



Operating A Dental Practice In Alberta

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Introduction

The College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta (CDSA) provides this document to assist Alberta dentists who are operating a dental practice or establishing a new dental practice. The document addresses the owner dentist(s) responsibilities as they relate to the CDSA when operating or establishing a dental practice. The document is targeted at new dental practices, but the same responsibilities apply to existing dental practices as well.

The document **does not** address items that are outside the authority of the CDSA such as but not limited to employer responsibilities, financial and accounting matters, items related to the Alberta Dental Association/Canadian Dental Association such as fee guides or electronic billing etc., building code compliance or inspections that may be required, nor requirements of any other municipal, provincial, or federal laws and regulations that may apply.

Legislation and the CDSA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice can be found at <https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/>.

Legislation

Refer to <https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/>.

Standards of Practice

Refer to <https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/>.

NOTE, Legislation and Standards of Practice change over time so dentists should regularly confirm they have the most up to date documents. The most recent documents can be found at <https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/>.

A. Member Registration

The Health Professions Act (HPA) *Part 2* provides the framework for registering as a dentist in Alberta.

Registration information, application, and other required forms to register as a dentist with the CDSA can be found online at: <https://www.cdsab.ca/becoming-a-dentist/>.

B. Infection Prevention and Control

The CDSA Standard of Practice: *Infection Prevention and Control Standards and Risk Management for Dentistry* is intended to protect dentists, their staff, and their patients from infectious disease transmission. Dental Health Care Personnel must apply this Standard of Practice in a diligent and conscientious manner. The CDSA Infection Prevention and Control Standard of Practice document is evidence based to the largest extent possible and established on current references. These standards set minimum requirements for infection prevention and control policies and procedures as well as minimum requirements for cleaning, disinfection, and sterilization of reusable medical devices in all dental facilities and settings. Higher standards may be required based on specific circumstances. Standards and guidelines established by Health Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) and the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) may also be applicable.

Refer to the [Infection Prevention and Control](#) page of the member website for additional information related to the Standard of Practice: *Infection Prevention and Control Standards and Risk Management for Dentistry*.

C. Practice Visits

There is no requirement for a dentist to have a Practice Visit from the CDSA before opening their practice.

There is no need to contact the CDSA to arrange a practice visit. Practices are selected on a random basis and the Regulatory Programs Coordinator will contact the dentist(s) to arrange the visit.

As part of registration renewal all dentists are required to complete and submit the CDSA, Practice Review Questionnaire form once during each Continuing Education 2-year reporting term. For example, for January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2023, Continuing Education reporting term each dentist would complete the questionnaire form once.

Practice Visits are a component of the [Health Professions Act](#), the [Dentists Profession Regulation](#), and the Continuing Competence Program. Practice Visits are not part of the disciplinary process. They are professional visits designed to assist dentists in improving their competency. Practice Visits are supportive in a preventive, educational and pro-active manner.

D. CPR, AED and Emergency Drug/Equipment, Airway Management and Sedation Monitoring Requirements

Two motions were passed at the October 2019 Council meeting.

Motion: Effective January 1, 2021, that all regulated members of the CDSA must have yearly HCP/CPR including AED or equivalent certification.

Motion: Effective January 1, 2021, that all Alberta dental offices must have a working AED on their premises.

For information related to first aid, emergency drug and equipment requirements for dental offices refer to <https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/cpr-aed-and-drug-requirements/>.

E. Professional Corporations

The CDSA is charged with the responsibility of administering dental professional corporations in Alberta.

Any registered dentist in Alberta can become incorporated. You should seek the advice of your legal counsel on when it would be in your best interests to incorporate. A professional corporation information package can be found online <https://www.cdsab.ca/practice-resources/professional-corporations/>.

Part 5 of the *HPA* provides the parameters for conducting dental practice in Alberta and makes it clear that only a registered member or a professional corporation may engage in the practice of dentistry. All the provisions of the Act, the Regulations, and the Bylaws that are applicable to an individual registered member apply with equal force and with all necessary modifications to a professional

corporation. The Act does not permit there to be different rules depending on whether a dentist practices individually or as a professional corporation.

You must advise the CDSA of all professional corporation changes. Questions should be directed to ProfessionalCorporations@cdsab.ca.

