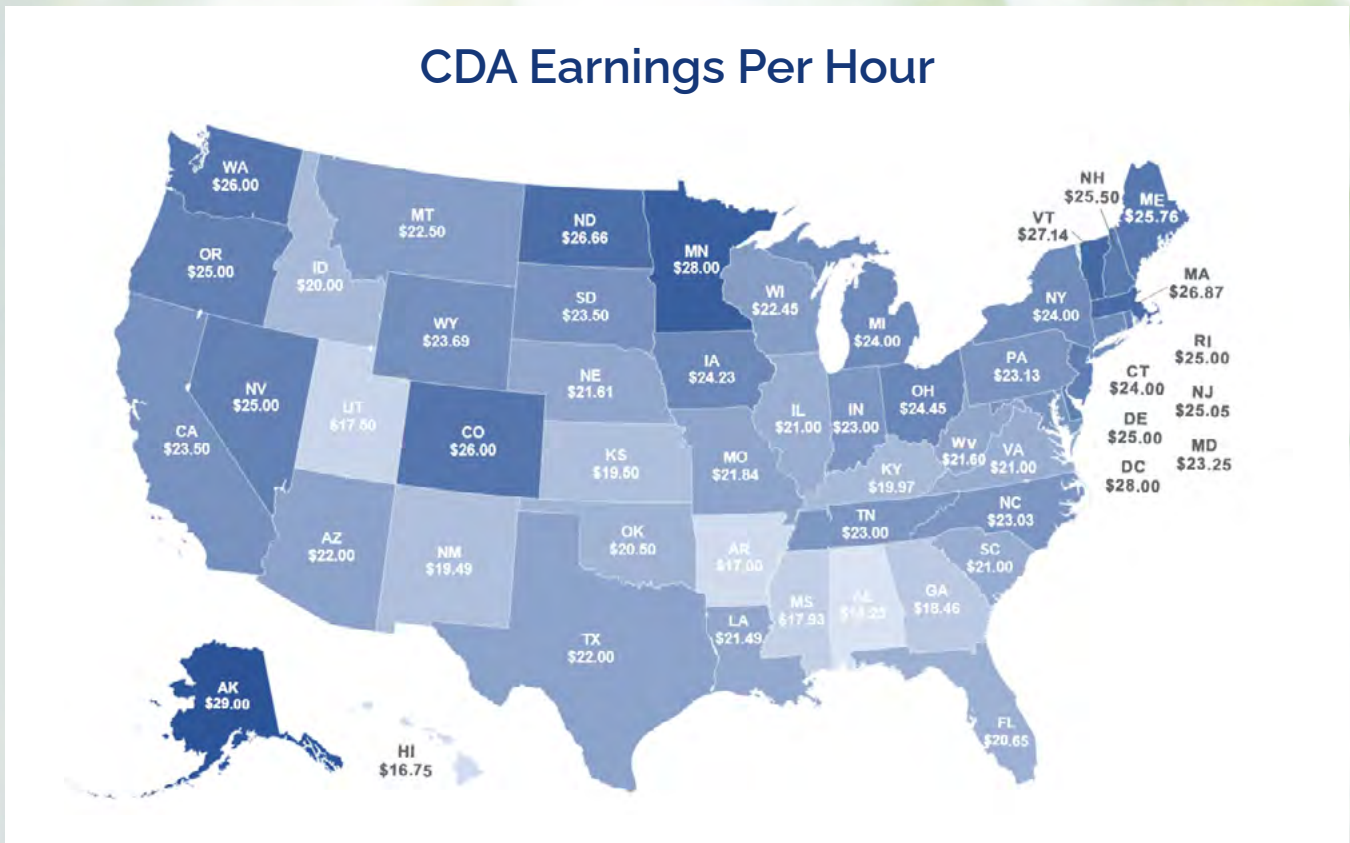
Certified Dental Assistants (CDA)

\$26

Certified Dental Assistant plus other certifications (CDA+)

