

Dental

*Dental Assistant, Dental Laboratory Technician,
Dental Hygienist, Dentist*



Dental Assistant, Dental Laboratory Technician

Dental Assistant

JOB DESCRIPTION

Dental assistants perform a wide range of tasks that may be interpersonal, technical, and administrative. They expose and develop X-rays, coordinate and implement infection control protocols, take diagnostic impressions, maintain inventory control, perform numerous office management tasks, and assist the dentist with equipment at chair side. Dental assistants often interact with patients and may provide preventive dental instruction and tend to the patient's comfort.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Chair Side Assistant – works directly with the dentist in the treatment area.

Receptionist/Office Assistant – performs duties associated with the business and front desk operation of the dental office.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Dentists employ the majority of dental assistants in private or group dental practices. Other work locations

include dental schools, public health clinics, civil and military services, hospitals, and insurance companies. Dental assistants work on a team with dental hygienists and dentists and often work close to 40 hours a week.

ANNUAL WAGES

National\$30,576

2002 Survey of Dental Practice, Employment of Dental Practice Personnel. American Dental Association.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Formal programs are offered at technical colleges. It is highly recommended that individuals check with the school for specific admission requirements. Programs vary in length from three to nine months. Individuals receive either a certificate or diploma upon completion of the program. Individuals who complete a dental assistant program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation are eligible to take the Dental Assisting National Board's (DANB) examination and become a Certified Dental Assistant. Individuals are also eligible to take the DANB exam if

they have two years of full-time work experience as a dental assistant. To become a licensed dental assistant in New York State, individuals must meet New York State licensing requirements. Detailed information for New York State licensing requirements can be found online at: www.labor.state.ny.us/business_ny/employer_responsibilities/olcny/menu.htm.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Dental Assistants Association
American Dental Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association
Dental Assisting National Board
National Dental Association
New York State Dental Association

For professional organization address and phone information see Appendix B.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

For a listing of educational programs in New York State for Dental see page 12.

Dental Laboratory Technician

JOB DESCRIPTION

Dental laboratory technicians, also known as dental technicians, fill dentist prescriptions, which can include making models and casts of teeth to construct replicas of teeth in the form of dentures, bridgework, or other dental prosthetics.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Dental Ceramist – applies porcelain and acrylic paste to form crowns, bridges, and other dental prosthetics.

Denture Contour Wire Specialist – makes and repairs braces and retainers.

Denture Finisher – polishes, cleans, and adjusts dentures and other dental work.

Denture Model Maker – forms various molds from dental impressions and models.

Denture Waxer – forms contour molds for casting of dentures and bridgework.

Voluntary certification is available in crowns and bridges, ceramics, complete dentures, partial dentures, and orthodontics.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Most dental laboratory technicians work in commercial dental laboratories, which tend to have few employees and are privately owned and operated. Other employment opportunities may be in larger laboratories, hospitals, dentists' offices, and in self-employment. Technicians can expect to work at least 40 hours a week, while the self-employed may put in more hours.

ANNUAL WAGES

National\$29,328

New York State\$33,779

National and New York State median annual earnings for 2003. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

Training in dental laboratory technology is available in accredited programs at community colleges, vocational-technical institutes, or the armed forces. Graduates of these programs usually need an additional two to five years of on-the-job training. Many dental laboratories will offer on-the-job training to interested candidates. Voluntary certification is available through the National Board of Certification of the National Association of Dental Laboratories.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Dental Association
National Association of Dental Laboratories
National Board for Certification in
Dental Technology

For professional organization address and phone information see Appendix B.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

For a listing of educational programs in New York State for Dental see page 12.

Dental Hygienist, Dentist

Dental Hygienist

JOB DESCRIPTION

Registered dental hygienists are licensed professionals who provide a variety of oral health services. They scale and polish teeth; apply cavity-preventive agents such as fluoride and sealant; expose, process, and interpret X-rays; monitor patients' medical and oral health; examine teeth and oral cavities; place temporary fillings and periodontal dressings; remove sutures; polish metal restorations; teach proper brushing and flossing techniques; and design and implement community or school oral health programs. In some states, including New York State, registered dental hygienists administer local anesthetics and perform other periodontal procedures after acquiring additional education. Additional duties may include placing and carving filling materials.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Hygienists commonly work in private dental offices,

although there are employment opportunities in public health, schools, clinics, and hospitals. An attractive feature of this career is its adaptability to any lifestyle. Some dental hygienists work weekend and evening hours, if days are inconvenient. Working part-time in more than one office is also not uncommon.

