



# HB 127: Dental Hygiene Advanced Practice Permit

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# Why is HB 127 Important?

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43% of low income Alaskans have difficulty biting and chewing<sup>1</sup>.

Low income families in Alaska don't regularly seek oral health care due to **cost, access, or trouble finding a provider**<sup>1</sup>.

**62% of Alaskan elementary students have a high tooth decay rate<sup>2</sup>.**

**Pain** is the top oral health problem for young adults and low income adults in America<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup>American Dental Association Health Policy Institute: [“Oral Health and Well-Being in the Alaska”](#)

<sup>2</sup>Alaska Department of Health & Social Services: [“Alaska Oral Health Plan”](#)

<sup>3</sup>American Dental Association Health Policy Institute: [“Oral Health and Well-Being in the United States”](#)

# Why is HB 127 Important?

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- ✓ Dental diseases disproportionately affect our state's most vulnerable people
- ✓ Dental hygienists are the front line for **preventative dental care** and education about the critical link between oral health and overall well being
- ✓ **HB 127 increases access to oral health care for underserved populations:**
  - Children,
  - Seniors, and
  - Alaskans with disabilities.

# What Does HB 127 Do?

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- ✓ HB 127 creates an **advanced practice permit**.
- ✓ This permit allows experienced, licensed dental hygienists to work independently to the full scope of their credentials and professional experience when they are caring for underserved Alaskans.

# Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (DHPSA) in Alaska

In 2019 there were 703  
licensed dental hygienists  
in Alaska

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**Geographic DHPSAs** (e.g. Aleutians East Borough, North Slope Borough, Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area)

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**Alaskan Native Tribal Populations** (e.g. SEARHC/Mt. Edgecumbe Hospital, Norton Sound Health Corporation Outpatient Primary Care, Kana Clinic Native Village of Karluk)

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**Correctional Facilities** (e.g. Goose Creek Correctional Center, Spring Creek Correctional Center)

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**Federally Qualified Health Centers** (e.g. Bethel Family Clinic, Mat-Su Health Services, Dena' Nena' Henash, Southeast Alaska Region Health Consortium)

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**Native American/Tribal Facility/Population** (e.g. Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center, Eklutna Health Clinic, Upper Tanana Health Center)

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Full index of all Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas here:  
<https://data.hrsa.gov/tools/shortage-area/hpsa-find>

# Questions?