

Government Relations Report – May 2017

RDA Practical Exam Suspension

At a special meeting in closed session on April 6, the Dental Board voted to suspend the RDA Practical Exam. Sarah Wallace, Assistant Executive Director of the DBC joined us at our Annual Conference April 21, 2017 to discuss this as well as other topics.

Why was the Exam suspended? Following the Sunset Review process, it was determined that there were problems with the exam and language was put into place that allowed the Dental Board to suspend the Practical Exam until July 1, 2017. The exam continued, but the Board studied the exam via the Occupational Analysis. It was determined that the exam was needed and should continue. Despite a candidate guide, the pass rates did not improve. The exam continued to be studied as part of the process, which included evaluation of the testing sites and stakeholder meetings. At that time it was recommended to the Board that the practical exam was no longer a valid measurement of competency of applicants fairly and recommended immediate suspension. The Dental Board took action.

The suspension of the RDA Exam will continue until July 1, 2017. Between now and July 1, 2017 an applicant can receive their RDA license by meeting all the requirements (as before) and passing the Law & Ethics and Written Exams.

No practical is required at this time.

However, on July 1, the Board will be unable to legally issue RDA licenses unless legislation is passed to push back the suspension date. Work is currently being done on the urgency legislation, which is AB1732. If the urgency bill is passed, then RDA licenses will continue to be issued after July 1 upon successful completion of all the requirements and passing the Law & Ethics and Written Exams. If the urgency bill is not passed before July 1, no RDA licenses will be issued until it is passed or until OPES and the Board have a suitable replacement for the current Practical Exam. A new application will be on the DBC website for RDA applicants. An FAQ is being developed to help answer questions as a result of this decision, so check the Dental Board website.

The process to identify alternatives to the existing RDA Practical Exam is underway, which they anticipate to be a two-year process, taking it into January 2020. OPES will continue to investigate the options, bringing back information at the August 4th Board meeting. However, the Practical Exam will not come back in its current form; many alternatives are being explored. If you have opinions, questions or comments, let us know at info@cdaaweb.org. All are welcome to attend the Board meetings.