

## **Dental Assisting Application Information Packet**

### **CERRITOS COLLEGE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS DIVISION DENTAL ASSISTING GENERAL INFORMATION**

Curriculum leads to a Certificate of Achievement and eligibility to take both the California State Board, Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) Examination and the Dental Assisting National Board, Certified Dental Assistant (CDA) Examination. Technical Standards/Essential Functions are available for your review on the program's website. They have been designed to give your more information about the profession and important skills/functions. This information will be helpful to assist you in deciding on your career path.

#### **I. Length and Kind of Program**

The program is three terms in length (Fall, Spring, and six-week Summer Session). General education and Dental Assisting classes are scheduled on the college campus and clinical experiences in patient care are scheduled at selected dental schools and private dental offices.

#### **II. Admission Requirements**

1. Academic requirements
  - a. High school graduation or satisfactory scores on the General Education Development (GED) examination (given at most adult education centers).
  - b. A 2.0 grade point average in all high school and college courses. If high school GPA is less than 2.0, at least 12 units of college course work with a GPA of 2.0 or higher is required.
  - c. Provide proof English clearance has been met through placement, assessment and/or course completion.

#### **III. Application & Admission Procedures (to be completed in order as listed)**

1. Applicants must submit to the Health Occupations Division Office the following items:
  - a. Completed application signed by the applicant and returned by May 31, 2026.
  - b. High school (or equivalent) and college transcripts. Unofficial transcripts can be submitted with application. Official transcripts must be submitted prior to the completion of the first semester of the program.

- c. Provide proof English clearance has been met.
  - d. Applicants completing admission requirements during the spring session must submit a final grade to the Health Occupations Division before May 31, 2026.
  - e. Verification of dental employment/volunteer work experience or dental education (if applicable).
2. Selection Criteria
- The Program Director and Faculty, in cooperation with appropriate institutional personnel, establish admissions procedures which are non-discriminatory, contribute to the quality of the program and allow selection of student with potential for successfully completing the program. The following point system criteria will be utilized as our program selection process:
- 1) High School Grade Point Average
  - 2) College Grade Point Average
  - 3) Completion of Higher Education College Degree
  - 4) Provide proof English clearance has been met through placement, assessment and/or course completion.
  - 5) Related work/volunteer experience (office or education) documented on organizations letterhead
  - 6) Email completed Dental Assisting Application with all required documents, received by May 31, 2026.
3. Selection will be based upon academic evaluation and data obtained from the application forms. Candidates will be notified of their application status by email late June 2026.
4. Admitted students and alternates will be required to attend a mandatory orientation meeting in July. During the orientation, information will be given regarding textbooks, uniforms, registration procedures, required Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Basic Life Support (BLS), immunizations, physical exam and any other possible additional costs that may be incurred. Students must provide their own “patients\*” to meet the following required competencies: Radiology Full Mouth (6-7\*), Pit and Fissure Sealants (4\*), and Coronal Polish (3\*). Details will be discussed during orientation.
5. Health Requirements
- a. A valid Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification must be obtained after acceptance into the program and submitted **prior to the first day of class**. It must be obtained through the American Heart Association, Basic Life Support (BLS Provider) or the Red Cross, HealthCare Provider. The CPR card must be valid throughout the program. The card is the responsibility of the student to obtain.
  - b. Physical exam and immunization records must be completed after acceptance into the program and submitted prior to the first day of class. All costs are the responsibility of the student.

