



Commission on Dental Accreditation

Via Email Transmission: jfierro@cerritos.edu

September 2, 2025

Dr. Jose Fierro
President
Cerritos College
11110 Alondra Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

RE: Cerritos College, Norwalk, California
Dental Assisting and Dental Hygiene Programs

Dear Dr. Fierro,

At its August 7, 2025 meeting, the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) granted the dental assisting and dental hygiene programs the accreditation status of “**approval without reporting requirements**,” and “**approval with reporting requirements**,” respectively. The definitions of accreditation classifications are linked below. Below is a summary of actions and additional information.

Dental Assisting (Site Visit)

The Commission considered the site visit report on the dental assisting program. The Commission also considered the institution’s response to the site visit report.

On the basis of this review, the Commission adopted a resolution to grant the program the accreditation status of “approval without reporting requirements.”

No additional information is requested from the program at this time. The next site visit for the program is scheduled for **2031**.

Dental Assisting (Program Change)

In a separate action, the Commission considered the June 2025 report describing a proposed program change for the dental assisting program. The Commission noted that the report describes the program relocating back to its newly remodeled facility located at 11110 Alondra Blvd Norwalk, CA 90650. The Commission previously approved the relocation to a temporary facility at its Winter 2022 Meeting. The program began transitioning back into the renovated facility in June 2025. The dental assisting facility will be fully functional and open to the new cohort of students by August 18, 2025.

Following careful review of the information provided, the Commission adopted a resolution to **approve** the report of program change and continue the program’s accreditation status of “approval without reporting requirements.” No additional information related to the change is requested from the program at this time. This change will be reviewed at the time of the next site visit for the program scheduled for **2031**.

Dental Hygiene (Site Visit)

In a separate action, the Commission considered the site visit report on the dental hygiene program. The Commission also considered the institution's response to the site visit report.

Following careful review of the information provided, the Commission adopted a resolution to continue the accreditation status of "approval with reporting requirements."

Based on a review of the response, the Commission determined that the following recommendations contained in the site visit report remain unmet: **#s 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7**. The Commission specified that continued accreditation of the program will be dependent upon the remaining recommendations being met and the program achieving full compliance no later than **August 2027**. When Accreditation Standards are revised during the period in which the program is submitting progress reports, the program will be responsible for demonstrating compliance with the new standards.

Dental Hygiene (Program Change)

In a separate action, the Commission considered the June 2025 report describing a proposed program change for the dental hygiene program. The Commission noted that the report describes the program relocating back to its newly remodeled facility located at 11110 Alondra Blvd Norwalk, CA 90650. The Commission previously approved the relocation to a temporary facility at its Winter 2022 Meeting. The program will begin transitioning back into the renovated facility during the Summer 2025 break, with anticipated completion by the end of 2025.

Following careful review of the information provided, the Commission adopted a resolution to continue the program's accreditation status of "approval with reporting requirements."

The Commission has **approved** the report of program change and **requests additional information** to ensure continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards. If the additional information submitted does not satisfy the Commission, the Commission reserves the right to request additional documentation or conduct a special focused site visit of the program.

Dental Hygiene (Report of Sites Where Educational Activity Occurs)

In a separate action, the Commission considered the June 2025 report describing the **retroactive** addition of three (3) **major** sites where educational activity occurs for the dental hygiene program. The Commission noted that the report described the addition of LA-Gen Hospital Dental Clinic, 1100 North State Street, Los Angeles, California 90033; Martin Luther King Community Hospital Dental Clinic, 1680 East 120th Street, Los Angeles, California 90059; and Long Beach Comprehensive Health Center Dental Clinic, 1333 Chestnut Ave Long Beach, California 90813, as **major** sites where educational activity occurs for the program. Specifically, it is noted that students have gained experience providing dental hygiene care to members of the community in need. Second-year students complete three (3), six (6) hour rotations during both the Fall and Spring semesters at the LA-Gen and Long Beach locations, and three (3), six (6) hour rotations during the Spring semester at the MLK location. Competency assessment occurs at the three (3) sites.

Following careful review of the information provided, the Commission adopted a resolution to **approve** the addition of the site where educational activity occurs and continue the program's accreditation status of "approval with reporting requirements."