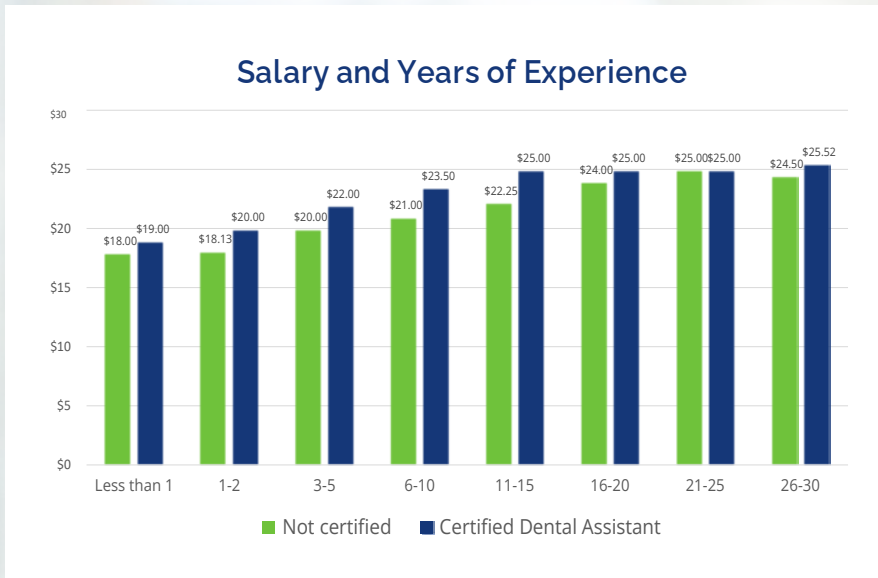
DANB CERTIFICATIONS CAN LEAD TO HIGHER PAY

A variety of factors influence dental assistants' salaries, such as location, years of experience and education. Certification can also play a role: DANB CDA certificants reported earning about \$4 per hour more compared to dental assistants who are not certified, and CDA+ certificants earned \$6 per hour more.



“Dental assistants are an integral part of the team and should be valued as such.”

EXPERIENCE PAYS OFF

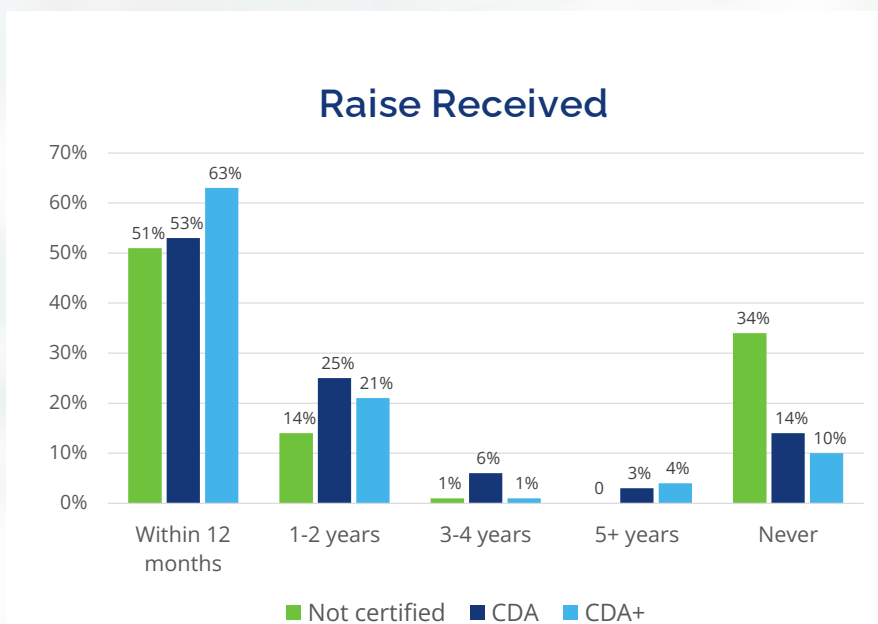


The national, median hourly wage for experienced dental assistants was higher compared to those newer to the profession, with Certified Dental Assistants earning more than those who are not certified.

PAY INCREASES

53% In the past 12 months, more than half of all dental assistants received a pay increase.

\$1-2 The average hourly wage increase for all dental assistants.



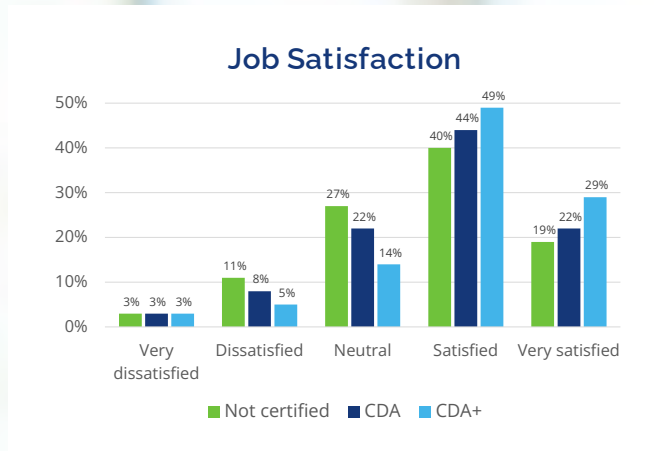
TOP REASONS DENTAL ASSISTANTS RECEIVED A PAY INCREASE

1. Offered as part of regular review
2. Given for outstanding performance
3. Asked for it

CERTIFIED DENTAL ASSISTANTS REPORT HIGHER JOB SATISFACTION

65% Nearly two-thirds of dental assistants reported being satisfied or very satisfied with their job.