- c. Applicant must present evidence of physical fitness and ability to perform tasks required of a Dental Assistant. Employment in this field requires good vision, hearing, and the ability to communicate verbally, nonverbally, and through written word. Students must have the ability to comprehend, analyze, and evaluate patients' charts in order to provide appropriate treatment. Students must be able to record in the patients' charts and have manual dexterity to use small instruments to provide patient care. For further details, see the Essential Functions section of the department's website at [www.cerritos.edu/dental-assisting](http://www.cerritos.edu/dental-assisting).
- d. The essential requirements of a dental assistant are used in consideration of admission, retention and graduation from the Cerritos College program. Graduates are expected to be fully qualified to enter the profession as an Assistant. It is the responsibility of the student with disabilities to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and provide verification of the disability and resulting limitations. Students are responsible to make advance request for those accommodations that he or she feel are reasonable and needed to execute the essential requirements described above.
- e. **Pregnancy Advisory:** all clinical affiliates require immunizations. All students must be immunized to participate in clinical education. Pregnancy may affect immunization and or other program requirements. If you are pregnant or planning on becoming pregnant (while enrolled), please consult with the Program Director. A statement from the student's health care provider noting the student may proceed through the program with "no limitations" will be required of all pregnant students.
- f. **Latex Advisory:** the use of latex/latex-based products may exist in the health care universal precautions and in environments such as but not limited to the classroom, labs, and clinical sites. Individuals with latex allergies should seek expert advice from their health care provider so that they may receive information to make an informed decision regarding their exposure to latex in the health care field.
- g. **Immunization Advisory:** immunizations are required in order to participate in clinical education. Individuals with allergies to required immunizations should seek expert advice from their health care provider to make an informed decision regarding their exposure to infectious diseases in the healthcare field. A statement from the student's health care provider noting the student may proceed through the program with "no limitations" will be required of all students declaring an immunization allergy.
- h. **Infection Control Guidelines:** Applicants are advised of the following Infection Control Guidelines as outlined by the Center for Disease Control (CDC): The prevention of cross contamination and transmission of infection to all persons, including: patients, Dental Health Care Professionals (DHCP), faculty, students, and non-clinical staff is the professional responsibility of all dental personnel. Cerritos College Dental Assisting Program has adopted policies and procedures that represent a comprehensive and practical infection control program, based upon

federal guidelines (Center for Disease Control). A fundamental principle of an effective infection control program is to exercise care, precautions and effective control techniques that can keep infectious microbes within manageable limits of the body's normal resistance to disease. Individuals at high risk of infectious diseases (HBV, HCV and HIV) among DHCP are those who perform tasks that might involve contact with blood, blood-contaminated body substances, other body fluids, or sharps should be vaccinated. Vaccination can protect both DHCP and patients from infectious diseases and whenever possible should be completed when DHCP are in training and before they have contact with blood. Compliance with these policies and procedures are an ethical obligation and responsibility of all participants in the delivery of care at Cerritos College. Guidelines for Infection Control in Dental Health Care Setting – 2003, 12/19/03 52(RR17); 1-61.  
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5217a1.htm>

#### IV. Expenses

1. See Cerritos College Catalog for complete list of Cerritos College enrollment fees and out-of-state resident fees.
2. Students may expect to pay approximately \$2,500 for dental assisting project fees, uniforms, student jackets, and books.
3. Students are responsible for their own living accommodations, including uniform laundry, transportation to extended campuses and parking fees at extended campuses and volunteer sites.
4. Physical exam, immunizations and CPR/BLS Provider or HealthCare Provider card expenses are the student's responsibility.
5. Upon successful completion of program requirements, the student is eligible to take the State Board Registered Dental Assisting exam and the National Certified Dental Assisting exam (approximately \$700 - cost incurred by student).
6. Upon successful completion of all program requirements, the student will be eligible to receive and wear the Dental Assisting pin, which is given at a Pinning Ceremony. The cost of the pin is incurred by the student.
7. Any reproductions of certificates are to be requested by alumni via email to [acontreras@cerritos.edu](mailto:acontreras@cerritos.edu) and the cost of each re-print is \$50 per certificate and is approved on a case-by-case basis.

#### V. Attendance, Scholarship, Promotion

1. **Attendance:** Due to the nature of the Dental Assisting program, all students are expected to observe the attendance requirements set by the Dental Assisting department at Cerritos College (see student handbook).
2. **Scholarship and Promotion:** Successful completion of all levels of course work is

necessary for completion of and graduation from the program. Students are required to maintain a "C" or higher in each course in order to progress and complete the program. This is whether enrolled in combined lecture/lab courses or clinical experiences. When

content is tiered, each level must be completed according to identified criteria. Upon successful completion of all program requirements, students are eligible to receive either the Certificate and/or Associate in Arts degree.

## **VI. Guidelines for Withdrawal, Dismissal, and Reinstatement**

### **1. Withdrawal**

- a. Withdrawal “W” may be initiated by either the student or the instructor. Dates for withdrawal without a grade are indicated in the Cerritos College Schedule of Classes.
- b. When a student is failing clinically, he/she will be encouraged to withdraw from the course. If the clinical failure is related to unsafe clinical practice, and the student does not withdraw when advised to do so, the instructor shall drop the student from the course. A student who has withdrawn or been dropped from a course may not attend after the withdrawal date.

