

Dental Quality Assurance Commission Coronavirus Screening in Dental Offices December 2020

The Washington State Dental Quality Assurance Commission finds that screening for coronavirus is within the scope of practice of a dentist under RCW 18.32.020(4).

A dentist may screen patients for the coronavirus by administering the test, prescribing the test to be administered at a testing site, and delegating the administration of the test to a licensed dental hygienist under general supervision and to a licensed expanded function dental auxiliary or a registered dental assistant under close supervision. A licensed dentist may purchase testing supplies.

Responsibilities of the licensed dentist administering or prescribing a coronavirus test include:

1. Follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens;
2. Notify the patient of results;
3. Refer the patient to their primary care physician, medical clinic, or local health department upon a positive result; and
4. Report all results to Washington State Department of Health.
5. Follow all other local, state, and federal laws.

Screening is a valuable resource for public health during this pandemic. Procedures inherent in dentistry necessitate a better knowledge of who may carry the virus to attempt to reduce the spread. Methods for screening are quickly evolving. As this is a highly dynamic situation, information from resources changes quickly, and keeping current with new practices can be overwhelming.

Resources include:

[Governor’s Proclamation 20-24.1](#)

[Department of Health \(DOH\)](#)

- [Healthcare Providers](#)
- [Conservation of PPE](#)
- [Re-use of PPE](#)
- [Infection control for aerosol generating procedures](#)

- [Pharmacy Plan-19](#)
- [Contact Tracing](#)
- [Report Test Results](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

- [Using PPE](#)
- [Strategies to Optimize PPE Supply](#)
- [Guidance for Dental Settings](#)
- [Interim Guidelines for Collecting, Handling, and Testing Clinical Specimens](#)

[U.S. Department of Labor \(OSHA\)](#)

- [Dentistry Workers](#)

[Organization for Safety Asepsis and Prevention \(OSAP\)](#)

- [COVID Toolkit](#)

[American Dental Association \(ADA\)](#)

[Washington State Dental Association \(WSDA\)](#)

If a dentist processes rapid point-of-care tests in their office a medical test site license or waiver may be required. Please contact the Department of Health Medical Test Site program at lqa@doh.wa.gov.

We appreciate the continued efforts of dentists in serving the public well by how they practice dentistry during this unprecedented challenge.