



District of Columbia
DENTAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

February 2025, Vol. 74, No. 2



Dr. Hillary Abel

Letter from DC Dental Society President Hillary Abel, DMD

Dear Colleagues,

I am honored to address you here for the first time as the President of the DCDS. It is truly a privilege to serve such a distinguished community of dental professionals, and I am eager to work alongside each of you to advance our shared mission of excellence in healthcare.

We are looking forward to a very exciting year for our constituency. With two of our member dentists now serving on the Board of Dentistry, we are hopeful for increased collaboration that will benefit

both our profession and our members. Last year, we had great success in addressing concerns related to agendas that posed potential risks to our profession.

Thanks to the dedicated advocacy of our member dentists and support staff, the District of Columbia Dental Society (DCDS) successfully opposed the **Dental Specialties Licensure and Scope of Practice Amendment Act**, which sought to mandate board certification for all specialist dentists. Had this requirement been enacted, it would have effectively restricted nearly half of all specialists from practicing in Washington, D.C., under the specialty for which they were trained. In addition, we engaged in constructive discussions with the **Department of Health Care Finance** regarding increases in Medicaid reimbursement rates for dental services. We remain committed to advocating for these necessary adjustments to ensure fair compensation for providers and continued access to quality care for patients. Building on this momentum, our priorities moving forward include addressing **Botox licensing regulations** and advocating for the **appropriate registration process for dental assistants**. These initiatives are critical to ensuring the continued advancement and accessibility of the dental profession in our community.

Additionally, I am thrilled to announce that we will be hosting **SmileCon, the ADA's 2025 national meeting**, right here in Washington, D.C., from **October 23-25**. This is a tremendous opportunity to showcase our city and the strength of our dental community. We encourage all of you to participate and represent our small but mighty society. In conjunction with SmileCon, we will also be hosting our **Symposium for Licensure on Saturday, October**

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February Virtual-Only CE Event: "Glass ionomer and resin cements in Restorative Dentistry " Tuesday, February 11th

Presented by Dr. Robert Margeas

Business Meeting Begins at 5:45 PM

Education Program Begins at Approximately 6:00 PM

Lecture Format

CE Credits Offered: 2.0

Disclosures: None



Dr. Robert Margeas

Award-Winning General and
Cosmetic Dentist in Des
Moines, IA

[Register Here](#)

Ericka Walker, Executive Director of the DC Board of Dentistry, will provide a brief update on the DC Board of Dentistry's Incentivized Time Period For Registration of Dental Assistants during the business meeting. See page 7 for additional details.

Cost: Free to DCDS Members | Non-Members—\$75 Presentation Recording or \$110 In-Person

Visit the [DCDS Registration Fees & Cancellation Policy page](#) for more details on registration and [read about the presenter here.](#)

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Continuing Education Disclaimer: The District of Columbia Dental Society is an ADA CERP Recognized Provider. ADA CERP is a service of the American Dental Association to assist dental professionals in identifying quality providers of continuing dental education. ADA CERP does not approve or endorse individual courses or instructors, nor does it imply acceptance of credit hours by boards of dentistry. It is the responsibility of each participant to verify the CE requirements of his or her licensing or regulatory agency and to contact them with any questions regarding licensing. The DC Dental Society designates the above presentations for 2 CE credits.

Concerns or complaints about a CE provider may be directed to the provider or to the **Commission for Continuing Education Provider Recognition** at ADA.org/CERP.

ADA CERP® | Continuing Education
Recognition Program

Letter from the President, Continued

25. DCDS remains committed to providing engaging and effective pathways for fulfilling licensure renewal requirements. Our programs will offer you and your dental team the opportunity to complete courses that meet the specific criteria set forth by the Board of Dentistry. We anticipate registration will open in early June, with the speaker lineup to be announced in the coming weeks. Additional details and event updates will be shared as they become available.

As we embark on this new chapter together, my vision is to build upon our strong foundation while exploring new opportunities for professional growth, advocacy, and community engagement. Our profession is constantly faced with evolving technologies, regulatory changes, and new challenges shaping the way we practice. Now, more than ever, it is essential that we stand together, support one another, and ensure that our voices are heard.

In 2025, DCDS is proud to be one of five state-level dental societies selected to participate in a special **American Dental Association (ADA) initiative**, the **Membership and Engagement Program**. This program is designed to provide greater flexibility in membership by lowering the base cost and allowing members to customize their experience with optional programs and benefits that best suit their needs.

