

## From the Dental Practice Act

### Allowable Duties Beginning 1/1/10

Following are sections of the Business and Professions Code that describe the allowable duties of unlicensed dental assistants and RDAs beginning January 1, 2010.

**DA Requirements.** B&P Section 1750 retains the SB1546/SB1541 statutory requirement that unlicensed DAs who are in a dentist's continuous employment 120 days or more must complete, within a year of the date of employment, a course in basic life support, an 8-hour board-approved course in infection control, and a board-approved course in the California Dental Practice Act. B&P Section 1750 also provides that the employer of a dental assistant shall be responsible for ensuring that the dental assistant maintains certification in basic life support.

### Business and Professions Code Section 1750.1 – DA Duties Beginning 1/1/10

(a) A dental assistant may perform the following duties under the **general supervision** of a supervising licensed dentist:

(1) Extra-oral duties or procedures specified by the supervising licensed dentist, provided that these duties or procedures meet the definition of a basic supportive procedure specified in Section 1750.

(2) Operate dental radiography equipment for the purpose of oral radiography if the dental assistant has complied with the requirements of Section 1656.

**(3) Perform intraoral and extraoral photography.**

(b) A dental assistant may perform the following duties under the **direct supervision** of a supervising licensed dentist:

(1) Apply nonaerosol and noncaustic topical agents.

(2) Apply topical fluoride.

(3) Take intraoral impressions for all *non-prosthetic appliances*.

**(4) Take facebow transfers and bite registrations.**

(5) Place and remove rubber dams *or other isolation devices*.

(6) Place, wedge, and remove matrices for restorative procedures.

(7) Remove post-extraction dressings *after inspection of the surgical site by the supervising licensed dentist*.

(8) Perform measurements for the purposes of orthodontic treatment.

(9) Cure restorative or orthodontic materials in operative site with a light-curing device.

**(10) Examine orthodontic appliances.**

**(11) Place and remove orthodontic separators.**

(12) Remove ligature ties and archwires.

(13) After adjustment by the dentist, examine and seat removable orthodontic appliances, and deliver care instructions to the patient.

(14) Remove periodontal dressings.

(15) Remove sutures *after inspection of the site by the dentist*.

**(16) Place patient monitoring sensors.**

**(17) Monitor patient sedation, limited to reading and transmitting information from the**

*monitor display during the intraoperative phase of surgery for electrocardiogram waveform, carbon dioxide and end tidal carbon dioxide concentrations, respiratory cycle data, continuous noninvasive blood pressure data, or pulse arterial oxygen saturation measurements, for the purpose of interpretation and evaluation by a supervising licensed dentist who shall be at the patient's chairside during this procedure.*

(18) Assist in the administration of nitrous oxide when used for analgesia or sedation. A dental assistant shall not start the administration of the gases and shall not adjust the flow of the gases unless instructed to do so by the supervising licensed dentist who shall be present at the patient's chairside during the implementation of these instructions. This paragraph shall not be construed to prevent any person from taking appropriate action in the event of a medical emergency.

**(c) Under the supervision of a registered dental hygienist in alternative practice, a dental assistant may perform intraoral retraction and suctioning.**

(d) The board may specify additional allowable duties by regulation.

(f) The duties of a dental assistant are defined in subdivision (a) of Section 1750 and do not include any duty or procedure that only an orthodontic assistant permitholder, dental sedation assistant permitholder, registered dental assistant, registered dental assistant in extended functions, registered dental hygienist, or registered dental hygienist in alternative practice is allowed to perform.

**Business and Professions Code Section 1752.4.– RDA Duties Beginning 1/1/10**

(a) A registered dental assistant may perform all of the following duties:

(1) All duties that a dental assistant is allowed to perform.

(2) Mouth-mirror inspections of the oral cavity, to include charting of obvious lesions, existing restorations, and missing teeth.

(3) Apply and activate bleaching agents using a non-laser light-curing device.

**(4) Use of automated caries detection devices and materials to gather information for diagnosis by the dentist.**

**(5) Obtain intraoral images for computer-aided design (CAD), milled restorations.**

(6) Pulp vitality testing and recording of findings.

