

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 yearly pay was \$47,300 per year (\$22.74 per hour) as of May 2024

JOB OUTLOOK

6% (Faster than average) 2024-2034

EDUCATION/TRAINING

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

Ohio State Dental Board recognizes:

- DANB, Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) Certification
- Certified Ohio Dental Assistant Certification by the Ohio Commission on Dental Assistant Certification (CODA)
- Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) by the American Medical Technologists

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.

CERTIFICATE & DEGREE PROGRAMS

CUYAHOGA VALLEY CAREER CENTER (Brecksville)

Dental Assisting Program (7-month, 216 clock-hours) with a four-module curriculum:

1. Dental Assisting Responsibilities/Preventive Dentistry
2. Restorative Dental Materials/Chairside Assisting
3. Radiology and Related Dental Office Procedures/Dental Assisting Methods
4. Applied Chairside Assisting/Dental Lab Processes

cvccworks.edu/adult-education/adult-education-programs/dental-assisting/

CERTIFICATE & DEGREE PROGRAMS *(continued)*

FORTIS COLLEGE (Cuyahoga Falls)

Adult Dental Assisting Program

A one-year hybrid program, Monday through Thursday. Provides students with hands-on strategies and techniques for working directly with the dentist in the treatment or operating room.

www.fortis.edu/programs/dental/dental-assisting.html

LAKELAND COMMUNITY COLLEGE (Kirtland)

Dental Assisting Certificate

A seven-month program that prepares students through blended classroom learning and hands-on training. The program starts in May, and students earn their certificate in December. If a student chooses, they may return to further their education, and their dental assisting credits/certificate will be applied toward the Associate of Multiskilled Health Technology Degree.

lakelandcc.edu/web/about/dental-assisting

LORAIN COUNTY JVS (Oberlin)

Adult Program in Dental Assisting & Dental Radiography

This approximately four-month, two evenings/week program prepares students for a chairside position in a dental office. Introduces dental anatomy, terminology, dental specialties, chairside 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 Radiographers.

acc.loraincountyjvs.com/healthcare

POLARIS CAREER CENTER (Middleburg Hts.)

Adult Dental Assistant Program

The 675-hour/39-week program includes dental competencies, computer technology, practice management, and an unpaid 180-hour externship.

polaris.edu/o/pcc/page/dental-assisting

STARK STATE COLLEGE (North Canton)

Dental Assisting Diploma Program or Associate Degree Program

This program offers flexible scheduling and can be completed in two semesters with 21 credit hours. After completion, the student can sit for the certification exam and apply for the dental assistant radiographer certificate. The associate degree pathway includes approximately 63 credit hours.

www.starkstate.edu/academics/explore-all-programs/dental-assisting/

STAUTENZENBERGER COLLEGE (Brecksville)

Dental Assisting Diploma Program

A ten-month, 60-credit-hour hybrid program that provides students with didactic, laboratory, and clinical instruction in dental assisting procedures, including chairside assisting, dental office administration, infection control, and dental treatment procedures.

www.sctoday.edu/programs/dental-assistant

RESTORATIVE DENTISTRY - EXTENDED TRAINING OPTIONS:

Ohio Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary (EFDA) programs train certified dental assistants in the art of restorative dentistry, training for specialization in advanced remedial intraoral procedures—including the placement of preventative or restorative materials limited to sealants and metallic/non-metallic restorative materials (fillings).

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY (Cleveland)

Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary program

case.edu/dental/prospective-students/expanded-function-dental-auxiliary-efda

STARK STATE COLLEGE (North Canton)

Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary (EFDA) Technology program

www.starkstate.edu/academics/explore-all-programs/expanded-functions-dental-auxiliary/

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

DENTAL ASSISTING NATIONAL BOARD

www.danb.org/