As part of our ongoing commitment to member support, **DCDS launched a new benefit in January**—the **DCDS Member Assistance Program**, available at no cost to all member dentists, their dental team members, and household members. In partnership with **AllOne Health**, this program offers a comprehensive suite of resources to support mental, emotional, professional, and financial well-being. Services are accessible **24/7/365** through the **AllOne Health portal**, with additional live support available via a toll-free number and online chat. Members can take advantage of life coaching, mental health sessions, financial consultations, and a range of other valuable services. Additionally, the **DCDS Wellness Committee** is actively developing new programs this year to further support the overall well-being of our members. We look forward to sharing more details in the coming months.

I encourage each of you to stay engaged, share your insights, and actively participate in shaping the future of DCDS. Your involvement is invaluable, and together, we can continue to elevate the profession and make a lasting impact. **If you would like to get involved in DCDS activities, please write to info@dcdental.org.**

Thank you for your trust and support and I look forward to working with you all in the year ahead. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your ideas, concerns, or aspirations for our society.

Warm regards,

Hillary Abel, DMD
President 2025-2026

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2025 Continuing Education Program

All members of the DC Dental Society, including those in a residency program, are invited to attend our monthly CE meetings at no cost. We hope you will join us in-person at the DCDS office to reconnect with your friends and colleagues in the dental community over dinner, while earning up to 2 hours of continuing education credits.

The monthly business meeting begins at 5:45 p.m. Educational session begins at approximately 6:00 p.m.

[Visit the DCDS website](#) for course information, speaker bios, fees and cancellation policy.

About DCDS Speakers

Your DC Dental Society has developed a continuing education program that features leading experts in dental care whether they practice across the country or down the street. The inclusion of local presenters on the program for DCDS monthly meetings is intended to foster collegiality and support our local community. DCDS does not endorse one specialist over another, but celebrates DC talent.

2025 Meeting Date	Meeting Topic	Speaker
February 11 Webinar Only	Cements and Restorations	Dr. Robert Margeas
March 11	The Wild World of Dental Insurance	Ms. Teresa Duncan
April 8	Elevate Your Everyday Anterior Composites, a Practical Predictable Approach	Dr. Marcos Vargas
May 13	Utility of p53 Immunohistochemistry in Oral Epithelial Dysplasia	Dr. Yen Chen Kevin Ko
June 10	Restorative Prosthodontics	Dr. Kenneth Kurtz
September 9	Antibiotic Prophylaxis - The Adoption of Recent Concepts	Dr. Ronald Brown
October	No monthly CE meeting. This year DCDS will host the Symposium for Licensure in conjunction with ADA SmileCon. Watch for details.	
November 11 Webinar Only	Update on Dental Materials	Dr. Lee Ann Brady
December 9	Proven Methods to Build a World-Class Practice	Dr. Roger Levin

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Concerns or complaints about a CE provider may be directed to the provider or to the **Commission for Continuing Education Provider Recognition** at [ADA.org/CERP](https://www.ada.org/CERP).



The DC Dental Society has partnered with AllOne Health to provide a Member Assistance Program to help you, your staff and members of your household reduce stress, improve mental health, and make life easier by connecting you to the right information, resources, and referrals. This benefit is made available to all DCDS members free with your membership as a thank you.

Below is an article from AllOne Health to help you leverage conflict constructively in the workplace.

[Visit the DCDS Member Assistance program page to access your benefits](#)

Let's Normalize Conflict and Tension to Build Stronger Workplaces



By **Jill Hinrichs**, Leadership and Team Development Coach, AllOne Health

Conflict is often seen as something to avoid, but what if we shifted our perspective? What if, instead of dodging tension, we embraced it as a powerful tool for growth, innovation, and stronger relationships?

I recently found myself in the middle of a conflict, and I'll admit—I didn't handle it well. I got caught up in the moment, reacting defensively, raising my voice, and walking away emotionally drained. Afterward, I couldn't stop replaying the interaction in my head. *Who was that? Why did I react that way? I know better!*

Then it hit me: I don't get enough practice handling conflict. Like many people, I've spent years avoiding it. But here's the reality—**conflict is normal, and it can actually be a good thing.**

From Conflict Avoider to Proactive Problem-Solver

Since that uncomfortable moment, I've committed to addressing tension head-on. Instead of avoiding difficult conversations, I now recognize them as opportunities to strengthen trust, improve decision-making, and foster collaboration. And the results? Transformational.

- My team is more open and trusting.
- We make better decisions because we actively seek out different perspectives.
- Creativity and innovation are flourishing because people feel heard.