(7) Place bases, liners, and **bonding agents**.

**(8) Chemically prepare teeth for bonding.**

**(9) Place, adjust, and finish direct provisional restorations.**

(10) Fabricate, adjust, cement, and remove indirect provisional restorations, **including stainless steel crowns when used as a provisional restoration.**

(11) Place post-extraction dressings **after inspection of the surgical site by the supervising licensed dentist.**

(12) Place periodontal dressings.

(13) Dry endodontically treated canals using absorbent paper points.

**(14) Adjust dentures extra-orally.**

**(15) Remove excess cement from surfaces of teeth with a hand instrument.**

(16) Polish coronal surfaces of the teeth.

(17) Place ligature ties and archwires.

- (18) Remove orthodontic bands.
- (19) All duties that the board may prescribe by regulation.

**(b) A registered dental assistant may only perform the following additional duties if he or she has completed a board-approved registered dental assistant educational program in those duties, or if he or she has provided evidence, satisfactory to the board, of having completed a board-approved course in those duties.**

- (1) Remove excess cement with an ultrasonic scaler from supragingival surfaces of teeth undergoing orthodontic treatment.
- (2) The allowable duties of an orthodontic assistant permit holder as specified in Section 1750.3. A registered dental assistant shall not be required to complete further instruction in the duties of placing ligature ties and archwires, removing orthodontic bands, and removing excess cement from tooth surfaces with a hand instrument.
- (3) The allowable duties of a dental sedation assistant permit holder as specified in Section 1750.5.
- (4) The application of pit and fissure sealants.
- (c) Except as provided in Section 1777, the supervising licensed dentist shall be responsible for determining whether each authorized procedure performed by a registered dental assistant should be performed under general or direct supervision.
- (d) This section shall become operative on January 1, 2010.

#### **Orthodontic Assistant Permit and Dental Sedation Assistant Permit**

Existing RDAs will be allowed to apply for a permit as an Orthodontic Assistant (OA) and/or Dental Sedation Assistant (DSA). RDAs will be allowed to continue to perform the overlapping OA duties that they are currently allowed to perform without seeking an OA permit (placing ligature ties and archwires, removing orthodontic bands, and removing excess cement from tooth surfaces with a hand instrument), and RDAs applying for an OA permit will not be required to complete further training in such duties.

An RDA may apply for an OA permit or a DSA permit, or both, by completing the applicable board-approved course, and passing a written examination.

An RDA with permits in either orthodontic assisting or dental sedation assisting shall be referred to as an "RDA with orthodontic assistant permit," or "RDA with dental sedation assistant permit," as applicable. Completion of the CE requirements by an RDA who also holds a permit will fulfill the CE for the permit or permits.

**d. OA Duties.** B&P Section 1750.3 specifies the duties of an OA as:

1750.3. A person holding an orthodontic assistant permit pursuant to Section 1750.2 may perform the following duties **under the direct supervision of a supervising licensed dentist:**

- (a) All duties that a dental assistant is allowed to perform.
- (b) Prepare teeth for bonding, and select, preposition, and cure orthodontic brackets after their position has been approved by the licensed dentist.
- (c) Remove only orthodontic brackets and attachments with removal of the bonding material by the supervising licensed dentist.

- (d) Size, fit, and cement orthodontic bands.
- (e) Remove orthodontic bands and remove excess cement from supragingival surfaces of teeth with a hand instrument.
- (f) Place and ligate archwires.
- (g) Remove excess cement with an ultrasonic scaler from supragingival surfaces of teeth undergoing orthodontic treatment.
- (h) Any additional duties that the board may prescribe by regulation.

