Department of Health
Health Systems Quality Assurance
Office of Health Professions

Guideline

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Title:	**Dental Assistant Registration for Minors (16- & 17-Year-Olds)**
References:	**Chapter 18.32, 18.260, Chapter 246-817 WAC, and WAC 296-125-030 (WAC 296-125-131 as of July 1, 2026)**
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Supersedes:	**N/A**
Approved By:	***"Signature on file"*** **Bryan Swanson, DDS, Chair, Dental Quality Assurance Commission**

Effective January 16, 2026, the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (Commission) adopted rule amendments to WAC 246-817-190, Dental assistant registration, to align with the rule language in the Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) WAC 296-125-030, Prohibited and hazardous employment—All minors. L&I recently completed rulemaking to implement legislative bills related to youth employment, including House Bill 1722, effective July 1, 2026. L&I's WAC 296-125-030 is newly numbered WAC 296-125-131 in the amended rule package, and students who are minors and have successfully completed a bona fide health care career training or vocational education program are now listed in WAC 296-125-131(24).

In response to L&I's rulemaking updates, the Commission has voted to open rulemaking to WAC 246-817-190 to align with L&I's rule number change and to define what the Commission will accept as a bona fide dental assistant career training or vocational education program. The Commission has developed these guidelines to provide interim guidance to minors seeking dental assistant registration during the rulemaking process.

Interim Guidelines for Minors Seeking Dental Assistant Registration

A) Beginning July 1, 2026, the Commission will allow minors who are **16 and 17 years old** to apply for dental assistant registration if one of the following requirements has been met:

- The applicant is currently a student in a bona fide dental assistant career training or vocational education program; or
- The applicant has successfully completed a bona fide dental assistant career training or vocational education program

For the purpose of these interim guidelines, the Commission defines "bona fide" to mean a dental assistant education and training program that is offered at a school approved or licensed by one of the following:

- Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- Washington Student Achievement Council
- Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
- Washington State Skill Centers Certified by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

B) WAC 246-817-190 details the Commission's current requirements for dental assistant registration; subsection (4) states:

(4) Meet the age requirements of WAC 296-125-030.

During the rulemaking process for WAC 246-817-190, the Commission will recognize L&I's newly numbered WAC 296-125-131 in place of WAC 296-125-030.

Information for Supervising Dentists

A supervising dentist may delegate the supportive services listed in WAC 246-817-520 under their close supervision, provided the registered dental assistant has demonstrated the skills necessary to perform each task competently.

Additional Resources

- Washington Workforce Training & Education Coordinating Board | Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
- Washington Student Achievement Council
- Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges
- OSPI Career and Technical Education (CTE) Skills Centers