How to Create a Conflict-Resilient Culture

If you want to normalize conflict—whether for yourself or within your organization—here are three tips for getting started:

1. Acknowledge That Conflict is Normal

Say it out loud: **Conflict is a natural and necessary part of teamwork.** When we recognize that tension is not a failure but an opportunity, we shift from avoidance to engagement.

2. Establish a Framework for Addressing Tension

Having a clear process helps teams navigate conflict constructively. Here's a simple framework:

- **Identify the tension** – What is really causing the conflict? Take time to reflect before reacting.
- **Understand different perspectives** – What are others experiencing? Journaling or perspective-taking exercises can help.
- **Define your goal** – Are you trying to complete a project, improve a relationship, or gain alignment? A clear goal leads to a productive conversation.
- **Address the tension** – Engage in open, honest dialogue with a focus on solutions.

3. Use Practical Conflict-Resolution Exercises

Here are three techniques to help teams navigate conflict effectively:

- **Root Cause Analysis** – Dig deeper into the issue by asking "Why?" five times to uncover the true source of tension.
- **Continue/Start/Stop Exercise** – Ask team members: *What should I continue doing? What should I start doing? What should I stop doing?*
- **Nonviolent Communication** – Use a structured approach: *"I feel [emotion] when [specific action] happens. My request is [solution]."*

The Payoff: Less Stress, Better Results

Our natural instinct is to avoid conflict because it feels uncomfortable. But when we lean into it, we reduce stress, find solutions faster, and prevent escalation.

If you're ready to build a **conflict-resilient culture** within your organization, let's talk. Our **Creating a Conflict-Resilient Culture Program** provides the tools and strategies you need to transform tension into a catalyst for growth.

Interested? [Let's connect.](#)



ADA.

EXCLUSIVE WELLNESS RESOURCES FOR ADA MEMBERS AND DENTAL STUDENTS



Find programs and resources to support your mental, emotional and physical well-being at [ADA.org/Wellness](https://ada.org/Wellness).



Talkspace Go
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Your well-being, your way. Talkspace Go, a self-directed therapy app, can help you address the challenges like work stress, relationships and burnout. Get your exclusive ADA access code for complimentary access at [ADA.org/TalkspaceGo](https://ada.org/TalkspaceGo).



Well-Being Index (WBI)
[ADA.org/Well-BeingIndex](https://ada.org/Well-BeingIndex)

Your health matters. The ADA provides members access to the Dental Well-Being Index (WBI), a validated, anonymous risk assessment tool invented by the Mayo Clinic. Log into your ADA account then set up your WBI account. In just one minute, you'll have access to a personalized dashboard and resources, allowing you to track your well-being over time.



**State Well-Being
Program Directory**
(updated in 2024)
[ADA.org/WellnessDirectory](https://ada.org/WellnessDirectory)

Looking for help and guidance? Support may be closer than you think. This directory links you to local resources, state contacts, and ADA Wellness Ambassadors, ensuring you have the assistance you need right in your community.



**ADA Ergonomic
Stretches**
[ADA.org/Stretch](https://ada.org/Stretch)

Better ergonomics, stretching, and exercise help dental teams build long, healthy careers. Download the ADA Ergonomic Stretches infographic with 25 quick stretches or access the ADA Member app for more resources to keep you and your dental team healthy.



**After a Suicide
Postvention Toolkit**
[ADA.org/Postvention](https://ada.org/Postvention)

Developed in 2023 by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP) and the ADA, the *After a Suicide Postvention Toolkit* provides guidance for those responding to a suicide death for professional dental settings.



**National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline**

If you or someone you know is experiencing suicidal thoughts or a crisis, please text or dial 988 to be connected to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. This service is free and confidential. For a medical emergency dial 911.



BOARD OF DENTISTRY Policy on Incentivized Time Period For Registration of Dental Assistants CHECKLIST

To submit an acceptable Application Cover Letter and Unregistered Practice Admission and Agreement for review and processing, please be sure to submit all the required supporting documents listed below based on submission by the Dental Assistant and Supervisory Dentist/Practice Owner.

Each item indicates whether it can be submitted via the [Online Application Portal](#), or by **MAIL** to DC Health. The address is below.

Also, please keep a photocopy of any submitted documents for your records, as they will not be returned.

