



Adopted August 2007
Revised September 2011

DANB's Code of Professional Conduct

To promote quality and ethical practice and to assist DANB Individuals* in understanding their ethical responsibilities to patients; employers; professional colleagues, including fellow DANB Individuals; the dental assisting profession; and the public, DANB has established the following *DANB Code of Professional Conduct*. The *DANB Code of Professional Conduct* includes a DANB Individual's responsibilities to patients, employers, colleagues, the profession, the public and DANB.

Individual Autonomy and Respect for Human Beings

The dental assistant has a duty to respect each patient's individuality, humanity and autonomy in decision making.

DANB Individuals shall

- Respect the autonomy of each person to decide from among treatment options, including refusing treatment.
- Respect the legal and personal rights, dignity and privacy of all patients in whose treatment they assist.
- Maintain professional boundaries in relationships with patients.

Health and Well-Being of Patients and Colleagues

The dental assistant has a duty to refrain from harming any patient. The dental assistant has a duty to promote each patient's welfare. The dental assistant has a duty to protect the health and well-being of colleagues.

DANB Individuals shall

- Always act in the best interests of each patient.
- Make patient health and safety the first and most important consideration in all actions and decisions.
- Undertake assignments only when qualified to perform them competently.
- Respect the health and safety of self, colleagues and patients.
- Practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency or mental illness.
- Diligently perform all duties designed to protect themselves and their colleagues from workplace hazards.
- Enhance professional competency through continuous learning, incorporating new knowledge into daily performance of delegated services.
- Refuse to conceal incompetent acts of others and report acts with a potentially dangerous outcome.

Justice and Fairness

The dental assistant has a duty to treat people fairly.

DANB Individuals shall

- When providing appropriately delegated oral healthcare services, behave in a manner free from bias or discrimination on any basis.
- Behave ethically, without a conflict of interest.
- Report unethical acts of others.

* *DANB Individuals* is an inclusive term that refers to all DANB examination applicants, DANB examination candidates, DANB Certificants (CDAs, COAs, CPFDAAs, CDPMAAs, COMSAs), and those who hold DANB Certificates of Competency (RHS, ICE, CP, SE, TA, TF). See Definitions section for additional detail.

All DANB Individuals must abide by the *DANB Code of Professional Conduct* and must maintain high standards of ethics and excellence in all areas of professional endeavor.

Violating the *DANB Code of Professional Conduct*, including but not limited to commission of any act specifically prohibited in *DANB's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures*, may result in disciplinary action and the imposition of sanctions.

Truth

The dental assistant has a duty to communicate truthfully.

DANB Individuals shall

- Conduct themselves with honesty and integrity at all times.
- Provide patients with truthful assessment(s) of problems and potential treatments, including risks, within the DANB Individual's authorized scope of practice.

Confidentiality

The dental assistant has a duty to respect each patient's right to confidentiality.

DANB Individuals shall

- Maintain patient confidentiality.
- Safeguard all patient and practice information that is confidential in nature.

Responsibility to Profession, Community and Society

The dental assistant has a duty to know the law, to act within the law, and to report to the proper authorities those who fail to do so.

DANB Individuals shall

- Obtain and maintain knowledge of governmental laws, rules and regulations that govern the dental assisting profession in the states where they work.
- Comply with their state's dental practice act and related rules and regulations, and any other local, state and federal statutes that promote public health and safety.
- Refuse to accept assignment of duties that violate the state's dental practice act or administrative rules or regulations.
- Report illegal acts of others.
- Report violations of the state dental practice act, administrative rules or regulations to the proper authorities, such as the state board of dentistry, state department of environmental protection, state bureau of radiological health, etc.

- Visit each state dental board's website to learn about state compliance.
- Visit www.danb.org/main/statespecificinfo.asp to learn more about each state's dental assisting requirements, and to link to each state dental board's website.
- To report a violation of a state dental practice act, administrative rules or regulations, follow the procedures listed on the department website.
- To file a complaint with DANB about misuse or misrepresentation of DANB credential designations or DANB trademarks, visit www.danb.org/main/complaint.asp.

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Responsibility to the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB)

The dental assistant has a duty to know DANB policies and procedures, to act within them, and to report to DANB those who fail to do so.

DANB Individuals **shall**

- Maintain current knowledge of DANB Certification and Recertification Requirements.
- Uphold the integrity of DANB credentials by representing credentials earned with complete accuracy.
- Report to DANB any misuse or misrepresentation concerning DANB credential designations or DANB trademarks by others.
- If Certified, maintain DANB Certification in accordance with the rules and procedures established by DANB.
- Refrain from any action or behavior prohibited in DANB's Disciplinary Policy and Procedures.

