



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF A POLICY STATEMENT

Title of Policy Statement: Dental Hygiene Initial Limited License Expiration Date Extension during the COVID-19 Response. Policy Number: HSQA OAS E03.1

Issuing Entity: Department of Health, Health Systems Quality Assurance

Subject Matter: Extending the 18-month expiration date for the dental hygiene initial limited license while in-person examinations required to renew are cancelled or postponed during the ongoing COVID-19 response.

Effective Date: October 1, 2021

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OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
STATE OF WASHINGTON
FILED

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**Department of Health
Office of Health Professions
Dental Hygiene Examining Committee**

Policy Statement

Revised – 10/18/11

Title:	Dental Hygiene Initial Limited License Expiration Date Extension during the COVID-19 Response.	Number: HSQA OAS E03.1
References:	RCW 18.29.190 , RCW 43.70.280 , Governor Proclamation 20-05 , Governor Proclamation 20-32 (v.1 released March 26, 2020)	
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Approved By:	Christie Spice, HSQA Assistant Secretary	

The Department of Health (department) will allow an additional extension of the 18-month expiration date for the dental hygiene initial limited license until September 30, 2022 due to the ongoing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) emergency response and the Governor issued proclamation declaring a state of emergency: [Proclamation 20-05](#). Policy statement HSQA OAS E03 originally provided an extension until September 30, 2021.

Dental hygienists are allowed to practice with an initial limited license up to 18 months with conditional application requirements as stated in [RCW 18.29.190\(2\)](#). Conditional application requirements include successfully completing an approved dental hygiene patient evaluation/prophylaxis examination, an approved local anesthesia written and clinical examination, an educational program on the administration of local anesthesia and nitrous oxide and demonstrating didactic and clinical competency in the administration of nitrous oxide analgesia. A limited license allows dental hygienists, who have not completed all of the Washington State examinations or educational requirements, to perform hygiene procedures within a limited scope of practice as outlined in [RCW 18.29.190\(3\)](#).

During the on-going response to the COVID-19 emergency, in-person dental hygiene examinations continue to be cancelled or postponed. The Dental Hygiene Examining Committee (committee) continues to review potential non-patient based exam options. After several meetings, the committee determined that no non-patient exams that meet licensing requirements are currently available. Therefore, dental hygienists with a limited license approaching either the initial 18-month expiration date or an extended expiration date would still not be able to apply for a renewable limited license and would not be able to continue to practice.

On March 26, 2020, the Governor issued [Proclamation 20-32](#) that waives and suspends rulemaking requirements related to licensing health care workers. The Governor extended Proclamation 20-32 on

January 19, 2021 to remain in effect until the termination of the state of emergency pursuant to RCW 43.06.210 or until the proclamation is extended. Based on [Proclamation 20-32](#), the Secretary of Health extended health profession license expiration dates for licenses up for renewal between April 1 and September 30, 2020. This extension allowed health professionals to focus on patient care, without worrying about renewal requirements.

To continue protecting public health, beginning October 1, 2021 the department will extend the initial limited license expiration date until September 30, 2022. Depending on whichever is later, this policy will be in effect through September 30, 2022 or until the declared state of emergency issued under [Proclamation 20-05](#) is rescinded.