Dental Assistant

Complete and submit **as part of the application** for a dental assistant registration or reinstatement of a dental assistant registration:

- Application Cover Letter** utilizing the [Online Application Portal](#)
- Unregistered Practice Admission and Agreement** utilizing the [Online Application Portal](#)
- Payment of \$250, made payable to "DC Treasurer". Include a copy of the **Application Cover Letter and Unregistered Practice Admission and Agreement** (**Submit by MAIL***)
- Two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics (**Submit by MAIL***)

Supervisory Dentist/Practice Owner Signature

- Completed, signed, and dated **Application Cover Letter** (**Submit by MAIL***)
- Completed, signed, and dated **Unregistered Practice Admission and Agreement** (**Submit by MAIL***).
- Payment of \$500, made payable to "DC Treasurer" (**Submit by MAIL***)
- Two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics (**Submit by MAIL***).

*** Documents labelled "Submit by MAIL" may also be hand delivered/dropped off to the Processing Center located on the 1st Floor of 2201 Shannon Place, SE Washington, DC 20020**

Board Mailing Address:
Board of Dentistry
2201 Shannon Place SE
Washington, DC 20020

Board Email Address: dcbod@dc.gov



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION

BOARD OF DENTISTRY
AUTHORITY FOR GUIDANCE

SEPTEMBER 2023
DATE OF POLICY

23-001-A
POLICY NO.

REVISED POLICY ON INCENTIVIZED TIME PERIOD FOR REGISTRATION OF DENTAL ASSISTANTS

To lawfully practice as a dental assistant in the District of Columbia, District of Columbia Code § 3-1205.1(a)(2), states that a registration is required. The District of Columbia Board of Dentistry (Board) may also take disciplinary action against a Licensee who aids an unauthorized person in practicing as a dental assistant in the District, pursuant to D.C. Code § 3-120514(a)(12). Beginning September 17, 2012, registration as a dental assistant in the District of Columbia was required by law for any person to practice as a dental assistant or perform any duties of a dental assistant in the District of Columbia.

The Board has elected to implement this policy to provide a temporary incentivized time period in which to encourage and facilitate unregistered individuals to come into compliance with District of Columbia law. This is not a grant of amnesty. Individuals who have engaged in unregistered practice will remain subject to a penalty as well as the Licensees who have aided in the unauthorized practice. However, those individuals who voluntarily come forward during this time period, pursuant to the parameters set forth in this policy, will receive a greatly reduced financial penalty.

Incentivized Time Period

January 1, 2025, to April 30, 2025

Requirements:

1. Applicant must fully complete and submit the attached cover letter as part of the application for a dental assistant registration or reinstatement of a dental assistant registration.
2. If the Applicant has not been previously registered, the Applicant is eligible to receive a 90-day supervised practice letter.
3. In addition to application fee, Applicant will be subject to an additional monetary assessment of \$250.00 and required to complete two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics, which may be completed through online courses, pursuant to an agreement entered into with the Board.
4. Supervising dentists or dental practice owners will be subject to a monetary assessment of \$500.00 for each unregistered dental assistant practicing under their supervision or in their dental office, and required to complete two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics, pursuant to an agreement entered into with the Board.

*Individuals who do not submit the required cover letter and come into compliance pursuant to the terms of this policy, during the incentivized time period, are subject to cumulative monetary assessments compounding for each month of unauthorized practice, formal disciplinary action, and possible criminal referral for practicing without a license. Depending on the number of years of non-compliance, the monetary assessments can range as high as \$5,000.00 for dental assistants and \$30,000.00 for dentists.



District of Columbia Board of Dentistry Incentivized Dental Assistant Registration Application Cover Letter

I, _____, have been working at, _____
(Name) (Dental Practice and Address)

in the District of Columbia from _____ to _____ under the supervision of dentist
(Dates/Time Period)

_____. My duties consist of _____
(Supervising Dentist)

Applicant Signature

Date

Supervisory Dentist/Practice Owner Signature

Date

¹ I acknowledge and understand that as a result of the Applicant's unregistered dental assisting practice in the District of Columbia, the Applicant and Supervisory Dentist/Practice Owner will be subject to a monetary assessment of \$250.00 for the Applicant and \$500.00 for the Supervisory Dentist/Practice Owner and required to complete (2) continuing education credit hours in ethics, pursuant to an agreement, but the cover letter and agreement cannot be used against me for any other purpose. I acknowledge and understand that the benefits and protections of this cover letter shall only apply to applications submitted with this completed cover letter between January 1, 2025, to April 30, 2025. Failure to provide correct and complete information on this cover letter may result in additional penalties.

