



Governor Dunleavy,

The Alaska Dental Society supports SB83/HB85 but feels modification to the bill would help Alaskan consumers and new graduates from dental and dental hygiene schools.

SB83 and HB85, as currently written, would reduce wait times for dental professionals looking to relocate to Alaska but would not reduce the time for new graduates from dental professional schools. There is a demarcation line for applicants for dental or dental hygienist licenses – those with over 5 years work experience can apply by using their work history (credentialing) and would be expedited under SB83 and those with less who would continue to wait for their license applications to be processed.

Dental and dental hygiene licensure in Alaska has been a slow process for decades but the recent staffing shortages at Professional Licensing have greatly increased wait times for applicants. University of Alaska Dental Hygiene grads made the news last year when it was discovered some of the applications were taking 6 months to process.

Alaska, like the other 49 states, is currently experiencing a severe shortage of dental hygienists. New graduates faced with a wait of multiple months are taking job offers elsewhere compounding the shortage here in Alaska. The dental hygiene shortage is already causing a shortage of available appointments for consumers and leading to increased dental costs.

We ask the Legislature to recognize this problem and allow new graduates without the requisite work experience to qualify for the temporary license in SB83 and HB85.

Sincerely,

Heather Willis, DDS
Governmental Affairs Chair, Alaska Dental Society

Version one, for all professions

Sec. 08.01.062. Temporary license. (a) The department shall issue an applicant a temporary license under this section to engage in a profession regulated under this chapter if

(1) the applicant

(A) is licensed or credentialed to practice the profession in another state or territory of the United States or province or territory of Canada that

(i) has requirements for a license to practice the profession that are substantially equivalent to or greater than the requirements listed in the applicable chapter of this title; or

(ii) authorizes a scope of practice substantially equivalent to the scope of practice of the corresponding license in this state; **or**

(B) has graduated from a US accredited professional school within the past 2 years

Remaining part stays the same but is relettered.

Version 2, just for dental

Sec. 08.01.062. Temporary license. (a) The department shall issue an applicant a temporary license under this section to engage in a profession regulated under this chapter if

(1) the applicant

(A) is licensed or credentialed to practice the profession in another state or territory of the United States or province or territory of Canada that

(i) has requirements for a license to practice the profession that are substantially equivalent to or greater than the requirements listed in the applicable chapter of this title; or

(ii) authorizes a scope of practice substantially equivalent to the scope of practice of the corresponding license in this state; **or**

(B) has graduated from a US accredited dental or dental hygiene school within the past 2 years