Dental assistants who were not certified reported lower job satisfaction.



WAGES IMPACT SATISFACTION

Compensation is an important aspect of any career, and the dental assistants surveyed reported higher job satisfaction with increased wages.



TOP JOB FACTORS FOR DENTAL ASSISTANTS

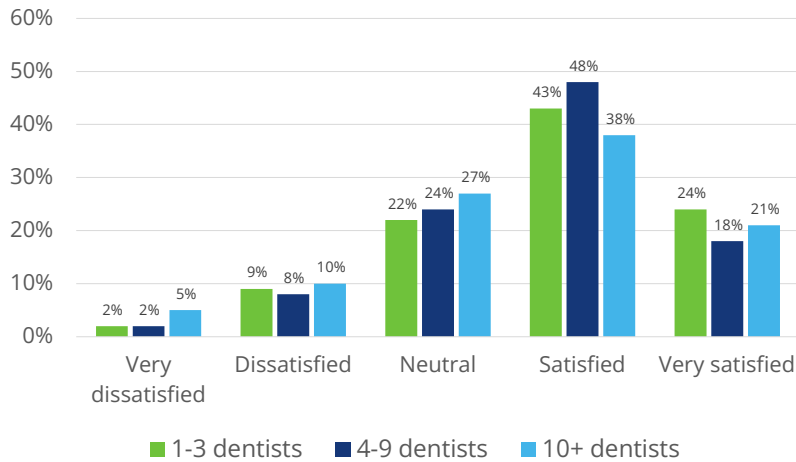
-  1. Salary
-  2. Work/life balance
-  3. Feeling like part of a team

“We have to ensure that our employer sees and respects us in every way possible so we can continue to make the dental environment safe and happy for everyone.”

SATISFACTION BY ENVIRONMENT

Environment plays a role in job satisfaction. Dental assistants who work in small or medium practices reported higher satisfaction than those in large practices.

Satisfaction and Practice Size

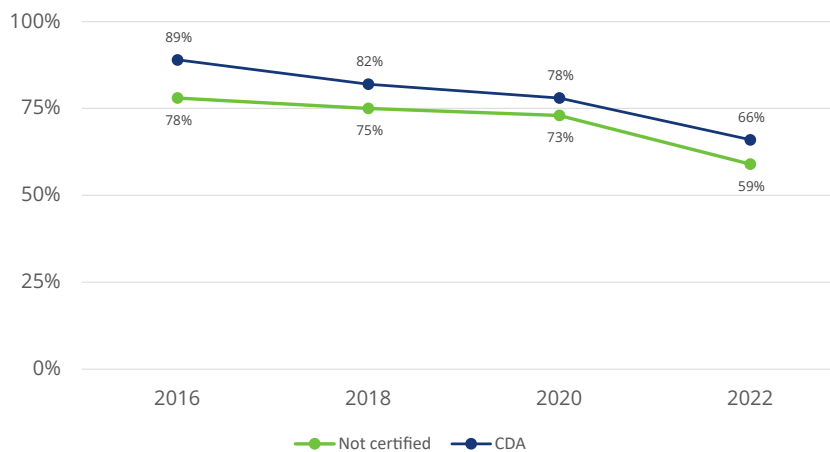


SATISFACTION IS HIGH, BUT DECLINING

Although overall job satisfaction among dental assistants is high, it has been on a decline since 2016.

Dental Assistant Satisfaction

High or very high job satisfaction



Satisfaction has declined by about 20 percentage points from 2016 to 2022.

