

Dental Assistant Duties - Effective January 1, 2010

(New duties in **bold**, expanded duties are shown as underlined)

A Dental Assistant may perform "basic supportive dental procedures": those procedures that have technically elementary characteristics, are completely reversible, and are unlikely to precipitate potentially hazardous conditions for the patient being treated.

General supervision:

1. Extra-oral duties or procedures specified by the supervising dentist, provided that these duties or procedures meet the definition of a basic supportive procedure.
2. Operate dental radiography equipment for the purpose of oral radiography if the dental assistant has complied with the requirements of Section 1656. **(previously allowed only under direct supervision)**
3. **Perform intraoral and extraoral photography.**

Direct supervision:

1. Examine orthodontic appliances.
2. **Take facebow transfers and bite registrations. (previous RDA duty)**
3. **Place patient monitoring sensors.**
4. **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.**
5. **Remove periodontal dressings. (current RDA duty)**
6. Apply nonaerosol and noncaustic topical agents.
7. Apply topical fluoride.*
8. **Take intraoral impressions for all nonprosthodontic appliances. (previous RDA duty)**
9. Place and remove rubber dams **or other isolation devices.** **(previous duty, expanded)**
10. Place, wedge, and remove matrices for restorative procedures.
11. Remove post-extraction dressings after inspection of the surgical site by the supervising dentist.
12. Perform measurements for the purposes of orthodontic treatment.
13. Cure restorative or orthodontic materials in operative site with a light-curing device.
14. **Place** and remove orthodontic separators. **(previous RDA duty, expanded)**
15. Remove ligature ties and archwires.
16. After adjustment by the dentist, examine **and seat removable orthodontic appliances** and deliver care instructions to the patient. **(previous duty, expanded)**
17. Remove sutures after inspection of the site by the dentist.
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.

Under RDHAP Supervision:

1. Intraoral retraction and suctioning.

Duties do not include:

1. Diagnosis and comprehensive treatment planning.
2. Placing, finishing, or removing permanent restorations.
3. Surgery or cutting on hard and soft tissue including, but not limited to, the removal of teeth and the cutting and suturing of soft tissue.
4. Prescribing medication.
5. Starting or adjusting local or general anesthesia or oral or parenteral conscious sedation, except for the administration of nitrous oxide and oxygen, whether administered alone or in combination with each other and except as otherwise provided by law.
6. Any duty or procedure that only an orthodontic assistant permit holder, dental sedation assistant permit holder, registered dental assistant, registered dental assistant in extended functions, registered dental hygienist, or registered dental hygienist in alternative practice is allowed to perform.

*Effective January 10, 2010, when operating in a school-based setting or a public health program created or administered by a federal, state, county, or local governmental entity pursuant to Sections 104762 and 104830 of the Health and Safety Code, a dental assistant may apply topical fluoride under the general direction of a licensed dentist or physician.