

Legislative Changes for RDA's in Texas

Changes to the RDA & Other Certificates for Dental Assistants is on the Legislative Agenda.....Do You Agree???

Should Dental Assistants have a voice on how they are regulated? Could a Dental Assistant be appointed to the TSBDE Board?

Can Dental Assistants provide ideas on educational standards & requirements for the RDA? Who can we speak to? Who will listen?

Do you agree with the recommendation to combine all the TSBDE Dental Assistant certificate programs?

1. Radiology
2. Pit & Fissure
3. Coronal Polishing
4. Nitrous Oxide Monitoring

Issue ONE (1) credential called the RDA?

Did you know that the 2017 Texas Legislature is preparing to change requirements for the RDA credential? "A dental assistant would not be authorized to perform any of the four services above without first obtaining registration from the TSBDE in all four certificate programs." This is language used in recommendations to legislature.



 Email  Write  Call



**THE TIME IS NOW
CONTACT YOUR
REPRESENTATIVE
AND SENATOR**

Find yours at:
[http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/
Home.aspx](http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx)

TOOLS YOU NEED TO ADVOCATE....You can make positive changes!

I. Contact Your Representative and Senator Now
go to <http://www.fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Home.aspx>
put in your address, click submit and find your Legislators

II. Write (by Email) or call them and ask them to support you
See sample letter on next page (**DO use some of the sample letter, but add in a personal story how these proposed changes are not good..... in other words , make it YOUR letter. DON'T use a form letter because they get tossed. Tell them your years of experience, your level of education, your background, how you feel this will impact the general public).**)

III. Follow-up! Call them, Email them, and visit them. Show your legislator that you care. Thank them for their time.

LET'S MAKE 2017 THE YEAR FOR DENTAL ASSISTING!!!

Can I count on you to contact your Representative & Senator?

If only a few do this, it will not work.....we **ALL** must work together if we want results.

Keep our RDA credential intact and a way to communicate what is best for our profession.

Questions: Contact Ronda Lane at 972-986-6855

SAMPLE LETTER BELOW:

December 26, 2016

The Honorable Kelly Hancock, Texas Senate
Staff: Mr. Jarret Hill
9121 Belshire Dr., Suite 200
North Richland Hills, TX 76182

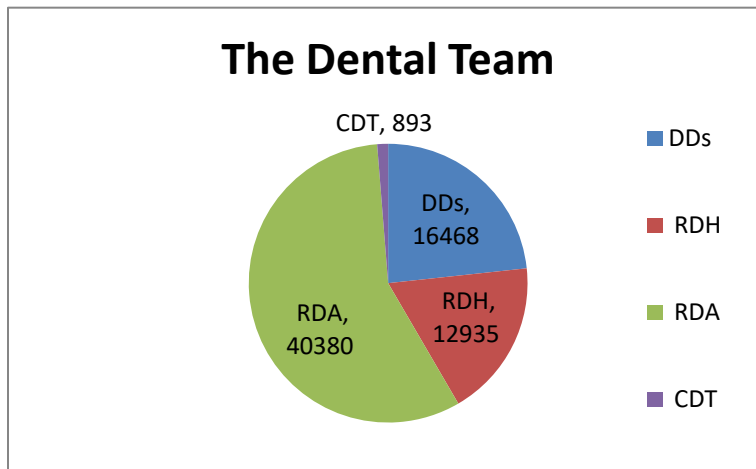
Re: Regulation of Dental Assistants in Texas

Dear Senator Hancock & Mr. Hill,

As a dental assistant and a constituent, I wish to express my concern that the interest of the dental consumer as well as the profession of dental assisting could be adversely affected when the 85th Texas Legislative Session convenes. The Texas State Board of Dental Examiners (TSBDE) has been under Sunset Review recently and several recommendations are being brought forward from the Sunset Advisory Commission. Some of these changes involve dental assistants (which number close to 50,000 in the state) and I would like to bring your attention to 3 major issues. I am currently on the Texas Dental Assistants Association legislative committee and am also the 9th District Trustee of the American Dental Assistants Association.

I. The Composition of the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners

The Sunset Advisory Commission has recommended to reduce the size of the board from 15 to 11 members and adjust its composition to 6 dentists, 3 hygienists, and 2 public members. Many states have a dental assistant on their Dental Boards, which reflects fair representation of the entire dental team. I believe that Texas should follow this national trend to have all members of the dental team be represented on the Board. The number of registered dental assistants in Texas has increased significantly and represents a very large portion of the Dental Team (see chart below). Unfortunately, even though we are high in numbers, we have no avenue to provide input or voice our concerns to the agency that supervises and regulates us. Please consider sponsoring legislation for a dental assistant be appointed to the State Board of Dental Examiners and a Dental Assistant Council be created.



