



**South Carolina Board of Dentistry**

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**Summary of Procedures that can be delegated to  
Dental Hygienists, Expanded Duty Dental Assistants, and Dental Assistants.**

*Please note that this summary is provided for information only. Unless otherwise specifically stated, the information contained herein is made available to the public for informational purposes only. No legal liability or responsibility is assumed for the accuracy, completeness, or usefulness of the information presented. Please refer to the Dental Practice Act statutes and regulations as well as legal counsel of your own choosing for further guidance.*

**I. Private Dental Office**

<b>Procedures under Direct Supervision</b>	<b>Dental Hygienist</b>	<b>Expanded Duty Dental Assistant</b>	<b>Dental Assistant</b>
<b>Chart, Records, and Instruction</b>			
Chart existing restorations, clinically missing teeth, and appliances within the oral cavity. <i>Regulations 39-12(2), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Take and record vital signs (blood pressure, pulse, respiration, etc) <i>Regulations 39-12(7), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Oral hygiene and instruction	√	√	√
Apply topical fluoride <i>Regulations 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
<b>Application, Removal, and Examination</b>			
Assist in basic supportive chairside procedures <i>Regulations 39-12(1), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Apply topical drugs, to include silver diamine fluoride, as prescribed by the dentist. <i>Regulations 39-12(3), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Place and remove rubber dam <i>Regulations 39-12(4), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Place and remove matrix <i>Regulations 39-12(5), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Place and remove orthodontic ligatures <i>Regulations 39-12(6), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Place and remove periodontal packs <i>Regulations 39-12(9), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√

<b>Procedures under Direct Supervision</b>	<b>Dental Hygienist</b>	<b>Expanded Duty Dental Assistant</b>	<b>Dental Assistant</b>
Remove sutures <i>Regulations 39-12(10), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Expose radiographs upon completion of Board approved radiation safety course. <i>Regulations 39-12(8), 39-13 and 39-14</i>	√	√	√
Place and remove socket dressing <i>Regulations 39-13(2) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Place and remove gingival retraction cord <i>Regulations 39-13(3) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Place temporary restorations <i>Regulations 39-13(4) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Cement temporary crowns or bridges <i>Regulations 39-13(5) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Remove excess cement from restoration and/or appliances <i>Regulations 39-13(6) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Polish restorations and supra-gingival tooth structure <i>Regulations 39-13(7) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Application of pit and fissure sealant <i>Regulations 39-13(8) and 39-14</i>	√	√	
Administration of local infiltration anesthesia upon Board certification <i>40-15-80(E)</i>	√		
Utilize laser for pocket disinfection at settings that preclude hard and soft tissue removal, except for incidental gingival curettage. <i>Regulations 39-9(C)</i>	√		
Place subgingival therapeutic chemicals (i.e. Actisite, Periochip, Atridox, Arestin, etc.) at the direction of a licensed dentist upon completion of a minimum one-hour training session as recommended by the manufacturer.	√		
Complete prophylaxis to include scaling, root planning, polish of supragingival and subgingival tooth structure, and performing clinical examination. <i>40-15-80(B)</i>	√		
Monitoring nitrous oxide conscious sedation upon Board certification. <i>40-15-105</i>	√	√	√

<b>Procedures under General Supervision</b>	<b>Dental Hygienist</b>	<b>Expanded Duty Dental Assistant</b>	<b>Dental Assistant</b>
Oral prophylaxis and assessment. <i>40-15-102(B)(1)</i>	√		
Fluoride treatment. <i>40-15-102(B)(2)</i>	√		
Oral hygiene instruction and education; perform oral screening, and provide nutrition and dietary counseling without prior authorization. <i>40-15-102(B)(3) and 40-15-80(D)</i>	√		
Exposure and process of radiographs as directed by standard office protocol. <i>40-15-102(B)(4)</i>	√		

## **II. School and Non-DHEC Public Health Settings**

<b>Procedures under General Supervision</b>	<b>Dental Hygienist</b>	<b>Expanded Duty Dental Assistant</b>	<b>Dental Assistant</b>
Apply topical fluoride. <i>40-15-80(B) &amp; 40-15-80(C)</i>	√		
Perform application of sealants. <i>40-15-80(B) &amp; 40-15-80(C)</i>	√		
Oral prophylaxis. <i>40-15-80(B) &amp; 40-15-80(C)</i>	√		
Exposure and process of radiographs directed by standard office protocol. <i>40-15-80(B) &amp; 40-15-80(C)</i>	√		

## **III. DHEC Public Health Settings**

<b>Procedures under General Supervision</b>	<b>Dental Hygienist</b>	<b>Expanded Duty Dental Assistant</b>	<b>Dental Assistant</b>
Oral screenings using DHEC approved screening systems. <i>40-15-110(F)</i>	√	√	√
Oral prophylaxis and assessment. <i>40-15-110(A)(10)</i>	√		
Application of topical fluoride including varnish. <i>40-15-110(A)(10)</i>	√	√	√
Application of dental sealants <i>40-15-110(A)(10)</i>	√		