DANB Individuals **shall not**

- Engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security (including unauthorized reproducing, distributing, displaying, discussing, sharing or otherwise misusing test questions or any part of test questions) before, during or after a DANB examination.
- Obtain, attempt to obtain, or assist others in obtaining or maintaining eligibility, certification or recertification through deceptive means, including submitting to DANB, the individual's employer or state regulatory body any document that contains a misstatement of fact or omits a material fact.
- Manufacture, modify, reproduce, distribute or use a fraudulent or otherwise unauthorized DANB certificate.

DANB Definitions

The term **DANB Certificant** refers to DANB Certified Dental Assistants (CDAs), Certified Orthodontic Assistants (COAs), Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistants (CPFDA), Certified Dental Practice Management Administrators (CDPMA) and Certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Assistants (COMSA). Those who have earned these credentials at one time but have not maintained them by complying with DANB Recertification Requirements are no longer DANB Certificants and may not use any DANB acronyms.

The term **DANB examination applicant** or **candidate** refers to those individuals who have applied for any DANB examination but who have not yet taken an exam, including national CDA, COA, CPFDA, RHS, ICE, GC, OA, CP, SE, TA and TF examinations. DANB has contracts with many state regulatory bodies to develop, administer and score state-specific dental assisting examinations. *DANB's Code of Professional Conduct* applies to individuals taking these examinations as well, as long as a particular state Code of Professional Conduct, if one exists, does not supercede *DANB's Code of Professional Conduct*. For a complete list of DANB state examinations, go to www.danb.org, and click on State-Specific Requirements.

The term **DANB certificate of competency holder** refers to those individuals who have taken and passed DANB's RHS, ICE, CP, SE, TA and/or TF exams.

DANB defines a **Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)** as a dental assistant, dental hygienist or dentist who

- Meets the education and/or experience prerequisites established by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) **AND**
- Passes DANB's Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) exam, which is comprised of component exams covering Radiation Health and Safety (RHS), Infection Control (ICE) and General Chairside Assisting (GC), **AND**
- Is currently CPR certified, **AND**
- Continues to maintain the credential by meeting DANB Recertification Requirements (including continuing education, current CPR certification and annual fee).

DANB defines a **Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA)** as a dental assistant, dental hygienist or dentist who

- Meets the education and/or experience prerequisites established by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) **AND**
- Passes DANB's Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA) exam, which is comprised of component exams covering Infection Control (ICE) and Orthodontic Assisting (OA), **AND**
- Is currently CPR certified, **AND**
- Continues to maintain the credential by meeting DANB Recertification Requirements (including continuing education, current CPR certification and annual fee).

DANB defines a **Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant (CPFDA)** as a dental assistant, dental hygienist or dentist who

- Meets the education and/or experience prerequisites established by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) **AND**
- Passes DANB's Certified Preventive Functions Dental Assistant (CPFDA) exam, which is comprised of component exams covering Coronal Polishing (CP), Sealants (SE), Topical Anesthetic (TA) and Topical Fluoride (TF), **AND**
- Is currently CPR certified, **AND**
- Continues to maintain the credential by meeting DANB Recertification Requirements (including continuing education, current CPR certification and annual fee).

DANB defines a **Certified Dental Practice Management Administrator (CDPMA)** as a dental assistant, dental hygienist or dentist, or person with management experience who

- Meets the education and/or experience prerequisites established by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) **AND**
- Passed DANB's Certified Dental Practice Management Administrator (CDPMA) exam, **AND**
- Is currently CPR certified, **AND**
- Continues to maintain the credential by meeting DANB Recertification Requirements (including continuing education, current CPR certification and annual fee).

DANB defines a **Certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Assistant (COMSA)** as a dental assistant, dental hygienist or dentist, or other healthcare professional who

- Meets the education and/or experience prerequisites established by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) **AND**
- Passed DANB's Certified Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Assistant (COMSA) exam, **AND**
- Is currently CPR certified, **AND**
- Continues to maintain the credential by meeting DANB Recertification Requirements (including continuing education, current CPR certification and annual fee).

Effective January 1, 2000, the COMSA examination was discontinued due to low participation. However, DANB continues to recognize those who have earned the COMSA credential and maintain it annually by meeting DANB's Recertification Requirements.



The *DANB Code of Professional Conduct* represents the minimum standard of professional behavior to which all dental assistants should adhere. Dental assistants Certified by DANB, those seeking Certification through DANB, and those who have applied for or taken and passed DANB

national exams, are subject to review under DANB's *Disciplinary Policy and Procedures* for violation of any tenet of the *Code of Professional Conduct*. DANB has published its *Disciplinary Policy and Procedures*, which are available on DANB's website, www.danb.org. DANB's *Disciplinary Policy and Procedures* addresses appropriate professional conduct with greater detail and specificity. DANB encourages all DANB Individuals to review and uphold the tenets describe in both of these documents.