



Dental Assistant with Limited Radiography License (L.R.C.)

Dental Assistants help patients feel comfortable and work side by side with the dentist, assisting primarily with corrective and restorative dental procedures. They provide support to dentists in the way of duties, such as using rinsing and suction tools, passing instruments, and ensuring that sanitary practices are maintained. Additional responsibilities include taking and recording medical and dental histories and patient vital signs and assisting the dentist in managing dental emergencies.

Dental assistants come into contact with patients through anything from taking blood pressure to scheduling appointments. Because they typically come into contact with all of the patients in their office, they can help to make a patients' experience a positive one.

Dental assistants work in a well-lit, clean environment. They must, however follow safety procedures to protect themselves. They wear things like safety glasses and surgical masks to protect themselves from patients with infectious diseases. They also have safety procedures they must follow when working with x-ray machines.

While most dental assistants work full-time, there are part-time positions available. Different dental offices can be open at different times, so dental assistants' hours can vary. Because of this dental assistants can have flexible hours and some may have to work nights and/or weekends. Some dental assistants choose to work part-time at different dental offices that open at different times.

Indiana Wage Information

	Entry	Median
Hourly Wage	\$14.73	\$17.11

Job Outlook in Indiana

Long term	15.08% (increase)
Short Term	2.27% (increase)

*Data collected from hoosierdata.in.gov

Job Duties

- Prepare patient, sterilize or disinfect instruments, set up instrument trays, prepare materials
- Make oral impressions
- Place dental dams for isolating teeth during treatment
- Apply sealants and cavity-preventive agents to teeth
- Perform teeth-whitening procedures
- Remove excess cement as part of a restorative dentistry procedure
- Remove sutures
- Fabricate mouth trays
- Remove and fabricate temporary crowns
- Polish amalgam-filling restorations with a slow-speed device

Important Qualities

Detail-oriented – must be aware of practices they are allowed to do in the state they work; specific rules and protocols must be followed in assisting dentists

Interpersonal skills – must work closely with both dentists and patients; must be sensitive to patients who may be in extreme pain or mental stress

Listening skills – must be able to follow directions from a dentist or dental hygienist in order to help with the treatment of patients

Organizational skills – must be extremely organized in making sure that tools are where they should be

Skills and Knowledge

Technical

- Knowledge of dental and oral anatomy
- Instrument identification for all aspects of dentistry
- Knowledge of dental terminology
- Knowledge of X-ray theory and technique
- Developing x-rays
- Knowledge of impression materials and practice in their use
- Model pouring and trimming
- Knowledge of medicine and dentistry
- Customer and personal service

Certification and Advancement

To obtain the Limited Radiography Certification (L.R.C.) license, one must first complete a CODA-Accredited education program in radiography, or complete an Indiana Board-approved educational program in radiography. Then they must be certified for clinical proficiency by a licensed practitioner or licensed dental hygienist and pass one or more of the following exams:

- The national DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) exam (CPR class is required)
- The national DANB Radiation Health and Safety (RHS) exam
- An exam approved by the Indiana State Department of Health/Division of Medical Radiology Services

There is a minimum age restriction of 18, and candidates must not have a criminal record.

In order to receive a Dental Radiography License, students must obtain a permit from the Indiana State Department of Health/Division of Medical Radiology Services. At this time, students must have a high school diploma or equivalent. On-the-job training has been eliminated for this certification. Training programs for Dental Radiography must be approved by the Indiana State Department of Health.

Career growth opportunities include:

- Dental Hygienist, Dentist
- Office Manager
- Dental Assistant Teacher
- Dental Laboratory Technician

Dental assistants can have the opportunity to advance into higher-paid positions that require a higher skill level. Some choose to go back to school to become a dental hygienist, and others may complete coursework to be able to perform more functions. Other job opportunities include: office manager, dental-assistant instructor, and dental product sales.

How can YOU get involved?

The world of work relies on the foundational skills students acquire in your classrooms and/or programs!

- Know your students'/clients' interests and career goals
- Affirm the value of the skills/hobbies students demonstrate both in and outside of the classroom
- Infuse your classroom culture and/or meetings with career-minded activities
- Provide time to make connections between the material learned in adult education or workshops and students' daily lives/career aspirations
- Know the basic job descriptions and training requirements of in-demand occupations in your area
- Know which WorkINDiana programs are available in your region
- Know the processes for referring students to postsecondary or on-the-job training
- Post resources where students can find more information about further education/training and careers