### **2. Dismissal (Failure) - Criteria for dismissal from course or program may include:**

- a. Final grade below “C” in any required Dental Assisting course.
- b. Failure to meet attendance requirements.
- c. Behavior not consistent with Dental Assisting Code of Ethics and the department’s “Code of Ethics and Responsibilities”
- d. Failure to comply with established department regulations and policies of Cerritos College or the Dental Assisting Department.
- e. Failure to meet stated objectives in the coursework.
- f. Placing self or others in physical and/or emotional jeopardy.
- g. In critical cases, such as unsafe clinical performance, dismissal may occur without prior warning or probation. This action requires the concurrence of the Dental Assisting Program Director, Instructional Dean of Health Occupations and/or Vice President of Academic Affairs.

### **3. Reinstatement**

- a. Students applying for reinstatement to the Dental Assisting Program after withdrawal or dismissal must write a letter requesting reinstatement addressed to the Dental Assisting Program Director.
- b. Following information must be included in the letter:
  - 1) Circumstances surrounding the withdrawal or dismissal

- 2) Activities pursued in the interim that demonstrate improvement in the problem area
  - 3) Reason for requesting reinstatement
  - 4) School term for which reinstatement is requested
- c. Student seeking reinstatement after one withdrawal/dismissal from the Cerritos College Dental Assisting Program/course will be reinstated contingent upon lab space availability in the priority order of date and time the request is received in the Dental Assisting Department.
  - d. Reinstatement written requests will be accepted only after letters from the Program Director have been mailed acknowledging the student's withdrawal or dismissal. These letters are mailed after the end of the school term in which the withdrawal occurred and are sent at the same time to all students who did not successfully complete the term. All students requesting reinstatement will have equal opportunity to apply for space available.
  - e. No student shall be reinstated after two withdrawals/dismissals from the Cerritos College Dental Assisting Program/course. A student who has acquired two withdrawals/dismissals shall have exceeded the repeat policy of the program and shall have no further chance of re-entry.
  - f. A student who withdraws from the program for personal reasons (e.g. pregnancy, illness, family crisis, financial difficulties, etc.) will be given additional consideration through faculty review, upon the student's request describing such reasons.

## **VII. Program Completion**

1. Completion Requirement:
  - a. Completion of all Dental Assisting course work with a grade of "C" or higher
  - b. Completion of ENGL 72, or equivalent, with a grade of a "C" or higher or satisfactory completion of the English placement process with eligibility for ENGL 100 or SRT.
  - c. Students who successfully complete the Dental Assisting Program will receive the following:
    - 1) Infection Control and Dental Practice Act Certificate of Completion
    - 2) Oral Radiology Course Certificate of Completion
    - 3) Coronal Polish (part of the RDA program certificate)
    - 4) Pit and Fissure Sealant (part of the RDA program certificate)
    - 5) Dental Assisting Certificate of Achievement
    - 6) Eligibility to apply for the State RDA exam and National Certification (CDA) Exam

2. **\*Completion of the program does not guarantee licensure or employment.\*** The RDA license includes a written law & ethics exam as well as a background check and fingerprinting. The RDA written law & ethics exam is via computer at various computer testing sites. Coronal Polish, Pit and Fissure Sealants are duties that may only be performed with the RDA license. Students and graduates are responsible for understanding the ethical and legal ramifications of performing duties they are not legally allowed to perform even after completing the required educational courses for all RDA duties. After graduation from the program you must have a current RDA license to perform any RDA duties.

All students completing the program will have met the requirements for the 8 hour infection control and 2 hour Dental Practice Act and may perform Dental Assisting duties as assigned by the Dental Board of California.

### **VIII. Licensure**

1. The State of California Board of Dental Auxiliaries requires all applicants for the RDA Exam to:
  - a. Supply their U.S. Social Security Number or Individual Tax Identification number (ITIN).
  - b. Complete a Livescan Fingerprint record
    - 1) If the applicant has been convicted or plead guilty to any crime in the U.S.A., its territories, military court or foreign country which includes a plea of no contest or any conviction that has been set aside or deferred pursuant to sections 1000 or 1203.4 of the Penal Code, including infractions, misdemeanors, and felonies must provide detail information regarding the conviction to complete the processing of the application and the State will determine if the individual does qualify to take the RDA exam.

