

There will also be numerous job openings caused by the need to replace assistants who transfer to other occupations, retire, or leave the profession for other reasons. There will continue to be many opportunities for entry-level assisting positions offering on-the-job training.

### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

American Dental Assistants  
Association (ADAA)  
203 North LaSalle St., Suite 1320  
Chicago, IL 60601-1225  
Phone: (312) 541-1550  
Web: [www.dentalassistant.org](http://www.dentalassistant.org)

National Association of Dental  
Assistants  
900 South Washington St.,  
Suite G-13  
Falls Church, VA 22046  
Phone: (703) 237-8616

Dental Assisting National Board,  
Inc. (DANB)  
676 North St. Clair, Suite 180  
Chicago, IL 60611  
Phone: (312) 642-3368  
Web: [www.danb.org](http://www.danb.org)

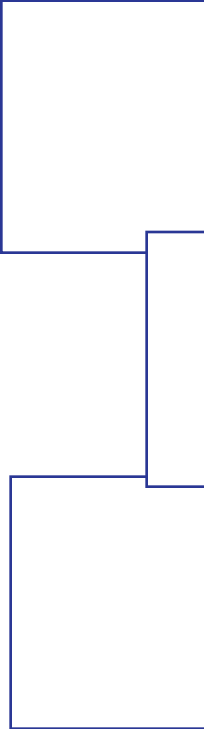


### MHA HEALTH CAREERS CENTER

6425 LAKEOVER ROAD (39213)  
P.O. Box 16444  
JACKSON, MS 39236-6444  
PHONE (601) 982-3251  
FAX (601) 368-3200

[WWW.MSHEALTHCAREERS.COM](http://WWW.MSHEALTHCAREERS.COM)

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## POSITION RESPONSIBILITIES

Dental assistants help dentists and dental hygienists in the delivery and maintenance of oral health care. They perform a wide range of tasks requiring technical as well as people skills. Some of their duties include helping patients feel comfortable during examinations and procedures, taking and processing dental X-rays, sterilizing and disinfecting instruments, recording patients' medical history, assisting in the construction of dentures and models of the teeth and mouth, and providing patients with oral care instructions following certain dental procedures. They may also be called upon to assist in the daily operation and management of the office by answering the phone, collecting fees for services, and maintaining a computerized inventory system. Dental assistants need to be outgoing and cheerful because they are usually the patient's first impression of the dentist office. Another important aspect of dental assisting is aiding the dentist during oral surgery, which requires that an individual be able to anticipate the dentist's needs and sit still and remain alert for several hours through longer procedures. Dental assistants are key members of the dental care team and greatly increase the efficiency of the dentist in the delivery of quality oral health care.

## WORK ENVIRONMENT

Dental assistants work under the supervision of a board-certified dentist. They usually work in dental offices, public health clinics, hospital dental clinics, health maintenance organizations, dental schools, nursing homes, insurance companies (claims), government agencies, the armed forces, and dental product sales.

## HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

Students interested in becoming a dental assistant should take high school courses in biology, algebra, chemistry, English, geometry, dental/medical assisting, computer skills, health occupations/medical professions education, physical education, typing, and office procedures.

## COLLEGE REQUIREMENTS

Individuals interested in dental assisting should have a high school diploma or equivalent. Programs offered at community colleges accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation usually take 12 to 24 months to complete. An individual wishing to become certified may take an examination administered by the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc., which will result in the designation of Certified Dental Assistant (CDA). This will assure the public that the dental assistant is prepared to assist completely in the provision of dental care. Students interested in dental assisting should contact schools for information on admission and course of study.

## EDUCATION

Hinds Community College  
Nursing/Anatomy  
1750 Chadwick Drive  
Jackson, Mississippi  
Phone: (601) 928-1234  
Web: www.hinds.edu

Pearl River Community College  
Forrest Campus  
5448 US Highway 90  
Hattiesburg, Mississippi  
Phone: (601) 833-1234  
Web: www.prc.edu

Average Annual Salary Range

Employment Outlook  
Dental assistants are in demand. The US Department of Labor projects a demand for dental assistants by more than 50% through the decade. The growth in the occupation is growing population and number of teeth well. The demand for dental assistants is