

These data are presented for informational purposes only and are not intended as a legal opinion regarding dental practice in any state. DANB confers with each state's dental board at least annually regarding the accuracy and currency of this information. To verify, or if you have any questions, please contact your state's dental board.



Measuring Dental Assisting Excellence™

How To Use The Following Charts

Chart 1

View which job designations are used in your state.

Be sure to follow the legal requirements to perform dental radiographic procedures.

See which tasks are not permitted by state law.



View the education/training/credential required for each level of dental assisting.




Compare your state's job designations to those used as standardized job titles in the DANB/ADAA Core Competency Study.

Chart 2



Review all the allowable tasks for each level of dental assisting as published in the state practice act.




The numbers next to each task correspond to the 70 numbered tasks that were identified and used in the DANB/ADAA Core Competency Study. Tasks that are not numbered do not directly match one of the 70 tasks, yet are identified by the state in the practice act. A full list of those tasks form your state's chart.



If your state's dental practice act specifically defines levels of supervision, the state-specific definition is noted in the template.

Education/Training/ Credential Required	Job Title According to State of MA	Proposed Standardized National Job Titles (see below)	Radiology Requirements	Functions NOT Permitted by Dental Assistants in MA
<p>Note: The legislature of Massachusetts passed a law in January 2009, House Bill 5180, which will require dental assistants to register with the Board of Registration in Dentistry, effective July 1, 2009. The Massachusetts Board of Dentistry will establish the rules and regulations to implement this bill. As updated information becomes available, it will be posted on www.danb.org under "State-Specific Information" or the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Dentistry at www.mass.gov/dph/boards/dn.</p> <p>To perform expanded functions in the state of Massachusetts, a dental assistant must earn one of the following designations: Formally Trained Dental Assistant (FTA) or DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA).</p> <p>To qualify as an FTA, one must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Successfully complete a CODA-accredited dental assisting program that has included a course in radiological techniques and safeguards <p>To qualify as a DANB CDA, one must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a current national DANB CDA Certification 	<p>Formally Trained Dental Assistant (FTA) or DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)</p>	<p>Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA)</p> <hr/> <p>DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) or Registered Dental Assistant (RDA)</p>	<p>To legally operate dental x-ray equipment and perform dental radiologic procedures in the state of Massachusetts, a dental assistant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a current national DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) Certification OR Earn state recognition as a Formally Trained Dental Assistant OR Successfully complete one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Massachusetts Board of Registration in Dentistry-approved course in radiological techniques and safeguards The national DANB Radiation Health & Safety (RHS) exam (within one year of course completion) 	<p>The following functions are not permitted by any level of dental assistant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Place permanent or bonded restorations in or on natural teeth Apply cavity liner or base material Take impressions for fabrications of restorations, appliances, or prostheses Condense or carve amalgam or composite restorations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diagnose oral conditions Treatment plans for dental services Surgically cut or remove hard or soft tissue (not to include gingival curettage) Prescribe medications or drugs Administer general anesthesia, parenteral sedation or conscious sedation Administer local anesthesia Perform extractions Place sutures Perform endodontic therapy Intraorally finish margins or adjust the occlusion of restorations Fabricate dentures Adjust dentures Permanently cement or recement cast restorations or stainless steel crowns Perform orthodontic therapy Apply or finish composite or bonding materials for restorative or cosmetic procedures Perform any other procedure prohibited by the Board
<p>An On-the-Job Trained Dental Assistant in the state of Massachusetts must be trained in the dental office under the supervision of a licensed dentist.</p>	<p>On-the-Job Trained (OJT) Dental Assistant</p>	<p>Dental Assistant</p> <hr/> <p>Entry Level Dental Assistant</p>	<p> The ADAA/DANB Alliance developed a listing of standardized job titles (left) based on its national Core Competency Study conducted from 2002-05.</p> <p>The same study utilized a list of 70 job functions which were determined to be representative of a broad range of dental assisting core competencies.</p> <p>Functions in this state that relate to the national DANB/ADAA Core Competency Study are numbered to the right, using language directly from this state's dental practice act. (The numbers correspond to the study's task numbering system.) </p> <p>Functions listed with bullets are part of this state's practice act but are not specific matches to DANB/ADAA research.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>These state templates reflect the work being done by the ADAA/DANB Alliance to support a uniform national model for one set of dental assisting tasks, levels, and requirements, which will serve as a viable career ladder for dental assistants.</p> </div>	

