

Dear Licensees,

As has been discussed over the last year and more during our rulemaking and at our public meetings, the Board has been considering ideas for inclusion in a Bill that would update and revise the Dental Practice Act statutes—NDCC ch. 43-28 and 43-20. Attached is Senate Bill 2217, recently filed by Senator Sean Cleary which does just that.

While many of these changes are housekeeping, revise outdated words and ideas, and clarify ambiguities, a number of the changes should have positive impacts on the profession. For example:

- Section 9: Allows dental hygienists to administer local anesthetic to those under 18.
- Section 17: Provides language that will allow us to draft rules to allow licensees who are physically or mentally impaired, or impaired by substance use, to seek confidential health care and treatment through a Professional Health Program. Physicians, Nurses, and other similar professionals have access to such programs. Allowing dentists to access them will increase the likelihood that more of our licensees will seek out help and remain practice to safely serve their patients—thereby keeping their dental office in place and employing their staff.
- Sections 4 and 20: Extends the late-renewal period by allowing those who change their mind about leaving the dental field a full year to renew their license.
- Section 22: Clarifies the Board’s authority to create a streamlined pathway to licensure for those who hold licenses issued by other states.

Sometimes the reasons for each change might not be readily apparent and might seem concerning at first glance. **If you have questions or concerns about any of this language, please email me and I will share the Board’s reasoning.**

The Board appreciates the time and input so many of you contributed toward this, and while not every suggestion has been incorporated into the Bill, we seek your support.

Sincerely,

David Schaibley

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