

Chapter 5. Dental Assistants

§501. Authorized Duties

A. A dental assistant is one who is employed by and works in the office of a licensed, practicing dentist and performs the duties authorized by the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry under the direct on-premises supervision, direction and responsibility of the dentist.

B. A dental assistant may only perform the following under the direct on-premises supervision of the dentist who employs her or him as directly ordered by the dentist:

1. serve as the dentist's chair side assistant;
2. take and develop dental radiographs and intra-oral photographs;
3. take and record pulse, blood pressure and temperature;
4. apply:
 - a. non-aerosol topical anesthetics;
 - b. topical fluorides following prophylaxis by a dentist or dental hygienist;
 - c. desensitizing agents;
 - d. non-endodontic oxygenating agents;
5. chart existing restorations and missing teeth, floss teeth and make preliminary inspections of the mouth and teeth with a mouth mirror and floss only;
6. give intra-oral instructions and demonstrations on oral hygiene procedures;
7. receive removable prostheses for cleaning or repair work;
8. remove cement from dental restorations and appliances, with hand instruments, limited to the clinical crown;
9. make dental plaque smears;
10. place or remove preformed crowns or bands for determining size only when recommended by the dentist and only under his or her supervision;
11. place or remove ligatures, cut and tuck ligatures, remove tension devices and any loose or broken bands or arch wires;
12. place a removable retaining device in the mouth of a patient;
13. remove final impressions;
14. apply and remove rubber dams;
15. make preliminary study model impressions and opposing model impressions;
16. fabricate and remove interim crowns or bridges (interim meaning temporary while permanent restoration is being fabricated);
17. condition teeth prior to placement of orthodontics bands or brackets;
18. place or remove temporary orthodontic separating devices;
19. remove sutures, post-extraction dressing and surgical ligature ties.
20. Exception: A dental assistant who has been employed by a licensed, practicing dentist and has worked as a dental assistant prior to July 30, 1992, may continue performing the following duties without registering as an expanded duty dental assistant. These duties must also be performed under the direct, on-premises supervision of the dentist:
 - a. apply cavity liners, excluding capping of exposed pulpal tissue;
 - b. place, wedge or remove matrices for restoration by the dentist;
 - c. place and remove periodontal dressings;
 - d. place and remove retraction cords.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Human Resources, Board of Dentistry (October 1970), amended LR 2:186 (June 1976), LR 7:586 (November 1981), amended by Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 15:965 (November 1989), LR 16:505 (June 1990), LR 19:205 (February 1993), LR 29.

§502. Authorized Duties of Expanded Duty Dental Assistants

A. A person licensed to practice dentistry in the state of Louisiana may delegate to any expanded duty dental assistant any chairside dental act that said dentist deems reasonable, using sound professional judgment. Such act must be performed properly and safely on the patient and must be reversible in nature. Furthermore, the act must be under the direct supervision of the treating dentist. However, a dentist may not delegate to an expanded duty dental assistant:

1. periodontal screening and probing, or subgingival exploration for hard and soft deposits and sulcular irrigations;
2. the removal of calculus, deposits or accretions from the natural and restored surfaces of teeth or dental implants in the human mouth using hand, ultrasonic, sonic, or air polishing instruments;

3. root planing or the smoothing and polishing of roughened root surfaces using hand, ultrasonic, or sonic instruments;
4. placement and removal of antimicrobial agents;
5. comprehensive examination or diagnosis and treatment planning;
6. a surgical or cutting procedure on hard or soft tissue including laser and micro abrasion reduction of tooth material;
7. the prescription of a drug, medication, or work authorization;
8. the taking of an impression for a final fixed or removable restoration or prosthesis;
9. the final placement and intraoral adjustment of a fixed appliance;
10. the final placement and intraoral or extraoral adjustment of a removable appliance;
11. the making of any intraoral occlusal adjustment;
12. the performance of direct pulp capping or pulpotomy;
13. the placement or finishing of any final restoration;
14. the final placement of orthodontic bands or brackets except in indirect bonding procedures in which the dentist has either performed the final placement of the brackets on the model or when the dentist has written a detailed prescription to the laboratory for placement of the bracket;
15. the administration of a local anesthetic, parenteral, Intravenous (IV), inhalation sedative agent or any general anesthetic agent.

B. The delegating dentist shall remain responsible for any dental act performed by an expanded duty dental assistant.

C. Certified expanded duty dental assistants may not hold themselves out to the public as authorized to practice dentistry or dental hygiene.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 19:205 (February 1993), amended LR 21:569 (June 1995), LR 22:1217 (December 1996), LR 24:1115 (June 1998), LR 25:1476 (August 1999), LR 26:1612 (August 2000), repromulgated, LR 27:1894 (November 2001).

§503. Guide to Curriculum Development for Expanded Duty Dental Assistants

A. Cognitive Objectives. Before becoming registered to perform expanded duty dental assistant functions, dental assistants should be tested on the reasons for doing these procedures, the criteria for correct performance of these procedures, and the effects of improper performance of these procedures. The dental assistant shall be familiar with the state Dental Practice Act and the rules and regulations governing dental auxiliaries. This testing shall be included within at least 30 hours of instruction.