**District of Columbia Board of Dentistry
Incentivized Dental Assistant Registration**

**Unregistered Practice Admission and Agreement
(Dental Assistant Applicant)**

The DC Board of Dentistry has temporarily established a policy to impose a monetary assessment of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) on the **dental assistant** applicant and require completion of two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics, and to impose a monetary assessment of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) on the **supervisory dentist or dental practice owner** for each unregistered dental assistant, and to require completion of two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics. The policy is only in effect from **January 1, 2025, to April 30, 2025.**

You have admitted on the attached cover letter that you have engaged in unregistered dental assisting in the District of Columbia, you may resolve this issue by:

1. Completing and signing this document;
2. Submitting the required payment of \$250.00, made payable to “DC Treasurer”;
3. Submitting the required two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics, which cannot be used to meet any renewal or reinstatement of registration continuing education requirements.

I accept the Board’s offered agreement under the Incentivized Time Period Policy #23-001-A in resolution of this matter as an administrative matter. I agree to pay the monetary assessment of \$250.00 and to complete (2) Board-approved continuing education credit hours in ethics, and to submit these items as part of my application. I agree that I must submit these items before I can be approved for a dental assistant registration in the District of Columbia.

Applicant Signature

Date

FOR THE BOARD:

Michelle Latortue, DDS
Board Chairperson

Date

This agreement is an administrative matter and shall not be construed as disciplinary in nature. The Board has not charged the Applicant with a violation of District law. The Board will not voluntarily disclose this agreement or its terms. However, Applicant understands and agrees that this agreement is subject to disclosure through a request made under the Freedom of Information Act, by subpoena, or court order, or in the event that the Applicant fails to comply with the terms of the agreement.

**District of Columbia Board of Dentistry
 Incentivized Dental Assistant Registration**

**Unregistered Practice Admission and Agreement
 (Supervising Dentist/Dental Practice Owner)**

The DC Board of Dentistry has temporarily established a policy to impose a monetary assessment of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) on the **dental assistant** applicant and require completion of two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics, and to impose a monetary assessment of five hundred dollars (\$500.00) on the **supervisory dentist or dental practice owner** for each unregistered dental assistant, and to require completion of two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics. The policy is only in effect from **January 1, 2025, to April 30, 2025.**

You have admitted on the attached cover letter that an unregistered individual engaged in dental assisting in the District of Columbia in your dental office or under your supervision. You may resolve this issue by:

1. Completing and signing this document;
2. Submitting the required payment of \$500.00, made payable to “DC Treasurer”;
3. Submitting the required two (2) Board-approved continuing education credits in ethics, which cannot be used to meet any renewal or reinstatement of licensure continuing education requirements.

 I accept the Board’s offered agreement under the Incentivized Time Period Policy #23-001-A in resolution of this matter as an administrative matter. I agree to pay the monetary assessment of \$500.00 (for each dental assistant) and to complete (2) Board-approved continuing education credit hours in ethics. I agree that I must submit these items within thirty (30) days after the date of signing this agreement.

Dentist’s Signature and License number _____ Date _____

FOR THE BOARD:

Michelle Latortue, DDS _____ Date _____
 Board Chairperson

This agreement is an administrative matter and shall not be construed as disciplinary in nature. The Board has not charged the Licensee with a violation of District law. The Board will not voluntarily disclose this agreement or its terms. However, Licensee understands and agrees that this agreement is subject to disclosure through a request made under the Freedom of Information Act, by subpoena, or court order, or in the event that Licensee fails to comply with the terms of the agreement.

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2 \$5,000 is the minimum requirement to refinance. The maximum loan amount is \$300,000 for those with medical, dental, pharmacy or veterinary doctorate degrees, and \$150,000 for all other undergraduate or graduate degrees.

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DENTAL SOCIETY**

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District of Columbia
DENTAL SOCIETY

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We’ve saved over \$26,000—and counting. AND, we didn’t have to change credit card processors. Who wouldn’t appreciate saving both effort and money, which can now remain right where it belongs: in our own offices. All I had to do was send them the last three months of statements and they took it from there! The beauty of their win/win business model lies in its nature: they only benefit from actual savings achieved. If they can’t save you money, there’s no charge for their efforts.

If you’re tired of feeling like you’re at the mercy of credit card companies, it’s time to take action. Let Merchant Advocate be your guide to greater financial freedom. Reach out to them today and start reclaiming control over your bottom line.”



**-Dr. Aliya Kassam
Two Aces Dentistry
Washington, DC**

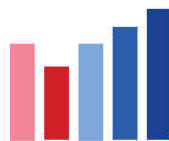


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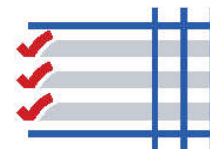
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Classifieds

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