



**American
Dental
Assistants
Association**

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**American Dental Assistants Association
Statement on the Re-opening of Dental Facilities
May, 2020**

The American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA) recognizes that these are very challenging times, and it continues to provide the latest information to the profession of dental assisting in a useful and timely manner.

The ADAA remains deeply concerned for the health and well-being of the public and the need to protect the entire dental team, including what we proudly believe to be the backbone of that team, the dental assistant.

The association believes that there must be a careful balance struck between:

- the well-being of the public;
- the safety of all oral health care team members;
- the desire of our dental assistants to get back to work; and
- the need for the American economy to start up again.

The association recognizes the potential costs to our patients of not opening dental practices again soon. The longer our patients are without regular dental care, the potential cost to them in regard to the deterioration of their overall health and to the amount and cost of needed oral care continues to grow.

ADAA recognizes the states wield a great deal of authority in the timing of when and how the state economies open and the conditions under which those economies open. Of course, this greatly affects dental offices and the dental community in general. ADAA recognizes that our current knowledge of the coronavirus is incomplete. With the daily changes in our understanding of COVID-19, no one can be sure about the appropriate timing of such actions.

The association recognizes that while it is vital for states to reopen their economies, it must be done in an appropriate manner. It is important that the provision of dental care open at the appropriate time for the health and well-being of our patients and to enhance the ability of both our members as well as all other oral health care professionals to safely return to work again.

"The people who make dental assisting a profession!"

Having said all this, the ADAA believes that dental facilities should only open in accordance with appropriate guidelines published by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA); Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC); the American Dental Association (ADA); the Organization for Safety, Asepsis and Prevention (OSAP); and state Health Departments. Patients and all members of the oral health care team should be able to participate in a safe environment during the provision of needed oral health care.

A dental facility should open in a way consistent with the aforementioned guidelines only if they are prepared to:

- create safe environments for all staff;
- properly screen their patients and all oral health care team members;
- provide and effectively use appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE);
- educate the staff on the proper donning and doffing of PPE;
- provide proper barriers where appropriate, especially for hard-to-clean surfaces; and
- appropriately disinfect operatories, process and sterilize instruments, and other armamentarium.

The association will continue to update its recommendations concerning the provision of oral care during this period on an ongoing basis as new information becomes available.

For further information, please visit the ADAA COVID-19 resource page at <https://www.adausa.org/Education/Coronavirus-COVID-19>.

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