### **IX. Disclaimer**

The Program has made every reasonable effort to determine that everything stated in the information packet is accurate. Matters contained herein, are subject to change without notice by the Administration of the Department for reasons related to student enrollment, level of financial support or for any reason, at the discretion of the Program. The Program further reserves the right to add, amend or repeal any of the rules, regulations, policies and procedures, consistent with applicable law.

**CERRITOS COLLEGE  
HEALTH OCCUPATIONS DIVISION  
CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT DENTAL ASSISTING**

<u>FIRST SEMESTER</u>		<u>UNITS</u>
DA 51	Applied Dental Science I	4
DA 52	Dental Radiography I	2
DA 53	Introduction to Chairside Assisting	3
DA 54	Introduction to Operatory Procedures	4
		13
<u>SECOND SEMESTER</u>		
DA 61	Applied Dental Science II	3
DA 62	Dental Radiography II	2
DA 63	Advanced Chairside Assisting	4
DA 64	Dental Office Management	2
DA 65	Clinical I Dental Schools	3
		14
<u>SUMMER SESSION</u>		
DA 75	Clinical II Cooperative Office Training	5
		32
<b>TOTAL CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS</b>		

**CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT:**

- (a) Meet all required coursework for certificate of Achievement
- (b) Provide proof English clearance has been met through placement, assessment and/or course completion.

**ASSOCIATE IN ARTS DEGREE REQUIREMENTS:**

(May be taken prior to or following Certificate of Achievement)

Meet all the requirements as listed for the Certificate of Achievement in Dental Assisting. For an

A.A. Degree, a student must also take electives and General Education to achieve a minimum of 60 units. Recommended electives for students interested in Dental Hygiene Program: CHEM 100, MICRO 200, A&P 200 A&P 201, and HO152.

## **CERRITOS COLLEGE DENTAL ASSISTING DEPARTMENT MISSION AND GOALS**

### **PROGRAM MISSION**

The Dental Assisting Program integrates well into the educational philosophy, mission and vision of Cerritos College. The program promotes both students' clinical and academic excellence to prepare them to become competent dental professionals. The program collaborates with faculty, administration, and the advisory committee to produce successful and proficient dental assistants to meet the needs of the dentist, patient, and the community it serves.

### **PROGRAM GOALS**

- To provide a high caliber curriculum that adheres to the current dental healthcare standards and business office management procedures in the dental field.
- To develop a sense of sense of responsibility in graduates to practice within the laws and regulations of California and the ethical principles of the American Dental Practice Act and Dental Assisting Code of Ethics.
- To create a faculty focus on student success through effective teaching practice in both didactic and clinical activities and to provide learning opportunities incorporating modern equipment based on professional trends, self and peer evaluations on pre-clinical and clinical competencies, oral, written research projects and various community activities.
- To prepare the student for employment as a safe, competent, and regulation-compliant dental health care professional.
- To graduate individuals with the academic knowledge and skills to qualify for and successfully pass both the National Board and State Board examinations.
- To lay the foundation and allow graduates to continue to plan, attain, and evaluate their educational and career goals regardless of age, gender, cultural and socio-economic status or ethnicity.
- To develop effective written, verbal, and non-verbal communication skills for the benefit of patients, colleagues, and other members of the health care team.

- To provide broad-based education that lays the groundwork for advancement into a variety of dental assisting careers.
- To provide students the opportunities to develop competencies in the use of safety techniques, exposing, developing and mounting radiographs.
- To build in graduates a commitment to lifelong learning, a dedication to fulfillment of personal and professional potential, an a sense of dignity, value and personal worth.
- To provide students with the following certificates at program completion:
  - California State Radiation License
  - Coronal Polish Certificate
  - Pit and Fissure Sealant Certificate
  - Infection Control Certificate
  - Dental Practice Act Certificate
  - Certificate of Completion- Students must petition through Admissions & Records by the March deadline.

**All career technical education (CTE) opportunities will be offered regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, or disability. Compliance with related laws, including Section 504/Title II, are the responsibility of Cerritos College's Director, Diversity, Compliance, & Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Human Resources | (562) 860-2451, ext. 2284 | Email: [dtix@cerritos.edu](mailto:dtix@cerritos.edu)**