

OCCUPATIONS CODE

TITLE 3. HEALTH PROFESSIONS

SUBTITLE D. DENTISTRY

CHAPTER 251. GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO PRACTICE OF DENTISTRY

Sec. 251.001. SHORT TITLE. This subtitle may be cited as the Dental Practice Act.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 251.002. DEFINITIONS. In this subtitle:

(1) "Board" means the State Board of Dental Examiners.

(2) "Executive director" means the executive director of the board.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 251.003. PRACTICE OF DENTISTRY. (a) For purposes of this subtitle, a person practices dentistry if the person:

(1) represents to the public that the person is a dentist or dental surgeon or uses or permits to be used for the person or another person the title of "Doctor," "Dr.," "Doctor of Dental Surgery," "D.D.S.," "Doctor of Dental Medicine," "D.M.D.," or another description, including the use of the terms "denturist" or "denturism," that, directly or indirectly, represents that the person is able to:

(A) diagnose, treat, or remove stains or concretions from human teeth; or

(B) provide surgical and adjunctive treatment for a disease, pain, injury, deficiency, deformity, or physical condition of the human teeth, oral cavity, alveolar process, gums, jaws, or directly related and adjacent masticatory structures;

(2) performs or offers to perform by any means the:

(A) cleaning of human teeth;

(B) removal of stains, concretions, or deposits from teeth in the human mouth; or

(C) diagnosis, treatment, operation, or prescription for a disease, pain, injury, deficiency, deformity, or physical condition of the human teeth, oral cavity, alveolar

process, gums, or jaws;

(3) prescribes, makes, or causes to be made or offers to prescribe, make, or cause to be made by any means an impression of any portion of the human mouth, teeth, gums, or jaws:

(A) to diagnose, prescribe, or treat, or aid in the diagnosis, prescription, or treatment, of a physical condition of the human mouth, teeth, gums, or jaws; or

(B) to construct or aid in the construction of a dental appliance, denture, dental bridge, false teeth, dental plate of false teeth, or another substitute for human teeth;

(4) owns, maintains, or operates an office or place of business in which the person employs or engages under any type of contract another person to practice dentistry;

(5) fits, adjusts, repairs, or substitutes or offers to fit, adjust, repair, or substitute in the human mouth or directly related and adjacent masticatory structures a dental appliance, structure, prosthesis, or denture;

(6) aids in the fitting, adjusting, repairing, or substituting or causes to be fitted, adjusted, repaired, or substituted in the human mouth or directly related and adjacent masticatory structures a dental appliance, structure, prosthesis, or denture;

(7) without a written prescription or work order signed by a dentist legally practicing dentistry in this state or in the jurisdiction in which the dentist maintains the dentist's office:

(A) makes, processes, reproduces, repairs, or relines a full or partial denture, fixed or removable dental bridge or appliance, dental plate of false teeth, artificial dental restoration, or a substitute or corrective device or appliance for the human teeth, gums, jaws, mouth, alveolar process, or any part for another; or

(B) offers, undertakes, aids, abets, or causes another person to engage in an activity described by Paragraph (A);

(8) directly or indirectly offers, undertakes, or causes another to perform for any person an act, service, or part of an act or service in the practice of dentistry, including:

(A) inducing, administering, prescribing, or dispensing anesthesia or an anesthetic drug, medicine, or an agent in any way related to the practice of dentistry;

(B) permitting or allowing another to use the person's license or certificate to practice dentistry in this state; or

(C) aiding or abetting the practice of dentistry by a person not licensed by the board to practice dentistry;

(9) controls, influences, attempts to control or influence, or otherwise interferes with the exercise of a dentist's independent professional judgment regarding the diagnosis or treatment of a dental disease, disorder, or physical condition; or

(10) represents that the person is a denturist or uses another title that is intended to convey to the public that the services offered by the person are included within the practice of dentistry.

(b) The practice of dentistry under Subsection (a)(9) does not:

(1) require an entity to pay for services that are not provided for in an agreement; or

(2) exempt a dentist who is a member of a hospital staff from following hospital bylaws, medical staff bylaws, or established policies approved by the governing board and the medical and dental staff of the hospital.