Note: These numbers were provided by TSBDE to me on 2-6-15 by Executive Director, Julie Hildebrand

II. Combine the Board's 4 (four) separate dental assistant certificate programs into 1 (one) credential

The Sunset Advisory Commission is recommending that the current 4 separate certifications for dental assistants be combined into one credential, which will impact the 35,000+ RDA's in the state who do not hold 2 of the 4 certificates.

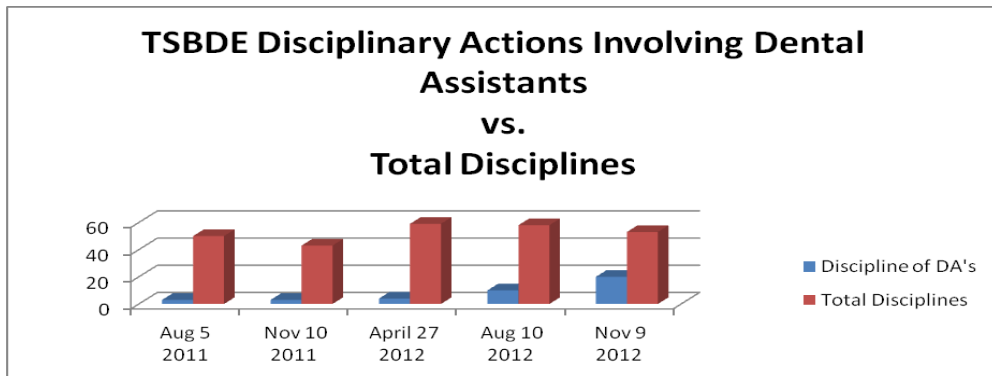
An alternative solution could be the certificates held by a dental assistant be listed on their registration certificate (please see example listed below) and not require extensive changes to current laws and rules or additional training that 35,000 dental assistants will need to complete to keep their current credential and perform their job. If the recommendation is adopted as written, then the following issues will become evident:

- * Manpower shortage of qualified dental assistants in the workforce
 - As of 2-6-15 there were 2,959 Coronal Polishing Certificate Holders
 - As of 2-6-15 there were 2,353 Pit and Fissure Sealant Certificate Holders
 - As of 2-6-15 there were 10,547 Nitrous Oxide Monitoring Permit Holders
- * Limited number of approved providers of certificate programs
 - As of 12-26-16 there were 6 TSBDE approved providers for Coronal Polishing (\$300 avg. cost)
 - As of 12-26-16 there were 10 TSBDE approved providers for Pit and Fissure Sealants (\$300 avg. cost)
 - As of 12-26-16 there were 14 TSBDE approved providers for Nitrous Oxide Monitoring (\$150 avg. cost)
- * Monetary burden to dental assistants
- * Loss of revenue to the state (\$18 per expanded certificate)

Please consider sponsoring legislation to keep the current 4 certificate programs in place and not combine them into one credential.

III. Regulation of all dental assistants to maintain public safety

There are many complaints filed with the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners that involve sanitation/sterilization and dental assistants are the primary personnel performing these duties in every dental office. The Dental Board's primary mission is to protect the public and that protection starts with infection control. The media has publicized many cases where citizens within a state were unnecessarily infected due to poor infection control measures. Many times the problem starts with the personnel who are in charge of cleaning and sterilizing/disinfecting items prior to patient care, which is the dental assistant. Please see chart below of complaints involving sanitation.



Please support legislation that requires continuing education requirements in sanitation/infection control for dental assistants and require the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners to monitor the compliance of mandatory CE for dental assistants.

As a final note, I would like to add that the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners staff have been burdened with the processing of many dental licenses and certificates, but eliminating or combining the certificates is not the answer to this problem. The TSBDE has suggested that dental assistant registration certificates be renewed every 2 years instead of annually, which will significantly lessen the burden of the Board staff. This is a great idea! Another way to lessen the burden is to issue only one registration and list the expanded functions directly on the registration that the dental assistant is qualified to perform. This will unburden the TSBDE staff from issuing 4 separate certificates and combining them into one certificate, but keeping in place the current laws and rules that already exist. Many dental assistants do not need all 4 certificates to work. Please see example below.

Sample Registration



TEXAS REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTANT

Ronda V. Lane

is legally registered as a Dental Assistant in this State under the laws of Texas governing such practice

REGISTRATION NUMBER: 4

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE ELIGIBLE DENTAL ASSISTANT FUNCTIONS:

Radiation Protection and Safety..... Yes
Placement of Pit and Fissure Sealants..... No
Coronal Polishing..... No
Nitrous Oxide Monitoring..... Yes

EXPIRATION DATE: October 31, 2017

THIS REGISTRATION MUST BE DISPLAYED AT ALL TIMES

Signature of Presiding Officer of TSBDE

Thank you for this opportunity to communicate with you about my profession, dental assisting, and the important role we serve for all citizens of Texas. Please let me know if I can help in any way to contribute to the best solutions to issues facing the legislature in dentistry. I look forward to your reply to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Ronda V. Lane

Ronda V. Lane, BS, CDA, RDA, FADAA

Email: vantroba@verizon.net