

Waivers for the Dental Profession

Background

In June, the General Assembly passed House Resolution 106, which terminated Governor Wolf's disaster declaration, effective immediately.

While the regulatory and statutory waivers and suspensions were originally authorized under the declaration, the Governor subsequently signed another bill from the General Assembly to ensure continuity of these suspensions.

Act 21 of 2021 extends most, but not all, of the regulatory and statutory suspensions authorized under the emergency declaration until September 30, 2021.



Update-August 2021

Type

Waiver

Status

ACLS/PALS Certification

Waiver suspended the requirement for dentists to renew their ACLS/PALS certification by taking an in-person course.

Guidance will expire on September 30, 2021, after which dentists with anesthesia permits have 90 additional days in which to take an in-person course for ACLS/PALS certification.

Administering COVID-19 Tests

Waiver allowed dentists to administer COVID tests to patients during the state of emergency and for 90 days thereafter.

Waiver expires on August 31, 2021, after which dentists **will not** be allowed to administer tests unless otherwise authorized by law or regulation.

Continuing Education

Waiver had suspended the requirement for dentists to complete in-person CE when renewing their license for the renewal period that ended March 31, 2021.

Waiver expired. Starting April 1, 2021, dentists must comply with current regulations and complete at least 50 percent of the 30-hour CE requirement with in-person learning. The State Board of Dentistry considers live, virtual CE webinars occurring in real time where participants can interact with the speaker as in-person learning. Recorded, non-interactive webinars count as self-study credits and are acceptable for 50 percent or less of the required CE credits.

CPR Certification

Waiver had suspended the requirement that dentists renew their CPR certification by taking an in-person course.

Waiver expired. Dentists must take an in-person training course when renewing their CPR certification. The 2023 licensing application form will ask dentists to attest that they have taken an in-person CPR course.

Dental and Hygiene Licensing Exam

State Board of Dentistry guidance allowed dental and hygiene students the option of taking a manakin-based licensing exam for initial licensure during the state of emergency.

The State Board of Dentistry voted in July to continue to allow dental and hygiene students the option of taking the CDCA's ADEX manikin based and Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) through December 31, 2022.

Reactivation of Expired, Inactive & Retired License

Waiver allowed eligible dentists with retired, inactive or expired licenses to obtain a license to practice during the state of emergency.

Waiver expires on August 17, 2021. Dentists who were granted a license under these circumstances may continue practicing until the license expires. They must meet current eligibility requirements if applying during the next renewal period.

Telehealth Services

Waiver allowed out-of-state dentists to provide telehealth services to in-state patients without having a PA license.

Waiver expired. There is no law or regulations in PA explicitly prohibiting the practice the telehealth. Dentists with PA licenses may continue to provide telehealth services so long as they are HIPAA compliant and following all other applicable state and federal laws.

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Type

Expanding Scope of Practice

NEW

Waiver

Waiver allowed dentists to triage; provide care in hospitals; accept ER referrals from hospitals; collect throat cultures; perform nasal swab tests; prescribe, administer and dispense medications outside of normal scope of practice.

Status

Waiver expires on August 31, 2021, after which dentists should adhere to dentistry's traditional scope of practice under the Pennsylvania Dental Practice Act.

Administering the COVID-19 vaccine

NEW

Waiver added other qualified health care professionals, including dentists, to administer the COVID-19 vaccine.

Waiver expires on September 30, 2021. Though an amendment to the federal PREP Act supersedes the state's waiver, essentially allowing dentists to continue administering the vaccine at this time, the PA Department of Health *may* no longer approve dentists as vaccine providers after the waiver expires.