B. The following is a model outline for the expanded duty dental assistant course. The hours are to be allocated by the instructor in accordance with current law:

1. introduction: what is an expanded duty dental assistant?;
2. jurisprudence: legal duties of auxiliaries; limitation of auxiliary services; responsibility of dentists for all service provided under dentist's supervision; responsibility of auxiliaries to perform only those functions that are legally delegated; penalties for violation of Dental Practice Act; and mechanism to report to the board violations of dentists and/or auxiliaries;
3. infection control and prevention of disease transmission; dental assistants' responsibilities in upholding universal barrier techniques; and OSHA rules;
4. handling dental emergencies;
5. charting;
6. oral anatomy; morphology of the teeth; and medical and dental history for the dentist's review (vital signs, drug evaluation, medical laboratory reports, ascertaining the patient's chief dental problem);
7. overview of dental materials: cavity liners, temporary crown materials, periodontal dressings, post-surgical packs and acid-etch materials;
8. coronal polishing: rationale, materials, techniques and contraindications;
9. lab on coronal polishing and performance evaluation; half of the lab period shall be spent practicing on typodonts while the second half shall be spent practicing on partners;
10. lecture on use of gingival retraction cords; types of cords placement; and removal of cords;
11. lab on placement and removal of retraction cords; and performance evaluation-lab period shall be practicing on mannequins;
12. lab on placement of cavity liners; placement of temporary restorations; fabrications and placement of temporary crowns; placement of periodontal dressings; placement of post-surgical packs; performance of acid-etch techniques; placement and removal of wedges and matrices; and performance evaluation;

13. lecture on monitoring nitrous oxide/oxygen (N₂O/O₂) sedation;
14. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Course "C," Basic Life Support for Health Care Providers as defined by the American Heart Association or the Red Cross Professional Rescue Course; this course may count for three hours of instruction provided this course has been successfully completed within six months prior to certification;
15. clinical exam instructions;
16. clinical and written exams;
17. lecture on the placement of pit and fissure sealants;
18. Lab on placement of pit and fissure sealant; performance evaluation lab shall be practicing on typodonts.

C. All applicants for expanded duty dental assistant certificate confirmation must successfully complete a course in x-ray function and safety approved by the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry. Any dental assistant who may have been grandfathered in 1984 with the amendment to R.S. 37:792 must still take a radiology course as described herein in order to seek the certificate confirmation as an expanded duty dental assistant.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R. S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 19:205 (February 1993), amended LR 22:22 (January 1996), LR 24:1115 (June 1998), LR 26:1613 (August 2000), repromulgated, LR 27:1894 (November 2001).

§504. Authorized Providers of Instruction for Expanded Duty Dental Assistant Courses

A. Louisiana State University School of Dentistry and University of Louisiana at Monroe School of Dental Hygiene; or

B. Louisiana state schools of allied health science including vocational technical schools in affiliation with Louisiana State University School of Dentistry and University of Louisiana Monroe School of Dental Hygiene; or

C. Designated dentists, and/or dental hygienists, and/or EDDAs under the direction of the institutions listed in §504.A and B provided they have been legally trained to serve as instructors and have had a minimum of five years experience as a dental assistant; or

D. The board reserves the right to randomly monitor any and all courses given under Chapter 5.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R. S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 19:205 (February 1993), amended LR 25:510 (March 1999), LR 28:1778 (August 2002).

§505. Expanded Duty Dental Assistant Certificate Confirmation Fee and Reconfirmations

A. Expanded duty dental assistants shall be charged an initial certification confirmation fee. A certificate reconfirmation fee shall be renewed no more than once in every three calendar years. Said fees shall be determined according to Chapter 4 of these rules.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 19:206 (February 1993).

§507. High School Diploma Requirement

A. Effective January 1, 1998, all applicants for expanded duty dental assistant certificate confirmation shall present satisfactory documentation evidencing their graduation from an accredited high school or receipt of a general equivalency diploma (GED).

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 24:1116 (June 1998).

§508. Dental Assistants Graduating from Dental Assisting Schools Approved by the Commission on Dental Accreditation

A. Since the inception of R.S. 37:751 (A) (6) defining an expanded duty dental assistant as a graduate from a dental assisting program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association, many changes in technology and dental materials have taken place, and in the interests of the protection of the public those persons seeking expanded duty dental assistant status and who have graduated from CODA accredited schools, must comply with the following:

1. Present satisfactory documentation from their dental assisting school evidencing training in all functions which expanded duty dental assistants are allowed to perform. If their training is inadequate, they must undergo remediation in a program approved by the board; or
2. Complete a full expanded duty dental assistant program approved by the Louisiana State Board of Dentistry.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:760 (8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR 28:1778 (August 2002).

§ 512. Sanctions

A. Any dental assistant or expanded duty dental assistant who administers nitrous oxide inhalation anesthesia is subject to severe sanctions for practicing dentistry without a license. The dentist under whose instructions he or she performed the procedure will be subject to severe sanctions up to and including revocation of his or her dental license.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 37:760(8).

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Health and Hospitals, Board of Dentistry, LR27:1892 (November 2001).