Job Title
According to
State of MA

Allowable Functions
(Functions with numbers relate specifically to Core Competency designations;
functions with bullets are in this state's practice act but are not specific matches to DANB research)

Formally
Trained
Dental
Assistant
(FTA)
or
DANB
Certified
Dental
Assistant
(CDA)

On-the-
Job
Trained
Dental
(OJT)
Assistant

With Immediate Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Place and remove gingival retraction cord 12. Place amalgam in tooth for condensation by the dentist 14. Irrigate and dry root canals 15. Place and remove orthodontic archwires 15. Place elastics and ligature wires | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 34. Apply cavity varnish 35, 63. Place surgical dressings 40. Apply dental sealants 43. Select and try stainless steel crowns or other pre-formed crown for insertion by dentist 45. Place and remove matrix bands 49. Perform pulp testing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 54-55. Remove temporary restorations with hand instruments 59. Assist in administration of nitrous oxide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place and remove wedges • Prepare teeth for bonding of orthodontic appliances • Remove fixed orthodontic appliances |
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Under Direct Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 29. Preliminary intra-oral fit of bands 42. Place and remove orthodontic separators 44. Take impressions for orthodontic retainers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61. Remove excess cement and bonding agents from bridges and orthodontic appliances with hand instruments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary oral fit of archwires • Select size of headgear |
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Under General Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Chart dental restorations and record lesions 9. Polish teeth after dentist or dental hygienist has determined that teeth are free of calculus 13. Remove sutures 18. Apply anti-cariogenic agents 24. Give oral health instruction 27. Place and remove rubber dam 35, 62. Place and remove periodontal dressings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 37. Take and record vital signs 44. Take impressions for study casts, athletic mouth guards, custom trays 47, 50. Place temporary restorations 47, 54. Cement and remove temporary crowns and bridges 48. Irrigate and aspirate the oral cavity 48. Retract lips, cheek, tongue and other oral tissue parts 48. Isolate the operative field 56. Apply topical anesthetic agents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 68. Perform minor emergency orthodontic adjustments to eliminate pain and discomfort 69. Remove surgical dressings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform dietary analysis for dental disease control • Take intra-oral photographs • Take wax bite registrations for identification purposes • Take oral cytologic smears • Insert and/or perform minor adjustment of athletic mouth guards and custom fluoride |
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Note: This state allows dental assistants to perform a separate set of orthodontic functions, which are specified by state in a section at the end of this booklet. Any functions specific to orthodontic assisting included on this page will also be reflected in the orthodontic assisting duties section of this booklet.

With Immediate Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Remove gingival retraction cord 12. Place amalgam in tooth for condensation by the dentist 14. Irrigate and dry root canals 15. Place and remove orthodontic archwires 15. Place elastics and ligature wires | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 27. Place and remove rubber dam 29. Preliminary intra-oral fit of bands 34. Apply cavity varnish 42. Place and remove orthodontic separators 44. Take impressions for orthodontic retainers 59. Assist in administration of nitrous oxide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61. Remove excess cement and bonding agents from bridges and orthodontic appliances with hand instruments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare teeth for bonding of orthodontic appliances • Remove fixed orthodontic appliances • Select size of headgear • Preliminary oral fit of archwires |
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Under Direct Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 13. Remove sutures 35, 62. Place and remove periodontal dressings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44. Take impressions for study casts, athletic mouth guards, custom trays 48. Irrigate and aspirate the oral cavity 48. Isolate the operative field | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 56. Apply topical anesthetic agents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take wax bite registrations for identification purposes • Take oral cytologic smears |
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Under General Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Chart dental restorations and record lesions 24. Give oral health instruction 37. Take and record vital signs 47, 50. Place temporary restorations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 48. Retract lips, cheek, tongue and other oral tissue parts 68. Perform minor emergency orthodontic adjustments to eliminate pain and discomfort | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take intra-oral photographs • Perform dietary analysis for dental disease control |
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***Immed. Supervision:** Supervision of dental procedures based on instructions given by a licensed dentist who remains in the dental facility, personally diagnoses the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedures, and before dismissal of the patient, evaluates the performance of the auxiliary.
Direct Supervision: Supervision of dental procedures based on instructions given by a licensed dentist who remains in the dental facility while the procedures are being performed by the auxiliary.
General Supervision: Supervision of dental procedures based on instructions given by a licensed dentist but not requiring the physical presence of a supervising dentist during the performance of those procedures.

