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Moving?

Here's what you need to know about getting a license in your new state:

Most states have some provision for dental hygienists already licensed in another state to obtain a license without retaking the clinical examination. It may be called licensure by endorsement, licensure by credentials—or rarely—reciprocity. The basic requirements will be:

- An active license in good standing.
- Almost always recent practice experience, although requirements for time in practice varies by state.
- Successful completion of the national board written exam.
- Successful completion of a clinical licensure exam – some states accept any clinical, while others only accept certain regional examinations.
- Graduation from a CODA accredited dental hygiene program.

If you are a newer graduate without enough practice to qualify for licensure by endorsement, you still may be able to submit newer scores from a clinical exam you have taken and apply for licensure by examination using that score.

Some other possibilities to check into if the state does not have licensure by credentials available for you

- The state may have temporary licensure to enable practice until the next time an exam is given.
- The state may have a special license if you agree to practice in certain public health/difficult access facilities.
- Practice is permitted with ANY valid license in federal facilities—like Indian Health Service clinics or military bases.

There is no such thing as automatic “reciprocity” among states which use the same clinical exam. You always need to apply for a license in the new state.

Depending on the state, there may be additional criteria to meet such as:

- Passing a state jurisprudence exam.
- Undergoing a professional background check. (Note: A background check may be performed by an independent agency and be a cost in addition to the application fee.)
- Letters of recommendation.
- Board interview.
- Qualification in an expanded function, such as local anesthesia.
- CPR certification or CE credits that correspond to what the new state requires.

How do I find out more?

For general information about how to obtain a license to practice in another state without retaking a clinical exam, please see the [State Licensure by Credentials/Endorsement Chart](#). It provides basic information on fees, examinations, and previous practice requirements states use in order to grant licensure by credential/endorsement.

Not all states offer licensure by credential/endorsement and not all dental hygienists interested in relocating meet the practice and other requirements necessary to obtain licensure by credential/endorsement. For those who will need to retake clinical examinations, the ADHA Dental Hygiene Clinical Examinations Summary notes applicant requirements, fees, patient treatment requirements, and other details associated with various clinical examinations administered in the United States.

Select State

Typically, states provide an easy to access webpage on dental hygiene licensure where you can see specific rules and often download an application.

If you have more questions or need assistance contacting a state board, email Governmental Affairs at gov.affairs@adha.net or call .

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