

STAFFING

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for the appointment of Dentists, GS-0680, in VA.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on staffing. The pages in this handbook replace the existing Dentist Qualification Standard in VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix G3, in its entirety. The new standards are effective on the date of issuance of this handbook. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005, Staffing, that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management Web site](#). Significant changes include:
 - a. Clarifies residency or comparable experience.
 - b. Clarifies dental staff requirements for General Practice Residents, Staff Dentists, Attendings, Consultants, and Managerial/Supervisory dentists.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix G3, dated April 15, 2002.

CERTIFIED BY:

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

/s/
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[APPENDIX G3. DENTIST QUALIFICATION STANDARD
Veterans Health Administration

1. **COVERAGE.** Following are the overall requirements for appointment as a dentist in VHA.

2. **BASIC REQUIREMENTS**

a. **Citizenship.** Citizen of the United States. (Noncitizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens in accordance with section A, chapter 3, paragraph 3g, this part.)

b. **Education.** Degree of doctor of dental surgery or dental medicine resulting from a course of education in dentistry. The degree must have been obtained from one of the schools approved by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs for the year in which the course of study was completed. Approved schools are:

(1) United States and Canadian schools of dentistry listed by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), in the list published for the year in which the course of study was completed.

(2) Schools (including foreign schools) accepted by the licensing body of a State, Territory, or Commonwealth (i.e., Puerto Rico), or the District of Columbia as qualifying for full and unrestricted licensure provided the licensure requirements include a written examination measuring science achievement and a performance examination measuring clinical competence.

NOTE: *The Under Secretary for Health or designee in Central Office may approve the appointment under authority of 38 U.S.C. 7405 of a graduate of a school of dentistry not covered above if the candidate is to be assigned to a research or academic position with no patient care responsibilities. The appointment will be made only in exceptional circumstances where the candidate's credentials clearly demonstrate high professional attainment or expertise in the specialty area. (Also see paragraph 2d(4) below on waiver of licensure provisions.) The Under Secretary for Health or designee may also approve the appointment of a graduate of a school of dentistry not covered above as a resident under 38 U.S.C. 7406.*

c. **Residency or Comparable Experience.** Completion of an approved residency program in general practice or specialty, or comparable experience as a dentist actively involved in treating medically compromised patients. (**NOTE:** *The appointing official may approve, under unusual circumstances, a waiver of Residency or Comparable Experience.*)

d. **Licensure and Registration**

(1) **Dentists (Except Residents).** Current, full, and unrestricted license to practice dentistry in a State, Territory, or Commonwealth of the United States (i.e., Puerto Rico), or in the District of Columbia. The dentist must maintain current registration in the State of licensure if this is a requirement for continuing active, current licensure.

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(2) **Residents (Independent and Integrated Programs).** Graduates of approved United States and Canadian schools of dentistry must have a current, full and unrestricted license to practice dentistry in a State, Territory or Commonwealth of the United States, or in the District of Columbia before the second year of VA residency, *or*, for integrated programs, meet any licensure, registration or other equivalent requirements established for residents of non-VA hospitals with which the VA facility is affiliated for training purposes. The resident must maintain current registration in the State of licensure if this is a requirement for continuing active current licensure.

(3) **Impaired Licensure.** A dentist who has, or has ever had, any license(s) revoked, suspended, denied, restricted, limited, or issued/placed in a probationary status may be appointed only in accordance with the provisions of section B, chapter 3, paragraphs 14 and 17c, of this part.

(4) **Waiver of Licensure.** Licensure may be waived by the Under Secretary for Health or designee in Central Office for individuals in research or academic assignments involving no direct patient care responsibilities in accordance with current regulations.

e. **Physical Requirements.** See VA Directive and Handbook 5019.

f. **English Language Proficiency.** Dentists, including residents, appointed to direct patient-care positions must be proficient in spoken and written English as required by 38 U.S.C. 7402(d) and 7407(d).

3. DENTAL STAFF REQUIREMENTS

a. **General Practice Resident.** None beyond the basic requirements.

b. Residents in Dental Specialties

(1) **First-Year Residents.** None beyond the basic requirements, however, paragraph 2c above does not apply to the appointment of general practice residents.

(2) **Second and Third Year Residents.** An individual at these levels must have the qualifications of the first-year resident, and in addition, the appropriate period of time (1 to 3 years depending on specialty) of approved residency training in the specialty or its creditable equivalent.

c. Dental Staff

(1) **Staff Dentist.** An individual that demonstrates the ability in the field of general dentistry or a dental specialty who is employed to perform the duties related to various professional activities of patient care and treatment without supervision. In addition to meeting the basic requirements, applicants must demonstrate ability in the general practice of dentistry; be capable of assisting in maintaining accepted standards of professional care in VA facilities; and be capable of accepting full responsibility for the proper care and treatment of assigned patients

(2) **Attending.** A dentist who teaches and supervises fellows, residents, and students in the provision of dental treatment for Veterans. The attending dentist has primary responsibility for the care

of the patient and provides direct patient care when not supervising trainees or performing other required duties. In addition to meeting the basic requirements, attendings must demonstrate the following:

(a) Ability in the field of dentistry; and ability to assist in maintaining accepted standards of professional care in VA facilities. Capable of accepting full responsibility for the proper care and treatment of assigned patients.

(b) Ability to train residents assigned to the service in facilities conducting residency training programs. An attending is a qualified dentist possessing privileges to perform all procedures being supervised. Attendings not holding a faculty appointment in an associated dental school must be recognized as an outstanding member of the profession of the caliber of a faculty member.

(3) **Consultant.** A dentist who is capable of giving authoritative views and opinions on subjects in dentistry. A consultant's expertise may consist of broad administrative or professional experience enabling the consultant to give advice of distinctive value. In addition to meeting the basic requirements, consultants must demonstrate the following:

(a) Outstanding professional ability and professional experience in a dental specialty or advanced dentistry;

(b) Ability to direct the educational training of residents in the appropriate specialty in facilities affiliated with approved dental schools. A consultant not holding a faculty appointment in an associated dental school should possess equivalent professional qualifications.

NOTE 1: *A dentist who represents a specialty for which no specialty board exists may be appointed as a consultant if the individual possesses outstanding ability in the particular field of specialization.*

NOTE 2: *All dentists, including residents, consultants and attendings, will accomplish the numerous administrative requirements of medical staff members, including but not limited to: mandatory training; attendance on medical center committees; and computer and privacy compliance.*

(4) **Manager/Supervisor.** A dentist assigned to a managerial or supervisory position. Dental leadership positions are called Directors, Service Chiefs, Assistant Chiefs, Section Chiefs, and/or Lead Dentists. In addition to meeting the basic requirements, Managerial/Supervisory Dentists must demonstrate the following:

(a) Outstanding professional ability in the practice of dentistry or a dental specialty;

(b) Ability to guide the development and implementation of programs within their respective domain. These would include, but are not limited to dental practice, professional standards, personnel issues, quality and performance improvement.

Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7304; 7402.]