Procedures under General Supervision	Dental Hygienist	Expanded Duty Dental Assistant	Dental Assistant
Exposure and process of radiographs directed by standard office protocol. <i>40-15-80(B) &amp; 40-15-80(C)</i>	√		

#### **IV. Prohibited Procedures**

In addition to the procedures prohibited from delegation as listed in SC Code of Law 40-15-82, the following procedures may not be delegated under any supervision level in any dental health setting:

- Establishment of IV line
- Drawing sedative drugs into a syringe
- Deliver drugs into an established IV line
- Performance of Botox injections

#### **IV. Definitions**

**Authorized** means the supervising dentist in a private office setting has personally approved the procedures to be performed and is responsible for the care provided to the patient. **40-15-100(A)**

**Dental Assistant** an unlicensed person who assists with dental procedures under the direct supervision of a South Carolina licensed dentist present on the premises. No formal academic dental training is required for dental assistants. **Regulations 39-12**

**Dental Hygienist** is any person who engages in those clinical procedures primarily concerned with the performance of preventive dental services not constituting the practice of dentistry, including removing all hard and soft deposits and stains from the surfaces of human teeth, root planing, performing clinical examination of teeth and surrounding tissues, and charting of oral conditions for diagnosis by a dentist, and performing such other procedures as may be delegated by regulations of the Board. **40-15-80(A)**

**Direct Supervision** means that a dentist is in the dental office, personally diagnoses the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedure, and before the dismissal of the patient, evaluates the performance of the auxiliary. This requirement does not mandate that a dentist be present at all times, but he or she must be on the premises actually involved in supervision and control. **40-15-85(3).**

**Expanded Duty Dental Assistant** is a dental assistant who is a graduate of an American Dental Association accredited dental assisting program, or one who has completed two (2) years of continuous full-time employment as a chairside dental assistant. **Regulations 39-13**

**General Supervision** means that a licensed dentist or the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control's public health dentist has authorized the procedures to be performed but does not require that a dentist be present when the procedures are performed. **40-15-85(6) & 40-15-102(C)**

- **General supervision may be authorized only upon meeting the following criteria:**
  - a new patient of record must be clinically examined by the authorizing dentist during the initial visit;
  - an appointed patient must be examined by the authorizing dentist at a minimum of

twelve-month intervals; and

- an appointed patient must be notified in advance of the appointment that he or she will be treated by the dental hygienist under general supervision without the authorizing dentist being present or being examined by the authorizing dentist.

**Nitrous Oxide Analgesia or Sedation** means the administration by inhalation of a combination of nitrous oxide and oxygen producing an altered level of consciousness that retains the patient's ability to independently and continuously maintain an airway and respond appropriately to physical stimulation or verbal command. **Regulations 39-17(A)(9)**

**Oral Prophylaxis** means the removal of any and all hard and soft deposits, accretions, toxins, and stain from any natural or restored surfaces of teeth or prosthetic devices by scaling and polishing as a preventive measure for the control of local irritational factors. **40-15-85(11)**

**Primary Preventative Care and Education** is defined as promotion and protection of health to avoid the occurrence of disease through community, school, and individual measures or improvements in lifestyle.

**Public Health Dental Program Services** include oral screenings using a Department of Health and Environmental Control approved screening system, oral prophylaxis, application of topical fluoride including varnish, and the application of dental sealants. **40-15-110(A)(10)**

**Public Health Setting** is defined as a hospital, nursing home, long term care facility, rural or community health clinic, health facility operated by federal, state, county, or local governments, hospice, an educational institution, a bona fide charitable institution, or a mobile delivery program operated in one of these settings under the direction of the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). Mobile delivery programs are defined as those that are not confined to a single building and can be transported from place to place. **40-15-110(E)**

- **School Setting** requires written permission of the student's parents or guardian to be obtained prior to procedures being performed. **40-15-80(B)**
- **Non-DHEC Public Health Settings** include hospitals, nursing homes, long term care facilities, rural and community clinics, health facilities operated by federal, state, county, or local governments, hospices, education institutions accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation that give instruction in dental hygiene, and in bona fide charitable institutions. Treatment may not occur in these settings unless medical emergency care is available within the facility.  
**40-15-80(C)**

**DHEC Public Health Settings** a licensed dental hygienist employed within or contracted through the public health system can provide education and primary preventive care that is reversible. These services are to be performed under the direction of the DHEC State Dental Coordinator or the department's designee but do not require that the director or a licensed dentist be present when any public health dental program services are provided. Public health dental program services include oral screenings using a DHEC approved screening system, oral prophylaxis, application of topical fluoride including varnish, and the application of dental sealants. **40-15-110(A)(10)** Coordinator is not required to be present when services are performed. **40-15-110(G)**