



DENTAL LICENSURE FAQ

WHAT DOES ASDA ADVOCATE FOR IN AN IDEAL LICENSURE EXAM?

ASDA advocates for an ideal licensure exam that does not use human subjects, is psychometrically valid and reliable, is reflective of the scope of current dental practice and is universally accepted. ASDA believes this should be demonstrated through a manikin-based kinesthetic assessment, a non-patient based Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) and submission of a portfolio of comprehensive patient care. This is in line with ASDA's L1 policy as adopted by the House of Delegates.

WHAT IS THE L-1 POLICY?

ASDA's L-1 policy was adopted by the 2016 House of Delegates and outlines ASDA's ideal licensure exam. The L-1 policy directs ASDA's advocacy efforts related to licensure reform and helps form what we ask for when approaching state dental boards and legislators.

HOW LONG HAS ASDA BEEN ADVOCATING FOR THIS, AND WHY WON'T ALL STATES ACCEPT IT?

ASDA has been advocating for licensure reform since the 1990's. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, ASDA members successfully advocated for non-patient based alternatives in states that had favorable climates for change, such as Colorado, California and Iowa. The pandemic catalyzed licensure reform, because the administration of live-patient examinations was not possible due to public health concerns. With non-patient based examinations available, states had alternative pathways to initial dental licensure to accept.

There are many reasons for why states don't accept non-patient based examinations. For many, the live-patient exam is simply what has been done for years. It's tradition. If a state's dental practice act requires a live-patient exam as a requirement for initial dental licensure, the state board must vote to remove that language. Depending on the climate in that state, this can be challenging. Furthermore, many state dental boards' members are examiners with regional testing agencies. This can cause conflicts of interest when determining which exams are accepted in a state. Lastly, states may be more willing to accept alternative pathways to dental licensure as more statistics become available about the reliability and validity of the exams.

DO ALL STATES ACCEPT THE SAME EXAM?

No. There is no single exam accepted in every state. Most states accept examinations administered by one of the five regional testing agencies: CITA, CDCA, WREB, CRDTS and SRTA. Some states also accept alternative exams (portfolio, manikin-based exams, DLOSCE, etc.) or credentials (PGY-1). Many states accept more than one of these pathways to initial licensure.

HOW DO I FIND OUT WHICH EXAM I NEED TO TAKE?

This will depend on the state you are practicing in. The Coalition on Modernizing Dental Licensure's Dental Licensure Map outlines the pathways to initial dental licensure that are accepted in each state. You can also contact the state dental board for more information.

WILL THE CHANGES THAT STATES MADE IN 2020 BECAUSE OF THE PANDEMIC CONTINUE FOR 2021?

As of January 2021, 21 states permanently accept non-patient based alternative pathways to initial dental licensure. ASDA's Board of Trustees appointed a Licensure Task Force to identify ways to advocate for permanent reform in states that accepted temporary changes, or did not make any changes, for the class of 2020.

HOW CAN I GET INVOLVED TO HELP ADVOCATE FOR LICENSURE REFORM?

ASDA encourages dental students to get involved in grassroots advocacy within their state. Interested students should familiarize themselves with ASDA's resources on licensure reform and assemble state-level coalitions of dental students, state dental associations and school administrations where applicable. Advocates should work with their district trustee and state licensure liaison to ensure a coordinated effort.

WHERE SHOULD I BE LOOKING FOR INFORMATION I NEED?

Licensure can be overwhelming. The links included in this document should help you find the information you need. National ASDA is always here for you, too. Please reach out to your district trustee or email licensure@asdanet.org with your licensure reform questions.

RESOURCES

- [DLOSCE Technical Report](#)
- [ASDA's White Paper](#)
- [ASDA's COVID-19 Licensure page](#)
- [ASDA's Licensure Reform Talking Points](#)
- [TARP Report](#)
- [Coalition for Modernizing Dental Licensure website](#)
- [Map of states' licensure requirements](#)

ASDA WEBINARS

- [Licensure Reform Strategy and the Coalition for Modernizing Dental Licensure](#)
- [Action-oriented licensure reform](#)
- [COVID-19 licensure town hall](#)