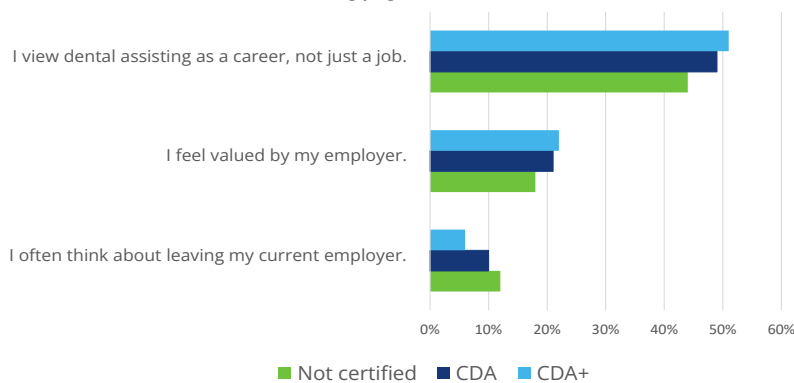
DENTAL ASSISTING AS A CAREER

78% 3 out of 4 agree or strongly agree that dental assisting is a career, not a job.

54% More than half agree or strongly agree they feel valued by their employer.

31% Nearly 1 in 3 often think about leaving their employer.

Career Commitment
Strongly agree with statement



CDAs are more likely to view dental assisting as a career and feel valued by their employer. They're less likely to think about leaving their current job.



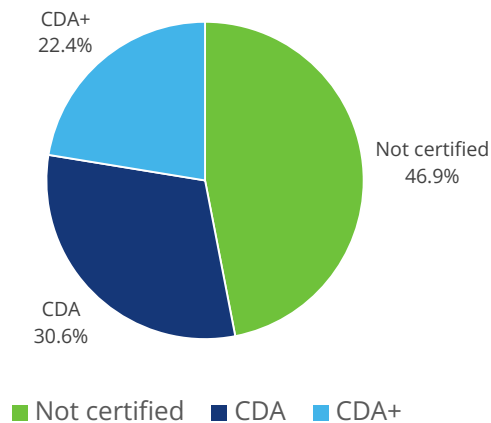
“If we are happy and appreciated we will bend over backwards because most of us really do love the job.”

JOB CHANGES

17%

Nearly 1 out of 5 dental assistants reported changing jobs within the last year, particularly those who are not certified.

Dental Assistants Who Changed Jobs within the Last Year



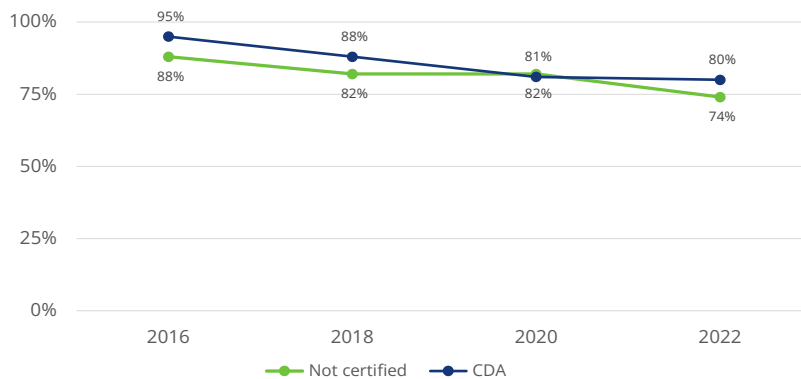
TOP 3 REASONS DENTAL ASSISTANTS CHANGED JOBS

1. Better pay
2. Felt underappreciated
3. Difficult team dynamics

CAREER PERSPECTIVES

Although a majority of dental assistants agree or strongly agree that dental assisting is a career, this number has declined in recent years.

View Dental Assisting as a Career



Viewing dental assisting as a career has declined by about 15 percentage points from 2016 to 2022.





WHY DO DENTAL ASSISTANTS BECOME DANB CERTIFIED?

55% While some dental assistants earned CDA certification to meet state or employer requirements, over half did so for personal reasons.

98% An overwhelming majority of Certified Dental Assistants plan to renew their certification.



TOP PERSONAL BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

- Pride
- Self-improvement
- Greater confidence



TOP PROFESSIONAL BENEFITS OF CERTIFICATION

- Stand out when applying for job
- Increased knowledge
- Higher pay

“I enjoy working as a Certified Dental Assistant. It is a rewarding profession, and I’m so proud of what I do to assist the dentist, office and especially the patients.”



ABOUT THE SURVEY

DANB's 2022 Dental Assistants Salary and Satisfaction Survey was conducted in July and August of 2022. The findings in this report are based on a 7% total response rate from survey invitations sent to more than 58,000 dental assistants. Survey researchers consider this response rate sufficient to generalize the results to the population surveyed. 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.

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ELEVATE YOUR CAREER WITH DANB

To learn more about DANB certification and career resources, visit danb.org or email danbmail@danb.org.