Massachusetts (Orthodontic)

State-approved 1/1/09
Updated by DANB 1/1/09

Education/Training/ Credential Required?	Job Title According to State of MA	Proposed Standardized National Job Titles (see below)	Radiology Requirements	Functions <u>NOT</u> permitted by orthodontic assistants in MA
<p>To perform orthodontic functions in the state of Massachusetts, a dental assistant must earn the national DANB Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA) Certification.</p>	<p>DANB Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA)</p>	<p>Expanded Functions Orthodontic Assistant (EFOA)</p> <hr/> <p>DANB Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA) or Registered Orthodontic Assistant (ROA)</p> <hr/> <p>Orthodontic Assistant</p> <hr/> <p>Entry Level Orthodontic Assistant</p>	<p>To legally operate dental x-ray equipment and perform dental radiologic procedures in the state of Massachusetts, a dental assistant must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Hold a current national DANB Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) Certification OR Earn state recognition as a Formally Trained Dental Assistant (see requirements in dental assisting section of this book) OR Successfully complete one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Massachusetts Board of Registration in Dentistry-approved course in radiological techniques and safeguards • The national DANB Radiation Health & Safety (RHS) exam (within one year of course completion) <p>The ADAA/DANB Alliance developed a listing of standardized job titles based on its national Core Competencies Study conducted from 2002-05, for <u>general</u> chairside assistants only.</p> <p>Currently, only four states (MD, MA, NJ, and OR) recognize one or more separate levels of orthodontic assisting.</p> <p>If the ADAA/DANB Alliance were to attempt to replicate the general chairside assistant Core Competencies Study for orthodontic assistants, the templates would contain the proposed standardized job titles that appear at left.</p> <p>Some functions in the general chairside Core Competencies Study are also appropriate for orthodontic assistants. The study utilized a list of 70 job functions which were determined to be representative of a broad range of dental assisting core competencies.</p> <p>Functions in this state that relate to the national DANB/ADAA Core Competency Study are numbered to the right, using language directly from this state's dental practice act. (The numbers correspond to the study's task numbering system.)</p> <p>Functions listed with bullets are part of this state's practice act but are not specific matches to DANB/ADAA research.</p>	<p>The following functions are not permitted by any level of orthodontic assistant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Place gingival retraction cord 9. Polish teeth after dentist or dental hygienist has determined that teeth are free of calculus 18. Apply anti-cariogenic agents 27. Place and remove matrix bands 33. Place permanent or bonded restorations in or on natural teeth 34. Apply cavity liner or base material 40. Apply dental sealants 46. Take impressions for fabrications of restorations, appliances, or prostheses 47, 54. Cement and remove temporary crowns and bridges 49. Perform vitality tests 51. Condense or carve amalgam or composite restorations 63. Place surgical dressings 69. Remove surgical dressings 70. Select and try stainless steel crowns or other pre-formed crowns for insertion by dentist • Diagnose oral conditions • Treatment plans for dental services • Surgically cut or remove hard or soft tissue (not to include gingival curettage) • Prescribe medications or drugs • Administer general anesthesia, parenteral sedation or conscious sedation • Administer local anesthesia • Perform extractions • Place sutures • Perform endodontic therapy • Intraorally finish margins or adjust the occlusion of restorations • Fabricate dentures • Adjust dentures • Permanently cement or recement cast restorations or stainless steel crowns • Perform orthodontic therapy • Apply or finish composite or bonding materials for restorative or cosmetic procedures • Place and remove wedges • Insert and/or perform minor adjustment of athletic mouth guards and custom fluoride • Perform any other procedure prohibited by the Board

Job Title
According to
State of MA

Allowable functions
(Functions with numbers relate specifically to Core Competency designations, functions with bullets are not specific matches to the list.)

