

## CAREER PROFILE

### **JOB DESCRIPTION**

Dental assistants provide patient care, take x-rays, keep records, and schedule appointments. Tasks may include:

- Telephone triage and scheduling
- Updating and filing patient medical records
- Handling billing and payments
- Taking vital signs and medical histories
- Instructing patients (tooth brushing, flossing, etc.)
- Performing chairside during procedures
- Mixing dental materials as required by the dentist
- Ensuring patients are comfortable in the dental chair
- Preparing patients and the work area for treatments and procedures
- Sterilizing dental instruments
- Handing instruments to dentists during procedures
- Drying patients' mouths using suction hoses and other equipment
- Taking and processing x-rays and completing lab tasks, under the direction of a dentist

### **PAY**

Median pay \$46,450 per year (\$22.38 per hour) as of May 2023

### **JOB OUTLOOK**

7% (Faster than average) 2022-2032

### **EDUCATION/TRAINING**

Becoming a certified dental assistant in Ohio requires a short-term training program to prepare the student for certification.

### **IMPORTANT SKILLS**

- **Detail-oriented.** Dental assistants must follow specific rules and protocols, such as infection control procedures, when helping dentists treat patients.
- **Dexterity.** Dental assistants must be good at working with their hands. They generally work in tight spaces on a small part of the body, using precise tools and instruments.
- **Interpersonal skills.** Dental assistants work closely with dentists. They also must be considerate in working with patients who are sensitive to pain or have a fear of undergoing dental treatment.
- **Listening skills.** Dental assistants must pay attention to patients and other healthcare workers. They need to follow directions from a dentist or dental hygienist so they can help treat patients and perform tasks, such as taking x-rays.
- **Organizational skills.** Dental assistants need to have the correct tools in place for a dentist or dental hygienist to use when treating a patient, and they need to maintain patient schedules and office records.

## TRAINING PROGRAMS

### **CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER**

*Brecksville*

Dental Assisting Program (7-month, 216 clock-hour) with a four module curriculum: (1) Dental Assisting Responsibilities/Preventative Dentistry, (2) Restorative Dental Materials/Chairside Assisting Radiology, (3) Dental Office Procedures/Dental Assisting Methods, and (4) Applied Chairside Assisting/Dental Lab Processes.

[cvccworks.edu/adult-education/adult-education-programs/dental-assisting/](http://cvccworks.edu/adult-education/adult-education-programs/dental-assisting/)

### **LAKELAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

*Kirtland*

A 7-month Dental Assisting Certificate that prepares students to take the national certification exam to become a Registered Dental Assistant (RDA).

[lakelandcc.edu/web/about/dental-assisting](http://lakelandcc.edu/web/about/dental-assisting)

## TRAINING PROGRAMS (continued)

### **POLARIS CAREER CENTER**

*Middleburg Hts.*

#### **A 10-week Adult Dental Assistant Program**

Certifications/License

- Ohio Dental Assistant Radiographer license (at student's expense, \$35)
- AHA Healthcare Provider CPR
- Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) (taken at testing center)

[polaris.edu/o/pcc/page/dental-assisting](http://polaris.edu/o/pcc/page/dental-assisting)

### **LORAIN COUNTY JVS**

*Oberlin*

#### **A 156-hour adult program in dental assisting and dental radiography**

This program prepares students for a chair-side position in a dental office. The course introduces dental anatomy, terminology, dental specialties, chair-side assisting, laboratory procedures, infection control, sterilization procedures, dental instruments, and mixing dental materials. The course also offers a 7-hour initial training course for Dental Assistant Radiographer.

[www.lcjvs.com/DentalAssistingRadiography](http://www.lcjvs.com/DentalAssistingRadiography)

*Extended training option for certified dental assistants interested in Restorative Dentistry:*

### **CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY EXPANDED FUNCTION DENTAL AUXILIARY**

*Cleveland*

This program trains certified dental assistants (CDA) with a strong desire to further their dental expertise in the art of restorative dentistry. Ohio EFDAs specialize in the placement of advanced remedial intraoral procedures—including the placement of preventative or restorative materials limited to sealants and metallic/non-metallic restorative materials (fillings).

[case.edu/dental/prospective-students/expanded-function-dental-auxiliary-efda](http://case.edu/dental/prospective-students/expanded-function-dental-auxiliary-efda)