In addition, the Commission has **requested supplemental information** to ensure continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards due to the addition of site where educational activity occurs. Use of the educational site is permitted; no special focused site visit is warranted at this time.

Requested Information for February 5, 2026 Commission Meeting:

The “Summary of Recommendations and Required Documentation” found at the end of this letter includes the stated recommendation and required documentation to submit with the progress report to demonstrate compliance.

For the dental hygiene program, the Commission requires one (1) electronic copy of a detailed report addressing the concerns noted in this letter be submitted by November 15, 2025 for consideration at the Dental Hygiene Education Review Committee’s January 5-7, 2026 meeting and the Commission’s February 5, 2026 meeting.

At the link below, please find Guidelines for Preparation of Reports and Documentation Guidelines for Selected Recommendations to assist you in developing a focused, concise report. In addition, the report must include appropriate administrator verification signatures, as outlined in the Guidelines. Please note that if the Review Committee determines that a report does not meet the criteria as outlined in the documentation guidelines, **including appropriate administrator verification and signatures**, the report will be returned to you and will not be reviewed at this meeting. The Commission’s timelines for demonstration of full compliance will not be modified due to a delayed review resulting from improperly formatted reports.

Instructions to assist you in developing and submitting an electronic copy are linked below. The electronic copy must include a signed verification page and must conform to the Commission’s electronic submission guidelines.

General Information

All institutions offering programs accredited by the Commission are expected to adhere to deadlines for requests for program information. If an institution fails to comply with the Commission's request, or a prescribed deadline, it will be assumed that the institution no longer wishes to participate in the accreditation program. In this event, the Commission will immediately notify the chief executive officer of the institution of its intent to withdraw the accreditation of the program(s) at its next scheduled meeting.

Institutions/Programs are expected to follow Commission policy and procedure on privacy and data security related to compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). The Commission’s statement on HIPAA, as well as the Privacy and Data Security Summary for Institutions/Programs (PDF), are found in the Policies/Guidelines section of the Commission’s website at <https://coda.ada.org/policies-and-guidelines/hipaa-compliance>. Programs that fail to comply with CODA’s policy will be assessed an administrative fee of \$4000.

It should be noted that Commission policy allows for the program to appear before the Dental Hygiene Education Review Committee to supplement the written information contained in your progress report. A written request for a special appearance must be submitted to Dr. Kathleen J. Hinshaw, interim senior director, Commission on Dental Accreditation, thirty (30) days prior to the January 5-7, 2026 meeting of the Dental Hygiene Education Review Committee.

If the special appearance request is approved, a representative of the institution will be permitted to appear before the Dental Hygiene Education Review Committee to present the additional information. The special appearance will occur at a specified date and time prior to the committee's consideration of the program's accreditation classification. If additional written materials will be presented, one (1) electronic copy should be submitted by the institution to this office at least one (1) week prior to the meeting, absent documented extraordinary circumstances.

The Commission expects institutions to keep the Commission informed as soon as possible of anticipated changes in any approved educational program offered, particularly in the areas of administration, enrollment, faculty, facilities and curriculum. The Commission's policy and guidelines for reporting program changes are linked below. Guidelines for specific program changes, including reporting enrollment changes, adding sites where educational activity occurs, and developing a teach-out report are found on the Commission's website.

The Commission has authorized use of the following statement by institutions or programs that wish to announce their programmatic accreditation by the Commission. Programs that wish to advertise the specific programmatic accreditation status granted by the Commission may include that information as indicated in italics below (see text inside square brackets); that portion of the statement is optional but, if used, must be complete and current.

The program in dental assisting is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation *[and has been granted the accreditation status of "approval without reporting requirements"]*. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (800) 232-6108 or at 401 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3300, Chicago, IL 60611-4250. The Commission's web address is: <https://coda.ada.org/>.

The program in dental hygiene is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation *[and has been granted the accreditation status of "approval with reporting requirements"]*. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (800) 232-6108 or at 401 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 3300, Chicago, IL 60611-4250. The Commission's web address is: <https://coda.ada.org/>.