ANNUAL WAGES

National	\$56,368
New York State	\$56,930

National and New York State median annual earnings for 2003. U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

An associate's degree is sufficient for practice in a private dental office. A bachelor's or master's degree usually is required for research, teaching, or clinical practice in public or school health programs. Some dental hygiene programs prefer applicants who have completed at least one year of college. However,

requirements vary from one school to another. Dental hygienists must be licensed by the state in which they practice. To become a licensed dental hygienist in New York State, individuals must meet New York State licensing requirements. Detailed information for New York State licensing requirements can be found online at: www.labor.state.ny.us/business_ny/employer_responsibilities/olcny/menu.htm.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Association of Dental Examiners
American Dental Association
American Dental Hygienists' Association
Dental Hygienists' Association of the State of New York
New York State Dental Association

For professional organization address and phone information see Appendix B.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

For a listing of educational programs in New York State for Dental see page 12.

Dentist

JOB DESCRIPTION

Dentists diagnose, prevent, and treat problems of the teeth, gums and tissues of the mouth. They examine patients to determine conditions and diseases using X-rays and a variety of dental instruments. They clean, fill, extract and replace teeth; provide preventive dental services such as instruction on proper diet, brushing and flossing; place protective plastic sealants on teeth and straighten teeth; and perform corrective surgery of the gums and supportive bones to treat gum diseases.

New technologies such as digital radiography and laser systems are involved in dentistry today. Dentists also teach future dentists and dental hygienists and perform research directed to improve oral health and develop new treatment methods.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

Endodontics – treat inner tooth structures and perform root canals.

Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology – perform tests to diagnose and study oral diseases.

Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology – produce and interpret images and data using various types of radiant energy to diagnose and treat disease and conditions of the mouth and jaw.

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery – perform surgery on the mouth and jaw.

Orthodontics – treat abnormalities in teeth, jaws, and structure of the mouth by prescribing and fitting braces, retainers and other appliances.

Pediatric Dentistry – provide dental care for infants, children, and adolescents.

Periodontics – prevent, diagnose and treat diseases supporting tissues of the teeth.

Prosthodontics – restore and replace missing teeth.

Public Health Dentistry – assess dental needs of the community and direct the dental health programs of public agencies.

WORK ENVIRONMENT

Most dentists are in private practice and usually work with a dental hygienist, dental assistant, or nurse. Dentists also may be a part of a dental or medical group, or they may work in a hospital, public health department, or the military. Dentists usually work four or five days a week during regular business hours, and a few work evenings and weekends to accommodate patients. Most dentists become general practitioners, handling a variety of dental needs. However some dentists obtain additional training in one of the listed specialties.

ANNUAL WAGES

NationalGeneral Dentist	\$173,140
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2002 Survey of Dental Practice, Employment of Dental Practice Personnel. American Dental Association.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

A college undergraduate degree is recommended in preparation for dental school. Students wishing to enter dental school must take the Dental Admissions Test (DAT). Their Grade Point Average (GPA) as well as the results from the DAT, information from letters of evaluation and other information will be considered. Dental school lasts three to four years. Upon completion of an accredited dental school, students receive the degree Doctor of Dental Surgery (DDS) or Doctor of Dental Medicine (DMD). Specialization may require two to four more additional years of study and additional exams, depending on the state of practice, and specialization choice. To become a licensed dentist in New York State, individuals must meet New York State licensing requirements. Detailed information for New York State licensing requirements can be found online at: www.labor.state.ny.us/business_ny/employer_responsibilities/olcny/menu.htm.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Association of Dental Examiners
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
New York State Dental Association
Northeast Regional Board of Dental Examiners

For professional organization address and phone information see Appendix B.

EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

For a listing of educational programs in New York State for Dental see page 12.

New York State Educational Institutions

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS WITH PROGRAMS IN DENTAL

(For New York State educational institution address and phone information, see Appendix A.)

Broome Community College
 Columbia University in the City of New York
 City University of New York Hostos
 Community College
 City University of New York New York City
 Technical College
 Erie Community College-North Campus
 Erie Community College-South Campus
 Hudson Valley Community College
 Madison Oneida BOCES-Continuing Education
 Mandl School
 Monroe Community College
 New York School for Medical and Dental Assistants
 New York University
 Niagara County Community College
 Onondaga Community College
 Orange County Community College
 Oswego County BOCES
 Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
 State University of New York at Buffalo
 State University of New York at Stony Brook
 State University of New York College of Technology
 at Farmingdale
 Ulster County BOCES School of Practical Nursing
 University of Rochester

Source: U.S. Department of Education – Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (www.nces.ed.gov/ipeds/) and the New York State Area Health Education Center System Data Resource Center, September 2003.