F. Standard of Practice: Practice Arrangements and Provision of Professional Services

The *HPA Part 5 Business Arrangements* provides the parameters for conducting dental practice in Alberta. The *HPA* makes it clear that only a registered member or a professional corporation may engage in the practice of dentistry.

The purpose of this Standard of Practice is to identify the professional, regulatory, and legal accountability of every regulated member (Dentist) for all aspects of the professional services they provide and the environment in which they are provided to assure compliance with the *HPA*.

Every Practice is required to appoint a Responsible Dentist. This is the Dentist with the key responsibility for the Practice and who is ultimately responsible for compliance with dental laws by the Practice. The Responsible Dentist will have specific reporting requirements to the College of Dental Surgeons of Alberta (CDSA) under this Standard of Practice.

Dentists are accountable for all aspects of the Professional Services they provide, regardless of the Practice arrangement in which the professional services are provided. Being accountable means that a Dentist is ultimately responsible to the CDSA, patients, and the public.

Complete the Responsible Dentist and Practice Arrangements Form Online www.cdsab.ca/responsible-dentist-and-practice-arrangements-form.

G. Unforeseen Event Reporting

Unforeseen Events (UFE) are events related to patient status or outcomes that are considered significant indicators of health and safety factors for patients which may or may not be associated with harm to the patient. All dental offices who provide minimal and moderate sedation and accredited facilities who provide deep sedation and general anaesthesia are required to report unforeseen events to the CDSA. General and specialty dental offices who do not provide sedation are also required to report unforeseen events to the CDSA.

In the event of an Unforeseen Event, a telephone report to the CDSA must be made immediately or no later than 9 a.m. the following morning for events occurring after hours no later than 9 a.m. the following day, and 9 a.m. Monday for event occurring on a weekend. Please call 780-432-1012.

The online fillable Unforeseen Event Report (UFE) must be completed within two weeks of the telephone reporting to the CDSA. Handwritten reports will not be accepted.

<https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/unforeseen-event-reporting/>.

For questions and inquiries please contact the CDSA at UFE@cdsab.ca

H. Radiation Health and Safety Program for Dental Facilities, X-Ray Equipment, Cone Beam CT, and Dental Lasers

The CDSA is designated as an Authorized Radiation Health and Registration Agency under the Government of Alberta Radiation Protection Program.

In the Province of Alberta dental X-ray equipment and facilities, as well as dental lasers are governed by the *OHS Act* and Code. These documents specify that owners and staff have certain obligations to ensure the health and safety of themselves, their patients, and the public.

Regulated members of the CDSA that own designated radiation equipment must register the equipment with the CDSA. For additional information refer to the website <https://www.cdsab.ca/practice-resources/radiation-health-and-safety-program/>.

For additional information and the online application form for Application for Registration of Designated Radiation Equipment see <https://www.cdsab.ca/practice-resources/radiation-health-and-safety-program/>.

I. Occupational Health and Safety

In Alberta, the legislated requirements for workplace health and safety are outlined in the *Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Act, Regulation and Code*. The *OHS Act* authorizes the government to make workplace health and safety regulations and codes. The *OHS Regulation* details the government policy and administrative matters. The *OHS Code* outlines the technical safety standards that employers and workers must follow.

The *Alberta OHS Act, Regulation and Code* set out the legal requirements that employers and workers must meet to protect the health and safety of workers. Employers must be knowledgeable of their responsibilities for workplace health and safety as detailed in the *OHS Act, Regulation and Code*. For many health and safety topics, employers (including dentists) must develop and maintain written procedures, plans and codes of practice.

Employer OHS responsibilities fall outside the authority of the CDSA provides dentists with resources to assist with implementing OHS requirements related to exposures to bloodborne pathogens, recapping needles and safety engineered needles.

The resources include the Bloodborne Pathogen-Needlestick Protocol, Policy Protocol Syringes & Safety Engineered Syringes (SES) Word doc template and the OHS Acceptance – Recapping Needles from OHS December 11, 2019. See the member website <https://www.cdsab.ca/patients-general-public-protection/public-protection/legislation/infection-prevention-and-control/>.

Additional information on employer responsibilities under OHS can be found at:

- <https://www.alberta.ca/ohs-act-regulation-code.aspx/>
- [Government of Alberta - Handbook of occupational hazards and controls for dental workers](#)
- [Government of Alberta OHS Health and Safety Topics](#)