DANB
Certified
Orthodontic
Assistant
(COA)

With Immediate Supervision*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Remove gingival retraction cord 12. Place amalgam in tooth for condensation by the dentist 14. Irrigate and dry root canals 15. Place and remove orthodontic archwires | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Place elastics and ligature wires 27. Place and remove rubber dam 34. Apply cavity varnish 54. Remove temporary restorations with hand instruments • Assist in administration of nitrous oxide | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare teeth for bonding of orthodontic appliances • Remove fixed orthodontic appliances |
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Under Direct Supervision*

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|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 15. Preliminary oral fit of archwires 42. Place and remove orthodontic separators | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44. Take impressions for orthodontic retainers 45. Preliminary intra-oral fit of bands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 61. Remove excess cement and bonding agents from bridges and orthodontic appliances with hand instruments • Select size of headgear |
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Under General Supervision*

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Chart dental restorations and record lesions 13. Remove sutures 24. Give oral health instruction 33. Place temporary restorations 35, 62. Place and remove periodontal dressings 37. Take and record vital signs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 44. Take impressions for study casts, athletic mouth guards, custom trays 48. Retract lips, cheek, tongue and other oral tissue parts 48. Isolate the operative field 48. Irrigate and aspirate the oral cavity 56. Apply topical anesthetic agents 68. Perform minor emergency orthodontic adjustments to eliminate pain and discomfort | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform dietary analysis for dental disease control • Take intra-oral photographs • Take wax bite registrations for identification purposes • Take oral cytologic smears |
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***Immediate Supervision:** Instructions are given by a licensed dentist who remains in the dental facility, personally diagnoses the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedures, and, before dismissal of the patient, evaluates the performance of the auxiliary.

Direct Supervision: Instructions are given by a licensed dentist who remains in the dental facility while the procedures are being performed by the auxiliary.

General Supervision: Instructions are given by a licensed dentist but do not require the physical presence of a supervising dentist during the performance of the procedures.

Dental Assisting Functions List

The following is a list of 70 dental assisting tasks developed by the ADA/DANB Alliance in the course of its research. These selected tasks were determined to be representative of a broad range of dental assisting core competencies.

Functions in each state that correspond to the national Core Competency Study functions are **numbered** in the Career Ladder Template, using language directly from the state's dental practice act. Functions listed with **bullets** in the Career Ladder Template are part of the state's practice act but are not specific matches to DANB research.

