



132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

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Legislative Document

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H.P. 1483

House of Representatives, February 10, 2026

An Act Expanding Access to Oral Health Care by Creating a New Path for Obtaining a License to Practice Dentistry

Reported by Representative MATHIESON of Kittery for the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 107, section 8.

Reference to the Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services suggested and ordered printed pursuant to Joint Rule 218.

R. B. Hunt
ROBERT B. HUNT
Clerk

1 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:**

2 **Sec. 1. 32 MRSA §18302, sub-§1-A** is enacted to read:

3 **1-A. Associate dentist.** "Associate dentist" means a person who holds a valid
4 associate dentist license issued by the board.

5 **Sec. 2. 32 MRSA §18302, sub-§1-B** is enacted to read:

6 **1-B. Associate dentist license.** "Associate dentist license" means the authority
7 granted to a person who is a graduate of a dental school or college, who is licensed to
8 practice dentistry in this State and who is practicing under the general supervision of a
9 dentist in a board-approved practice setting in accordance with this chapter.

10 **Sec. 3. 32 MRSA §18342, sub-§1, ¶A**, as amended by PL 2021, c. 163, §1, is
11 further amended to read:

12 A. Verification of either a doctoral degree in dentistry from a dental program
13 accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation
14 or its successor organization or the educational equivalent of a doctoral degree in
15 dentistry, as determined by the board. If the applicant holds an associate dentist license
16 in good standing and provides verification that the applicant has actively practiced
17 during the 6 consecutive years immediately preceding application to the board, that
18 applicant is deemed to be in compliance with this paragraph; and

19 **Sec. 4. 32 MRSA §18342, sub-§7** is enacted to read:

20 **7. Associate dentist license.** An applicant for an associate dentist license must comply
21 with section 18341 and must provide:

22 A. Verification of a degree in dentistry from a dental school or college located in the
23 United States or another country;

24 B. Verification of passing all examinations required by the board;

25 C. Verification that the applicant will be practicing dentistry in a board-approved
26 practice setting within the State; and

27 D. A statement from the supervising dentist under section 18371, subsection 5 that
28 demonstrates that the general supervision and control of the services to be performed
29 by the applicant are adequate and that the performance of these services are within the
30 applicant's dental knowledge and skill.

31 **Sec. 5. 32 MRSA §18371, sub-§2, ¶F** is enacted to read:

32 F. An individual with an associate dentist license may provide dental services only in
33 the board-approved practice setting for which the license was issued by the board and
34 if authorized by a written practice agreement under the general supervision of a dentist
35 licensed in this State pursuant to subsection 7.

36 **Sec. 6. 32 MRSA §18371, sub-§5**, as amended by PL 2019, c. 388, §9, is further
37 amended to read:

38 **5. Supervision of dental therapists and associate dentists.** A dentist, referred to in
39 this section as the "the supervising dentist," who employs a dental therapist or associate
40 dentist shall comply with this subsection.

1 A. A supervising dentist shall arrange for another dentist or specialist to provide any
2 services needed by a patient of a dental therapist or associate dentist supervised by that
3 dentist that are beyond the scope of practice of the dental therapist or associate dentist
4 and that the supervising dentist is unable to provide.

5 B. The supervising dentist is responsible for all authorized services and procedures
6 performed by the dental therapist pursuant to a written practice agreement executed by
7 the dentist pursuant to section 18377.

8 B-1. The supervising dentist is responsible for all authorized services and procedures
9 performed by the associate dentist pursuant to a written practice agreement executed
10 by the dentist pursuant to subsection 7.

11 C. Revisions to a written practice agreement must be documented in a new written
12 practice agreement signed by the supervising dentist and the dental therapist or
13 associate dentist.

14 D. A supervising dentist who signs a written practice agreement shall file a copy of
15 the agreement with the board, keep a copy for the dentist's own records and make a
16 copy available to patients of the dental therapist or associate dentist upon request.

17 **Sec. 7. 32 MRSA §18371, sub-§7** is enacted to read:

18 **7. Associate dentist practice requirements.** An associate dentist must comply with
19 the following practice limitations.

20 A. An associate dentist may practice under the general supervision of a dentist pursuant
21 to a written practice agreement signed by both parties. A written practice agreement is
22 a signed document that outlines the functions that the associate dentist is authorized to
23 perform. An associate dentist may practice only under the standing order of the
24 supervising dentist, may provide only care that follows written protocols and may
25 provide only services that the associate dentist is authorized to provide by the written
26 practice agreement.

27 B. A written practice agreement between a supervising dentist and an associate dentist
28 must include the following elements:

29 (1) The services and procedures and the practice settings for those services and
30 procedures that the associate dentist may provide, together with any limitations on
31 those services and procedures;

32 (2) Any age-specific and procedure-specific practice protocols, including case
33 selection criteria, assessment guidelines and imaging frequency;

34 (3) Procedures to be used with patients treated by the associate dentist for
35 obtaining informed consent and for creating and maintaining dental records;

36 (4) A plan for managing medical emergencies in each practice setting in which the
37 associate dentist provides care;

38 (5) A quality assurance plan for monitoring care, including patient care review,
39 referral follow-up and a quality assurance chart review;

40 (6) Protocols for administering and dispensing medications, including the specific
41 circumstances under which medications may be administered and dispensed;

(7) Criteria for providing care to patients with specific medical conditions or complex medical histories; and

(8) Specific written protocols, including a plan for providing clinical resources and referrals, governing situations in which the patient requires treatment that exceeds the scope of practice or capabilities of the associate dentist.

C. Revisions to a written practice agreement must be documented in a new written practice agreement signed by the supervising dentist and the associate dentist.

D. An associate dentist shall file a copy of a written practice agreement with the board, keep a copy for the associate dentist's own records and make a copy available to patients of the associate dentist upon request.

E. An associate dentist shall refer patients in accordance with a written practice agreement to another qualified dental or health care professional to receive needed services that exceed the scope of practice of the associate dentist.

F. An associate dentist who provides services or procedures beyond those authorized in a written practice agreement engages in unprofessional conduct and is subject to discipline pursuant to section 18325.

SUMMARY

This bill is reported out by the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services to implement a recommendation from the Commission to Expand Access to Oral Health Care by Studying Alternative Pathways for Obtaining a License to Practice Dentistry pursuant to Resolve 2025, chapter 107. The joint standing committee has not taken a position on the substance of this bill. By reporting this bill out, the joint standing committee is not suggesting and does not intend to suggest that it agrees or disagrees with any aspect of this bill; instead, the joint standing committee is reporting the bill out for the sole purpose of having a bill printed that can be referred to a joint standing committee for an appropriate public hearing and subsequent processing in the normal course. The joint standing committee is taking this action to ensure clarity and transparency in the legislative review of the proposals contained in the bill.

The bill establishes a new dentist license category, an associate dentist license, which allows a qualified dentist who lacks the board-determined educational equivalency to a United States doctoral degree in dentistry, such as a dentist trained outside of the United States with a bachelor of dentistry degree, to obtain a license to practice dentistry under the general supervision of a licensed dentist through a written practice agreement signed by both parties. The bill also establishes a pathway to be licensed as a dentist after practicing with an associate dentist license in good standing for 6 consecutive years.