

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
CLASS SPECIFICATION**

**Code No. 002105
Grade 21**

DENTAL HYGIENIST

DEFINITION OF CLASS:

This is community dental health and clinical dental hygiene work providing dental health outreach, education and case management in conjunction with providing prophylactic dental treatment to County residents. Contacts involve significant interactions in a variety of settings (clinics, schools, homes, etc.) with a wide range of persons having different outlooks and skill sets, including educators (such as Head Start teachers), social workers, health care providers, medical and dental professionals and dental clients from diverse backgrounds. Contacts are made to explain and coordinate activities pursuant to public dental health education and individual care and case management. Case management includes referrals to various health care providers, financial assistance, etc., as well as clinical follow-up. Dental education and health services provided to County residents constitute immediate and short-term public service and assistance on a daily, recurring basis to many people.

An employee in this class serves as lead worker while performing same or similar work with responsibility for performing dental inspections and prophylaxis and providing oral health care instructions and dental health educational services in a variety of settings. The incumbent is required to have knowledge of standard prophylactic dental procedures and techniques to perform a variety of recurring assignments and to be able to recognize when to refer the dental patient to a dentist for treatment (if not already scheduled). The employee must independently plan the work to be done and proceed with dental prophylaxis and education assignments, using judgment in selecting and applying the appropriate guidelines, references, and procedures to specific dental cases or educational situations. Complexity is marked by the varied work processes and methods used to physically examine and assess the teeth and oral structures of the subject, to determine appropriate hygiene intervention(s) to recommend to the patient or the dentist, and to analyze the issues (technical and non-technical, including cultural, family and communication challenges) in each assignment. The dental services are provided to a wide range of County residents and affect their physical and social well-being. Work involves dexterity of arms, hands and fingers and periods of standing, bending, and lifting or pushing of objects up to 20 pounds. Work is mainly performed in clinic and classroom settings with some discomforts, such as awkward positioning of the body and exposure to dangerous bodily fluids, such as saliva and blood, and liquid and aerosolized chemicals. Hazards include contact with body fluids, sick people with potential for exposure to contagious diseases and radiographic equipment with potential for exposure to radiation. Hazards require strict adherence to special safety precautions and routine use of safety equipment, including goggles or a face shield, a mask and gloves.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES: (Illustrative Only)

- Performs oral prophylaxis involving scaling of calculus, curettage, polishing and application of medicaments.
- Provides assistance to dentist by examining and caring for dental and oral conditions of dental clinic patients.
- Exposes and processes dental radiograms.

- Obtains patients' basic medical and dental histories and records oral conditions.
- Schedules, plans and conducts classroom-type group sessions in oral hygiene including lectures, demonstrations and discussions. Instructs patients (from young to old, and healthy to sickly) and patient groups (including the pregnant, under-privileged and under-served) in oral hygiene, diet and nutrition as they relate to oral health and how oral health affects general health.
- Selects and adapts instructional materials and presentations to meet the needs of a particular community - e.g., preschoolers, seniors.
- Motivates dental clients and groups to follow professional dental advice.
- Manages cases by identifying patient needs, consulting with agencies/providers, making referrals and following-up. Advises clients on dental hygiene and related aspects of oral health.
- Informs them of and refers them to financial assistance centers for financial aid.
- Serves as resource person in oral health education for school personnel and other interested groups and organizations.
- Maintains an inventory of and cares for dental instruments, equipment, medications and supplies.
- Maintains records of dental clients and program activities.
- Performs related duties as required.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES:

- Knowledge of core dental hygiene sciences, the related clinical techniques and procedures, and the standard dental instruments and materials to examine teeth using appropriate dental instruments, make basic dental assessments, perform routine prophylactic treatment (such as cleaning, scaling and polishing the teeth) and provide basic oral health care instructions and informational services to patients or their guardians/care givers.
- Knowledge of common oral diseases and abnormal conditions, such as dental decay, gingivitis, abnormalities of tooth position, size and form, oral abscesses, abnormal growth, and other conditions, including their cause and effect on the patient's health sufficient to recognize the presence of these conditions, explain their etiology to patients or guardians/care providers, provide the necessary prophylactic treatment, provide education in the prevention of tooth decay and inflammation of the gums and help ensure coordination and integration of dental and medical information.
- Knowledge of dental radiology (including radiographic principles, intraoral and extraoral techniques, processing, exposure factors, radiation safety and basic radiographic anatomy) to identify normal anatomic landmarks on x-rays and to use these x-rays as aids in the treatment and education of the patient. Knowledge of modern disinfection, sterilization and prophylactic equipment and techniques to protect oneself and patients against infectious diseases, such as AIDS, Hepatitis B and Tuberculosis.
- Knowledge of dental clinic procedures and practices, in a public health setting, to include administrative requirements to take, record, use and safeguard medical and dental histories, record oral conditions of the teeth, use insurance codes and fee tables, etc. This includes skill in keeping records.
- Knowledge of the principles of public health, standards of practice in Maryland and professional ethics that govern the dental treatment provided to ensure provision of appropriate care and adherence to ethical practices.
- Some knowledge of oral health education principles and skill in planning and providing individual and group oral health care instructions for diverse demographic groups to promote oral health and motivate clients with special needs toward the practice of effective oral hygiene.

- Skill and dexterity in manipulating a variety of instruments while performing prophylactic procedures and in the use and care of dental equipment, including dental x-ray and film-developing devices.
- Skill in speaking before school and other community groups concerning dental health care.
- Skill in interpersonal contacts to deal courteously and effectively with people from diverse backgrounds.
- Skill in case management to identify patient needs, consult with agencies/providers, make referrals and follow-up.
- Ability to complete continuing education units required by State of Maryland Board of Dental Examiners to maintain licensure.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:

Experience: None.

Education: Graduation from a school of Dental Hygiene accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA-CODA) and approved by the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners.

Equivalency: None.

LICENSE:

- Possession and maintenance of a valid license issued by the Maryland State Board of Dental Examiners to practice as a Dental Hygienist.
- Possession and maintenance of certification in CPR.
- Possession and maintenance at all times of a valid Class "C" (or equivalent) driver's license from the applicant's state of residence.

Note: There will be no substitutions for this section.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD:

Individuals appointed or promoted to this class will be required to serve a probationary period of six (6) months, during which time performance will be carefully evaluated. Continuation in this class will be contingent upon successful completion of the probationary period.

MEDICAL EXAM PROTOCOL: Core Exam.

Class Established: August 1964

Revised: January 1974

August 1978

February 1986

Classification Study: February 1992 (M)

Classification Study: March 1999 (M)

Classification Study: February 2007 (M)

August 2013

October 2014

February 2015

Classification Study: March 2015 (M)

Revised (Minimum One-Years' Experience Requirement): March 2025