The Commission wishes to thank you and the faculty and staff for their cooperation during the site visit. Please contact Ms. Jamie Asher Hernandez at 312-440-4660 or asherhernandezj@ada.org should you need further assistance with dental assisting. Please contact my office at 312-440-2695 or navickask@ada.org should you need further assistance with dental hygiene.

Dr. Jose Fierro
September 2, 2025
Page 5

Sincerely,



Katie Navickas, BSDH, MA
Manager, Allied Dental Education
Commission on Dental Accreditation

KN/ds

Web Links: [CODA Accreditation Status Definitions](#)
[Guidelines for Reporting Program Changes in Accredited Programs](#)
[Electronic Submission Guidelines for General Correspondence](#)

Attachment: Formal Report of the Site Visit

cc: Dr. Elizabeth Riley, instructional dean, Health Occupation Division, Cerritos College,
eriley@cerritos.edu
Ms. Anne Contreras, program director, Dental Assisting Program, Cerritos College,
acontreras@cerritos.edu
Ms. Diane Loera, director, Dental Hygiene Program, Cerritos College, dloera@cerritos.edu
Ms. Elizabeth Daggett, director, Accreditation Division, U.S. Department of Education (via
CODA website)
State Boards of Dentistry (via CODA website)
Institutional Accreditors (via CODA website)
Dr. Frank W. Licari, chair, Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA)
Dr. Kathleen J. Hinshaw, interim senior director, CODA
Ms. Jamie Asher Hernandez, manager, Allied Dental Education, CODA

**Summary of Recommendations and Required Documentation
Cerritos College
Norwalk, California
Dental Hygiene**

Please review the following paragraphs that include the stated recommendations and required documentation to submit with the progress report to demonstrate compliance.

Progress Report:

Recommendation #1: It is recommended that all arrangements with co-sponsoring or affiliated institutions be formalized by means of written agreements which clearly define the roles and responsibilities of each institution involved. (DH Standard 1-7)

The Commission reviewed a narrative stating that the institution is working on an amendment to the facility contracts to be completed by January 31, 2026 and the new agreement will apply to the program's seven (7) major educational activity sites used by the program.

To demonstrate compliance with Recommendation #1 the Commission requests: a fully executed contract between the program and all major education activity affiliation sites which clearly defines the roles and of each institution involved.

Recommendation #2: It is recommended that graduates be competent in providing dental hygiene care for all patient populations including:

- 1) child
- 2) adolescent
- 3) adult
- 4) geriatric
- 5) special needs. (DH Standard 2-12, parts 1-5)

The Commission reviewed a narrative stating that students provide care to all required populations; however, the current tracking system documentation submitted did not reflect students had experiences with all patient populations. The program also noted that full-time faculty will participate in a summer (2025) work project to enhance and develop an effective tracking system that will adequately reflect both the process of care and the minimum patient care experiences for all patient populations, including child, adolescent, adult, geriatric, and special needs patient; however, documentation was not submitted providing evidence that all students are providing dental hygiene care for all patient populations and achieving competency on each patient population.

To demonstrate compliance with Recommendation #2 the Commission requests: 1) evidence that all graduates in the class of 2025 have demonstrated competence in providing dental hygiene care for the child, adolescent, adult, geriatric, and special needs patient populations; 2) provide a tracking form that documents the number of patients completed by student and evidence that all students have completed the competencies; and 3) describe and document how competency is assessed. When presenting information, please identify students as Student 1, Student 2, Student 3, etc. Do not include Protected Health Information (PHI) or Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) in the submission.

Recommendation #3: It is recommended that graduates be competent in providing the dental hygiene process of care which includes:

- a) comprehensive collection of patient data to identify the physical and oral health status;
- b) analysis of assessment findings and use of critical thinking in order to address the patient's dental hygiene treatment needs;
- c) establishment of a dental hygiene care plan that reflects the realistic goals and treatment strategies to facilitate optimal oral health;
- d) provision of comprehensive patient-centered treatment and evidence-based care in a manner minimizing risk and optimizing oral health;
- e) measurement of the extent to which goals identified in the dental hygiene care plan are achieved;
- f) complete and accurate recording of all documentation relevant to patient care. (DH Standard 2-13, a-f)

The Commission reviewed the program's grading instrument titled the Dental Hygiene Inspection Form to demonstrate the clinical dental hygiene process of care was being performed by students. However, the program did not provide data related to completed patients that demonstrate students are competent in providing each aspect of the process of care.

