

Resolution No.	7	New <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Substitute <input type="checkbox"/>	Amendment <input type="checkbox"/>
Submitted By:	Council on Dental Practice			
Date Submitted:	April 11, 2025	Reference Committee <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Direct to House <input type="checkbox"/>	
Total Financial Implication:	\$ none			
Amount One-time	\$ none	Amount On-going	\$ none	

On-the-Job Trained Dental Assistant Tier

Background: The On-the-Job Trained Dental Assistant Tier resolution was submitted to the NYSDA Board by the NYSDA Workforce Shortage Task Force in 2024. The Board referred this proposal to the Council on Dental Practice (and Dental Education and Licensure) for their recommendations.

For many years, there has been a severe shortage of dental support staff in New York State. This shortage has recently reached crisis levels. Ratios of registered dental assistants (RDAs) to licensed dentists are: 1:12 across the state. The actual shortage of RDAs is estimated to be above 20,000 people, based on Bureau of Labor Statistics numbers.

The number of RDAs has been dropping over the last several years. As of January 1, 2025, according to statistics published by the New York State Education Department Office of the Professions (<https://www.op.nysed.gov/professions/registered-dental-assistants/license-statistics>), there were only 1,501 RDAs in the state for 18,371 licensed dentists.

The current RDA law has been in effect since 1995. In the nearly 30 years since the law's inception, there has been no significant increase in the number of licensed RDAs. Additionally, there are not enough Dental Board-approved dental assisting schools in the state, and several schools are discontinuing their assisting programs.

Research conducted by NYCDS members shows New York is a significant outlier among states regarding credentialing requirements for RDAs. This is anti-competitive and reduces the portability of licensure for workers; it may discourage assistants from moving into the state. This lack of portability is contributing to the workforce shortage and will continue to do so if no changes are made.

The lack of expanded function for RDAs also reduces the incentive for people to pursue certification. To encourage growth in the number of RDAs, the state should change the scope of duties to include expanded function.

Data from New York Dental Board disciplinary actions indicate public safety is not compromised when properly on-the-job-trained assistants perform assisting duties under direct supervision of licensed dentists. In fact, changing the current law will improve public safety since more dental assistants will be required to take infection-control courses. The potential pool of assistants will immediately increase exponentially with the creation of a new tier of dental assistants. This will also increase the pool of available hygienists in general dental offices, as fewer hygienists will do the work of dental assistants. Other states with similar regulatory environments to that of New York, such as Massachusetts and California, have a tier of assistant similar to what is being proposed here, one that does not require extensive formal education or passing of lengthy and expensive board exams.

This proposal is politically viable in the near future given the minimum state budget implications. It is precisely crisis situations like this where dentists look to their professional organization to act nimbly and provide prompt and meaningful solutions. Addressing this workforce shortage with urgency now--as opposed to tabling the discussion and settling for low-impact incremental change--is an opportunity for NYSDA to prove the value of membership to current members and nonmember dentists alike.

The first two resolving clauses were created by the Workforce Shortage Task Force. After review by the CDP, it was decided to add the third resolving clause and send it to the NYSDA House for consideration.

Accordingly, the following resolution is being submitted for consideration:

7. Resolved, that NYSDA support and request the Education Law be amended to create the tier of On-the-Job Trained Dental Assistants and that the "Definition and Practice of Registered Dental Assisting" be modified accordingly as needed. The scope of practice for these On-the-Job Trained Dental Assistants will include low-risk remediable tasks that assistants may be trained to perform safely by licensed dentists, under direct supervision, including the following:

1. Taking 2D and 3D photography of dentition
2. Placing, wedging, and removing matrix bands
3. Placing and removing rubber dams or other isolation devices
4. Taking impressions
5. Applying topical fluoride and other topical agents such as benzocaine
6. Preparing teeth with etchant in preparation for restorative or orthodontic procedures
7. Light-curing composite
8. Taking dental radiographs
9. Tying and untying orthodontic ligatures, separators, and placing pre-

formed arch wires; pre-fitting orthodontic bands prior to final placement
by the dentist

10. Performing any other remediable procedures that the Board deems
appropriate in the future; and be it further

Resolved, that On-the-Job Trained Dental Assistants be required to
complete a New York State Education Department-approved infection control
course every three years; completion of this course will be tracked and
verified by the employer dentist(s); and be it further

Resolved, that NYSDA supports the State of New York changing the scope of
practice for registered dental assistants to include expanded function services.

Board Comments: The Board supports developing certification for dental assistants via on-the-
job training. We feel it should help elevate these colleagues within our members' offices and
make their offices more productive and more rewarding for the assistants.

BOARD RECOMMENDATION: VOTE YES

name	yes	no	abstai n	abse nt	name	yes	no	abstai n	abse nt	name	yes	no	abstai n	abse nt
Casper-Klock	x				Greenberg	x				Korkosz	x			
Cuomo	x				Hills	x				Miller	x			
Demas	x				Jackson	x				Rothas	X			
Edwards	x				Jacobo	x				Samuels	x			
Gamache	x				Jonke	x				Scharoff	x			
Giordano			x							Stacy	X			
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