

Dental Hygiene Participation in Regulation

The following states have dental hygiene advisory committees or varying degrees of self regulation for dental hygienists.

Arizona

The Arizona Dental Hygiene Committee consists of one dentist and one dental hygienist from the board, plus four additional dental hygienists and one public member. The committee serves as a forum for discussion of dental hygiene issues and advises the board on rules and proposed statute changes concerning dental hygiene education, regulation and practice. In addition, the committee evaluates CE classes for expanded functions and monitors dental hygienists' compliance with CE requirements.

California

The Dental Hygiene Committee of California is a self-regulating dental hygiene committee in conjunction with the Department of Consumer Affairs. The committee consists of four dental hygienists, four public members and one dentist appointed by the governor. The responsibilities of DHCC include issuing, reviewing, and revoking licenses as well as developing and administering examinations. Additional functions include adopting regulations, determining fees and continuing education requirements for all hygiene licensure categories.

Connecticut

Connecticut is unique because dental hygiene is directly under the Department of Public Health. Although there is no standing dental hygiene committee the department director has the ability to appoint an ad hoc committee of dental hygienists, if there is a need to address rules or disciplinary matters.

Delaware

Delaware's Advisory Committee is appointed by the governor and consists of three dental hygienists. The committee writes the examination for dental hygiene licensure (in conjunction with the dental board). In addition, the committee votes with the board on issues of dental hygiene licensure by credentials, disciplinary decisions, continuing education requirements for dental hygiene licensure, disciplinary action involving dental hygienists and issues involving the policy and practice of dental hygiene but not the scope of practice.



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Florida

Florida has both dental hygiene and dental assisting councils. The dental hygiene council is composed of four dental hygienists, one of whom sits on the board, and one dentist member of the board. The council is expected to develop all dental hygiene rules to submit to the board for its approval.

Iowa

Beginning in 1999, both dental hygienists on the dental board and one of the dentists became a dental hygiene committee of the board. This committee has the power to make all rules pertaining to dental hygiene. The board is required to adopt those rules and enforce the committee rules.

Maine

Maine has a Subcommittee on Dental Hygienists. The subcommittee consists of five members: one dental hygienist who is a member of the board; two dental hygienists appointed by the governor; two dentists who are members of the board and appointed by the president of the board. The duties of the subcommittee are to perform an initial review of all applications for licensure as a dental hygienist, submissions relating to continuing education of dental hygienists, and all submissions relating to public health supervision status of dental hygienists.

Maryland

Maryland's committee consists of three dental hygienists, one dentist, and one public member, all of whom are full voting members of the dental board. The committee was created during a sunset review as a compromise to the creation of a separate dental hygiene regulatory board. According to statute, all matters pertaining to dental hygiene must first be brought to the committee for its review and recommendation.

Michigan

This six member committee, comprised of two dental hygienists and two dentists, one dental assistant and one public member, considers matters related to the dental hygiene profession and makes recommendations to the full board of dentistry. All members of the committee are voting members on the board. The existence of the committee is not mandated by state rules or statutes, but instead is a committee appointed by the chairperson of the board.

Missouri

A five member advisory commission, composed of the dental hygienist on the dental board and four dental hygienists appointed by the governor was created by the state legislature in 2001. The commission makes recommendations to the board concerning dental hygiene practice, licensure, examinations, discipline and educational requirements.

Montana

In 2002, the board assigned both dental hygienist members and one dentist member to be a standing committee to consider and address dental hygiene issues in a timely fashion. The committee formulates specific recommendations to bring to the entire board for action.

Nevada

Legislation in 2003 added a third dental hygienist to the board who, together with a dentist appointed by the board, constitute a dental hygiene committee that formulates recommendations on dental hygiene rules for the board.

New Hampshire

The New Hampshire Dental Hygienists' Committee is a five member advisory committee, comprised of one dental hygienist member of the board, one dentist member of the board and three additional dental hygienist members appointed by the governor. The Dental Hygienists' Committee proposes rules concerning the practice, discipline, education, examination, and licensure of dental hygienists. The rules proposed by the committee may be accepted by the Board of Dental Examiners for adoption.

New Mexico

New Mexico has a Board of Dental Health Care comprised of five dentists, two dental hygienists and two public members. There is a dental hygiene committee comprised of five dental hygienists, two public members and two dentists. The committee selects two of its dental hygiene members to serve as the dental hygienists on the board. The board's public members and two of its dentist members are the dentist and public members of the committee. The committee adopts all the rules pertaining to dental hygiene and is also responsible for the discipline of dental hygienists. The board enforces the dental hygiene committee's rules.

Oklahoma

The Dental Hygiene Advisory Committee is comprised of the current dental hygienist on the Oklahoma dental board, and four additional dental hygienists appointed by the board.

Oregon

Under its authority to create standing committees, the Oregon dental board has appointed a dental hygiene committee to advise the board concerning dental hygiene issues.

Texas

In 1995, a dental hygiene advisory committee, comprised of three dental hygienists and two public members appointed by the governor and one dentist appointed by the board, was established.

Washington

The state of Washington has a uniform disciplinary code which applies to all health professions and creates the regulatory bodies to implement each practice act. Dentistry and dental hygiene have separate practice acts. Dentists are regulated by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (an independent dental board with no dental hygiene members). Dental hygienists are regulated by the Department of Health, but the statute requires that the department develop rules and definitions to implement the dental hygienist act in consultation with the Dental Hygiene Examining Committee. The committee is comprised of three dental hygienists and one public member appointed by the department.