To demonstrate compliance with Recommendation #3 the Commission requests: the program's tracking mechanism to document that all graduates are competent in providing the dental hygiene process of care which includes: comprehensive collection of patient data to identify the physical and oral health status; analysis of assessment findings and use of critical thinking in order to address the patient's dental hygiene treatment needs; establishment of a dental hygiene care plan that reflects the realistic goals and treatment strategies to facilitate optimal oral health; provision of comprehensive patient-centered treatment and evidence-based care in a manner minimizing risk and optimizing oral health; measurement of the extent to which goals identified in the dental hygiene care plan are achieved; complete and accurate recording of all documentation relevant to patient care. Provide a table demonstrating when the dental hygiene process of care was completed to competence by each student for the class of 2025. When presenting information on tracking of experiences and clinical competencies, please identify students as Student 1, Student 2, Student 3, etc. Do not include Protected Health Information (PHI) or Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) in the submission.

Recommendation #4: It is recommended that graduates be competent in providing dental hygiene care for all types of classifications of periodontal diseases including patients who exhibit moderate to severe periodontal disease. (DH Standard 2-14)

The Commission reviewed a narrative explaining the current tracking system has been modified to ensure that students have experiences with all types of classifications of periodontal disease patients including those who exhibit moderate to severe periodontal disease will be implemented for the upcoming academic year.

To demonstrate compliance with Recommendation #4 the Commission requests: evidence that all graduates in the class of 2025 have demonstrated competence in providing dental hygiene care for all types of classifications of periodontal diseases including patients who exhibit moderate to severe periodontal disease. Provide a tracking form that documents the number of patients completed by student and evidence that all students have completed the competencies. Also describe and document how competency is assessed and present example competency assessment forms as applicable. When presenting information, please identify students as

Student 1, Student 2, Student 3, etc. Do not include Protected Health Information (PHI) or Sensitive Personal Information (SPI) in the submission.

Recommendation #6: It is recommended that qualified institutional support personnel be assigned to the program to support both the instructional program and the clinical facilities providing a safe environment for the provision of instruction and patient care. (DH Standard 3-10)

The Commission reviewed a narrative explaining that the position is currently being temporarily filled, however it was noted that a full-time permanent position has not been filled at this time and the program plans to have a permanent position in place in January 2026.

To demonstrate compliance with Recommendation #6 the Commission requests: job description, proof of hire and evidence of time allotment for all qualified institutional personnel assigned to the program to support both the instructional program and the clinical facilities providing a safe environment for the provision of instruction and patient care.

Recommendation #7: It is recommended that when the institution uses an additional facility for clinical education that includes program requirements then the following conditions be met in addition to all existing Standards:

- a) a formal contract between the educational institution and the facility;
- d) the dental hygiene program administrator retains authority and responsibility for instruction and scheduling of student assignments;
- g) the policies and procedures of the facility are compatible with the goals of the educational program. (DH Standard 4-4 a, d, and g)

The Commission reviewed a narrative stating that the institution is working on an amendment to the facility contracts for the seven (7) major educational activity site utilized by the program and are to be completed by January 31, 2026, and the new agreement(s) will apply to all seven (7) major educational activity sites used by the program.

To demonstrate compliance with Recommendation #7 the Commission requests: revised and fully executed formal contracts between the educational institution and all utilized facilities that include all major educational activity sites utilized by the program that demonstrate dental hygiene program administrator retains authority and responsibility for instruction and scheduling of student assignments and the policies and procedures of the facility are compatible with the goals of the educational program.

For the Report of Program Change: The Commission requests: 1) final certificate of occupancy of the new facility and 2) photographs of the facility in a vacant (without students or patients) state.

For the Report of Sites Where Educational Activity Occurs: The Commission requests: updated contracts/memorandum of agreement for the major educational activity sites being reported.