**e. DSA Duties.** B&P Section 1750.5 specifies the duties of a DSA as:

1750.5. A person holding a dental sedation assistant permit pursuant to Section 1750.4 may perform the following duties **under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist or other licensed health care professional authorized to administer conscious sedation or general anesthesia in the dental office:**

- (a) All duties that a dental assistant is allowed to perform.
- (b) Monitor patients undergoing conscious sedation or general anesthesia utilizing data from noninvasive instrumentation such as pulse oximeters, electrocardiograms, capnography, blood pressure, pulse, and respiration rate monitoring devices. Evaluation of the condition of a sedated patient shall remain the responsibility of the dentist or other licensed health care professional authorized to administer conscious sedation or general anesthesia, who shall be at the patient's chairside while conscious sedation or general anesthesia is being administered.
- (c) Drug identification and draw, limited to identification of appropriate medications, ampule and vial preparation, and withdrawing drugs of correct amount as verified by the supervising licensed dentist.
- (d) Add drugs, medications, and fluids to intravenous lines using a syringe, provided that a supervising licensed dentist is present at the patient's chairside, limited to determining patency of intravenous line, selection of injection port, syringe insertion into injection port, occlusion of intravenous line and blood aspiration, line release and injection of drugs for appropriate time interval. The exception to this duty is that the initial dose of a drug or medication shall be administered by the supervising licensed dentist.
- (e) Removal of intravenous lines.
- (f) Any additional duties that the board may prescribe by regulation.
- (g) The duties listed in subdivisions (b) to (e), inclusive, may not be performed in any setting other than a dental office or dental clinic.

## **5. Registered Dental Assistants in Extended Functions (EFs)**

**a. Duties.** B&P Section 1753.3 places into statute most of the duties that regulations currently allow EFs to perform, with the addition of certain duties, and certain duties moved to other categories. Following are all of the duties that EFs licensed after January 1, 2010, will be allowed to perform, with new duties noted in italics:

1753.5. (a) A registered dental assistant in extended functions licensed on or after January 1, 2010, is authorized to perform all duties and procedures that a registered dental assistant is authorized to perform as specified in and limited by Section 1752.4, and those duties that the board may prescribe by regulation.

(b) A registered dental assistant in extended functions licensed on or after January 1, 2010, is authorized to perform the following additional procedures **under direct supervision and pursuant to the order, control, and full professional responsibility of a licensed dentist**:

*(1) Conduct preliminary evaluation of the patient's oral health, including, but not limited to, charting, intraoral and extra-oral evaluation of soft tissue, classifying occlusion, and myofunctional evaluation.*

*(2) Perform oral health assessments in school-based, community health project settings under the direction of a dentist, registered dental hygienist, or registered dental hygienist in alternative practice.*

(3) Cord retraction of gingiva for impression procedures.

(4) Size and fit endodontic master points *and accessory points*.

*(5) Cement endodontic master points and accessory points.*

(6) Take final impressions for permanent indirect restorations.

*(7) Take final impressions for tooth-borne removable prosthesis.*

*(8) Polish and contour existing amalgam restorations.*

*(9) Place, contour, finish, and adjust all direct restorations.*

*(10) Adjust and cement permanent indirect restorations.*

(11) Other procedures authorized by regulations adopted by the board.

(c) All procedures required to be performed under direct supervision shall be checked and approved by the supervising licensed dentist prior to the patient's dismissal from the office.

**b. Existing EFs.** B&P Section 1753.4 requires EFs who are licensed prior to January 1, 2010, and who wish to perform the new duties, to complete a board-approved course in all of the new duties, and complete specified examinations.

### **1017. Units Required for Renewal of License.**

Effective January 1, 2006 as a condition of renewal, licensees are required to complete continuing education units for license renewal in each of the following subjects: (1) infection control and (2) California Dental Practice Act and attending regulations. Dentists and Dental Auxiliaries will be required to complete a minimum of 80% of their required units for license renewal in Category I subjects including two (2) units of continuing education in infection control and two (2) units in the California Dental Practice Act, and no more than 20% of their required units in Category II subjects. The mandatory units will count toward the total units required to renew a license; however, failure to complete the mandatory courses will result in non-renewal of a license.

(b) Every RDA/RDAEF licensee shall accumulate 25 continuing education units during the biennial license renewal period and shall assure the board that he/she will accumulate such units during the succeeding two year renewal period; except that those new licensees who have been issued a license to practice for a period less than 2 years shall commence accumulating continuing education credits with the next biennial renewal period occurring after the issuance of a license to practice. As part of the continuing education requirements, each licensee shall complete, at least once every two years, a course in basic life support approved by the American Red Cross or the American Heart Association.