

# PENNSYLVANIA STATE BOARD OF DENTISTRY



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## New Regulations for Dental Hygienists

New regulations published in the [Pennsylvania Bulletin](#) in final form on Dec. 12 revise the scope of practice for Pennsylvania-licensed dental hygienists, including adding authority to administer local anesthesia. The new regulations also provide for a new class of certification - public health dental hygiene practitioner.

A public health dental hygiene practitioner may perform dental hygiene services without the supervision of a dentist in the following practice settings:

- All public and private educational institutions that provide elementary and secondary instruction to school aged children,
- Correctional facilities,
- Healthcare facilities,
- Personal care homes,
- Domiciliary care facilities,
- Older adult daily living centers,
- Continuing-care provider facilities,
- Federally qualified health centers,
- Public or private institutions under the jurisdiction of a federal, state or local agency, and
- Free and reduced-fee nonprofit health clinics.

A licensed dental hygienist who desires to obtain certification as a public health dental hygiene practitioner must submit an application, pay the application fee, meet the qualifications and have the required certification issued by the board.

To qualify, candidates for certification as a public health dental hygiene practitioner must:

- Hold an active license in good standing to practice as a dental hygienist in Pennsylvania,
- Provide to the board a certification statement signed by a licensed dentist verifying that the dental hygienist has completed 3,600 hours of practice as a licensed dental hygienist under the supervision of a licensed dentist; and

- Provide documentation demonstrating that the dental hygienist has obtained professional liability insurance, or is a named insured covered by a group policy in the minimum amount of \$1 million per occurrence and \$3 million per annual aggregate.

The new local anesthesia authority includes local infiltration anesthesia and intraoral nerve block anesthesia limited to the 2nd (maxillary) and 3rd (mandibular) divisions of the trigeminal nerve, performed in a dental office. To obtain the authority licensees must submit the application, pay the application fee, meet the [qualifications](#) and have the required permit issued by the board.

Licensed dental hygienists practicing in Pennsylvania and their employing dentists are encouraged to review these new regulations revising the scope of practice for dental hygienists. Employers are expected to verify that all licensed personnel hold the appropriate license, certificate and/or permit issued by the board. License status may be verified on the Board's License Verification Web site at [www.licensepa.state.pa.us](http://www.licensepa.state.pa.us).

Application forms and requirements to obtain the certificate to practice as a public health dental hygiene practitioner and/or the certificate for the administration of local anesthesia by dental hygienists are available on the board's Web site at [www.dos.state.pa.us/dent](http://www.dos.state.pa.us/dent) under "Licensure Information." Questions may be addressed to the board's e-mail at [st-dentistry@state.pa.us](mailto:st-dentistry@state.pa.us) or 717-783-7162.

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