1. Perform mouth mirror inspection of the oral cavity
2. Chart existing restorations or conditions
3. Phone in prescriptions at the direction of the dentist
4. Receive and prepare patients for treatment, including seating, positioning chair, and placing napkin
5. Complete laboratory authorization forms
6. Place and remove retraction cord
7. Perform routine maintenance of dental equipment
8. Monitor and respond to post-surgical bleeding
9. Perform coronal polishing procedures
10. Apply effective communication techniques with a variety of patients
11. Transfer dental instruments
12. Place amalgam for condensation by the dentist
13. Remove sutures
14. Dry canals
15. Tie in archwires
16. Demonstrate knowledge of ethics/jurisprudence/patient confidentiality
17. Identify features of rotary instruments
18. Apply topical fluoride
19. Select and manipulate gypsums and waxes
20. Perform supragingival scaling
21. Mix dental materials
22. Expose radiographs
23. Evaluate radiographs for diagnostic quality
24. Provide patient preventive education and oral hygiene instruction
25. Perform sterilization and disinfection procedures
26. Provide pre- and post-operative instructions
27. Place and remove dental dam
28. Pour, trim, and evaluate the quality of diagnostic casts
29. Size and place orthodontic bands and brackets
30. Using the concepts of four-handed dentistry, assist with basic restorative procedures, including prosthodontics and restorative dentistry
31. Identify intraoral anatomy
32. Demonstrate understanding of the OSHA Hazard Communication Standard
33. Place, cure and finish composite resin restorations
34. Place liners and bases
35. Place periodontal dressings
36. Demonstrate understanding of the OSHA Bloodborne Pathogens Standard
37. Take and record vital signs
38. Monitor vital signs
39. Clean and polish removable appliances and prostheses
40. Apply pit and fissure sealants
41. Prepare procedural trays/armamentaria set-ups
42. Place orthodontic separators
43. Size and fit stainless steel crowns
44. Take preliminary impressions
45. Place and remove matrix bands
46. Take final impressions
47. Fabricate and place temporary crowns
48. Maintain field of operation during dental procedures through the use of retraction, suction, irrigation, drying, placing and removing cotton rolls, etc.
49. Perform vitality tests
50. Place temporary fillings
51. Carve amalgams
52. Process dental radiographs
53. Mount and label dental radiographs
54. Remove temporary crowns and cements
55. Remove temporary fillings
56. Apply topical anesthetic to the injection site
57. Demonstrate understanding of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Guidelines
58. Using the concepts of four-handed dentistry, assist with basic intraoral surgical procedures, including extractions, periodontics, endodontics, and implants
59. Monitor nitrous oxide/oxygen analgesia
60. Maintain emergency kit
61. Remove permanent cement from supragingival surfaces
62. Remove periodontal dressings
63. Place post-extraction dressings
64. Fabricate custom trays, to include impression and bleaching trays, and athletic mouthguards
65. Recognize basic medical emergencies
66. Recognize basic dental emergencies
67. Respond to basic medical emergencies
68. Respond to basic dental emergencies
69. Remove post-extraction dressings
70. Place stainless steel crown



Levels of Supervision

An important consideration in the discussion of the delegation of tasks to dental assistants is that of supervision of dental assistants by their dentist-employers. The American Dental Association (ADA) has identified four levels of supervision for dental auxiliaries, including dental assistants, which it defines in its “Comprehensive Policy Statement on Allied Dental Personnel,” (2006: 307) which is part of its *Current Policies*, last updated in 2007. Note that “allied dental personnel” refers to dental assistants, dental hygienists, and dental laboratory technicians.

The four levels of supervision defined by the ADA are as follows:

Personal supervision. A dentist is personally operating on a patient and authorizes the allied dental personnel to aid treatment by concurrently performing a supportive procedure.

Direct supervision. A dentist is in the dental office or treatment facility, personally diagnoses the condition to be treated, personally authorizes the procedures and remains in the dental office or treatment facility while the procedures are being performed by the allied dental personnel and, before dismissal of the patient, evaluates the performance of the allied dental personnel.

Indirect supervision. A dentist is in the dental office or treatment facility, has personally diagnosed the condition to be treated, authorizes the procedures and remains in the dental office or treatment facility while the procedures are being performed by the allied dental personnel, and will evaluate the performance of the allied dental personnel.

General supervision. A dentist is not required to be in the dental office or treatment facility when procedures are being performed by the allied dental personnel, but has personally diagnosed the condition to be treated, has personally authorized the procedures, and will evaluate the performance of the allied dental personnel.

Furthermore, the ADA’s Comprehensive Policy Statement on Allied Dental Personnel stipulates that intraoral expanded functions should be performed by allied dental personnel “only under the direct supervision of a dentist.”

Because the study of dental assisting core competencies undertaken by the ADAA/DANB Alliance did not address the question of supervision, the ADAA/DANB Alliance does not make any recommendations as to the levels of supervision that should be necessary for the delegation of the tasks included in the study to dental assistants. However, the ADAA/DANB Alliance believes it is important to call attention to the fact that, while the ADA has defined supervision levels in the aforementioned policy statement, which governs the ADA’s own activities and the activities of its members, these definitions have not been uniformly adopted by the dental boards of every U.S. state or district.

For the purposes of this volume, if a state’s dental practice act specifically defines levels of supervision, the state-specific definition is noted in the template.



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