

DENTAL ASSISTING

The goals of the Registered Dental Assisting program is to provide marketable skills in clinical chairside, radiographic and laboratory procedures. Registered Dental assistants perform a broad scope of dental procedures and administrative functions under the supervision of dentists and dental hygienists. The Orange Coast College Registered Dental Assistant program prepares you to sit for the Registered Dental Assistant examination through the Dental Board of California.

Registered Dental assistants may perform the following services:

- Operate and maintain dental equipment
- Expose and prepare dental x-rays
- Administer periodontal dressings
- Apply topical anesthetics
- Place preventative sealants
- Take tooth impressions
- Coronal Polish
- Maintain Infection Control protocols related to patient care
- Assist in all aspects of dental patient care and oral care instruction
- Schedule patients and maintain dental records
- Ultrasonic scaling for cement removal

The work may include laboratory and clinical procedures, office duties, patient intake and education. Registered Dental assistants may work in private or group dental practices, general dentistry or dental specialties such as orthodontics, periodontics, children's dentistry, and other specialties. The work schedule can be full-time or part-time, providing flexibility in working hours.

The employment outlook is excellent and is expected to continue growing. In California, there is a severe shortage of qualified Registered Dental Assistants. Opportunities exist in general dentistry or dental specialties, such as oral and maxillofacial surgery, orthodontics, endodontics, periodontics, children's dentistry, and other specialties. Preventive dentistry has reduced the incidence of oral disease. As a result, the growing older population will retain their teeth longer and will be even more aware of the importance of regular dental care. Dentists will need to employ more dental assistants than ever before to meet the increased demand for dental services.

A career as a Registered Dental Assistant is a pathway to pursue additional certification after obtaining your RDA, including Registered Dental Assistant Expanded Function (RDAEF), Registered Dental Assistant Oral Sedation (RDAOS), and Registered Dental Assistant Orthodontic Assistant (RDAOA). Other areas of interest include Dental Hygiene and Dental School after Registered Dental Assisting clinical experience.

Department Contact Information

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Dental Assisting Department Website (<https://orangeoastcollege.edu/academics/consumer-health/allied-health/dental-assisting/>)

- Dental Assisting - Registered, Certificate of Achievement (<https://catalog.cccd.edu/orange-coast/pathways/careers-healthcare/dental-assisting/dental-assisting-registered-certificate-achievement/>)

- Dental Assisting - Registered, Associate in Science Degree (<https://catalog.cccd.edu/orange-coast/pathways/careers-healthcare/dental-assisting/dental-assisting-registered-associate-science-degree/>)