(c) In this subtitle, the practice of the dental specialty of oral and maxillofacial surgery includes the diagnosis of and the surgical and adjunctive treatment of diseases, injuries, and defects involving the functional and aesthetic aspects of the hard and soft tissues of the oral and maxillofacial region.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 251.004. EXEMPTION FROM PRACTICE OF DENTISTRY. (a) A person does not practice dentistry as provided by Section [251.003](#) if the person is:

(1) a faculty member of a reputable dental or dental hygiene school in which the member performs services for the sole benefit of the school;

(2) a student of a reputable dental school who performs the student's operations without pay, except for actual cost of materials, in the presence of and under the direct personal supervision of a demonstrator or teacher who is a faculty member of a reputable dental school;

(3) a person:

(A) who performs laboratory work only on inert matter; and

(B) who does not solicit or obtain work by any means from a person who is not a licensed dentist engaged in the practice of dentistry and does not act as the agent or solicitor of, and does not have any interest in, a dental office or practice or the receipts of a dental office or practice;

(4) a physician licensed in this state who does not represent that the person is practicing dentistry, including a physician who extracts teeth or applies pain relief in the regular practice of the physician's profession;

(5) a dental hygienist:

(A) who is authorized to practice dental hygiene in this state; and

(B) who practices dental hygiene in strict conformity with the state law regulating the practice of dental hygiene;

(6) a person who is a member of an established church and practices healing by prayer only;

(7) an employee of a licensed dentist in this state who makes dental x-rays in the dental office under the supervision of the dentist;

(8) a Dental Health Service Corporation chartered under Section A(1), Article 2.01, Texas Non-Profit Corporation Act (Article 1396-2.01, Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes);

(9) a dental intern or dental resident as defined and regulated by board rules;

(10) a student:

(A) who is in a dental hygiene program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association and operated at an accredited institution of higher

education;

(B) who practices dental hygiene without pay under the general supervision of a dentist and under the supervision of a demonstrator or teacher who is a faculty member of the program:

(i) in a clinic operated for the sole benefit of the program's institution of higher education; or

(ii) in a clinic operated by a government or nonprofit organization that serves underserved populations as determined by board rule; and

(C) who practices in strict conformity with state law regulating the practice of dental hygiene;

(11) a dental assistant who performs duties permitted under Chapter 265, in strict conformity with state law;

(12) a dentist or dental hygienist licensed by another state or a foreign country who performs a clinical procedure only as a demonstration for professional and technical education purposes, if the dentist or dental hygienist first obtains from the board a temporary license for that purpose;

(13) a dental hygienist who is a faculty member of a dental or dental hygiene school while practicing dental hygiene:

(A) under the supervision of a dentist licensed in this state or of a teacher or demonstrator who is a dentist faculty member of the school; and

(B) in strict conformity with state law regulating the practice of dental hygiene;

(14) a dentist who is in a remedial training program sponsored by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association at an accredited dental or dental hygiene school;

(15) a dental hygienist who is in a remedial training program sponsored by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association at an accredited dental or dental hygiene school and who acts in strict conformity with state law regulating the practice of dental hygiene, except that supervision may be provided by a demonstrator or teacher who is a dentist member of the program;

(16) a dentist who is not licensed in this state and who is taking the dental clinical examination offered in this state by an examining body designated by the board;

(17) a dental hygienist who is not licensed in this state and who is taking the dental hygiene clinical examination offered in this state by an examining body designated by the board if participation is in strict conformity with state law regulating the practice of dental hygiene, except that supervision may be provided by a dentist whose services are secured by the examining body;

(18) a dentist whose license is in retired status or who is licensed in another state and is attending a continuing education clinical program offered at a dental or dental hygiene school accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association; or

(19) a dental hygienist whose dental hygienist license is in retired status or who is licensed in another state and is attending a continuing education clinical program offered at a dental or dental hygiene school accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association if tasks are performed in strict conformity with state law regulating the practice of dental hygiene, except that supervision may be provided by a dentist member of the program.

(b) A person's activities described by Subsections (a)(14), (15), and (18) are considered not to be the practice of dentistry only to the extent the person is participating in the specified program.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999. Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1420, Sec. 14.071(a), eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 810 (S.B. 610), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2005.

Sec. 251.005. APPLICATION OF SUNSET ACT. The State Board of Dental Examiners is subject to Chapter 325, Government Code (Texas Sunset Act). Unless continued in existence as provided by

that chapter, the board is abolished September 1, 2029.

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 388, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999. Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 17, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1481, Sec. 1.02, eff. Sept. 1, 2001; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 17, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1232 (S.B. [652](#)), Sec. 3.06, eff. June 17, 2011.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 295 (S.B. [313](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2017.