

2015 Proposed Salary Guide for Registered Dental Assistants

SALARY ACCORDING TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE (DOLLARS PER HOUR)							
YEARS EXPERIENCE	START	6 M0	1 YR	1.5 YRS	2 YRS	3 YRS	4 YRS
DENTAL ASSISTANT	19.10	19.87	21.70	22.07	22.48	22.85	23.44
YEARS EXPERIENCE	5 YRS	6 YRS	7 YRS	8 YRS	9 YRS	10 - 15 YRS	15 YRS +
DENTAL ASSISTANT	24.01	24.69	25.24	25.79	26.50	27.21-31.54	32.49*

KEY: *The 2015 Guide has a proposed 4.0% increase incorporated.*

RDA means a Registered Dental Assistant holding provincial registration & current licensure.

START means no previous work experience in a dental office, generally a new graduate.

Years of Experience means actual "years of practice"; not time with current employer

* EMPLOYEES WITH GREATER THAN 15 EXPERIENCE YEARS SHOULD RECEIVE THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF 4.0% PLUS AN APPROPRIATE MERIT INCREASE FOR THE CURRENT YEAR OF SERVICE.

Note that the Consumer Price Index for Canada (CPI) increased by 2.1 % (August 2013- August 2014)

In the past 12 months (August 2013 - August 2014) the Saskatchewan CPI increased by 2.7% The Regina and Saskatoon CPI climbed 2.7 and 2.6 percent respectively during the same period.

Our guide addresses dollar compensation only

CALCULATION TO DETERMINE MONTHLY SALARY:

"Start" Hourly Rate x Hours in a week x 52 = Yearly Salary ÷ 12 = Monthly Salary

\$19.10 x 35 x 52 = 37,762 per year ÷ 12 = 2,896.93 per month

\$19.10 x 37.5 x 52 = 37,245 per year ÷ 12 = 3,103.75 per month

\$19.10 x 40 x 52 = 39,728 per year ÷ 12 = 3,310.67 per month

COMPARISON OF NEW GRADUATE SALARIES:

Full-time training-related average starting monthly salary (2013 SIAST Graduate Employment Report)

("Average" starting hourly wage reported within first 6 months of employment)

Dental Assistant - \$2,736 [Range of \$1,800 to \$3,375; Median \$2,700]

Pharmacy Technician Certificate - \$3,150 [Range of \$2,213 to \$3,953; Median \$3,150]

Medical Lab Technician - \$4,713 [Range of \$4,500 to \$4,887; Median \$4,730]

Dental Hygienist - \$5,698 [Range of \$4,800 to \$7,800; Median \$5,625]



THE SALARY SCHEDULE:

This guide is designed to provide a range of salaries appropriate to the practice experience of a dental assistant. It is suggested that salary recognize educational training, experience and status rather than specific to a job description.

This guide suggests an hourly wage along with a formula to assist in calculating a monthly salary dependent on hourly rate, hours worked per day, and days worked per month.

The first column indicates an initial salary level that is recommended for an individual, presumably a new graduate; who has never had any experience in the duties of a Registered Dental Assistant. Years of experience are identified in the header of the table. It is presumed that dental assistants with experience would start a new position at the step appropriate to their years of experience in dentistry. Acknowledging experience and merit is an important part of staff retention and managing a successful practice.

The Salary Guide for dental assistants extends to 15+ years. After 15 years of experience there are so many variables, it is often difficult for veteran assistants to negotiate an appropriate rate of pay. A dental assistant with 15+ years experience is considered an expert in their field. We trust employers will reimburse these valuable employees at a fair market value commensurate with their expertise. This value could be

as much as an additional 6.0% (4.0 + 2.0) annually (note: merit is calculated into the steps from start to 15 years). We assert that all dental employees should receive an annual merit and cost of living increase reflective of their abilities, which truly recognizes their years of employment.

Many dental assistants' have taken advantage of opportunities to expand their scope of practice with additional post-graduate training. In doing so these individuals have expanded their roles within the dental office and should be assigned duties and reimbursed accordingly.

(According to the Statistics Canada Survey of Employment, Payroll and Hours) The average weekly income in the province increased by 2.81 percent over the past year with the average weekly earnings being \$972.90.

Cost of Living Factors: Saskatchewan has been experiencing strong economic growth. Along with increased opportunities and higher wages we are also experiencing significantly higher housing prices for both mortgage holders as well as renters. We have seen higher costs for transportation, natural gas, electricity, and water.

In General: There remains a shortage of qualified, skilled Registered Dental Assistants' in the province. With the current strong economic outlook we can expect the population to continue to rise, thus adding to the demand for ser-

vices.

Salaries are one of the workplace stressors in all sectors of the labour force. Dentistry is no exception, although for the most part, both employers and employees seem to be able to reach amiable agreements. We are hopeful this will continue to be the situation, and that the "Proposed Salary Guide" can provide some framework for the process. Why are negotiations important? A high staff turnover rate will create a lack of profitability within any office. Members tell us that in many instances they have preferred to resign a position when higher salaried employment became available. Unfortunately resigning was in preference to entering negotiations with the employer-dentist.

Both dentists and dental assistants should recognize that the salary guide is provided to assist your office in arriving at a reasonable and equitable salary structure. Dentists must recognize that the guide is based on the principle of establishing a salary level sufficient to attract and maintain high quality oral health professionals. Practice profitability and salaries of other dental personnel all have a bearing on an appropriate salary. Employers who value professional, committed staff must offer compensation to entice and retain these individuals.

WORKPLACE: The Registered Dental Assistant must hold a valid license and must practice in accordance with the Dental Disciplines Act, Regulatory Bylaws and the General Competency document.

Only members licensed at practice status are eligible to perform intra oral procedures. Employers must not ask allied personnel to practice beyond their scope of practice as defined in The Dental Disciplines Act (2010). A currently licensed Saskatchewan Dental Assistant may only perform skills that are listed with the SDAA. All dental assistant practice is based on formal training. The RDA's personalized skill list should be reviewed during an interview.

A written 'Agreement for Employment' stating hours, wages, benefits, holidays, job expectations and other terms of employment should be drafted. A performance appraisal would be beneficial to both parties on a yearly basis following the initial probation.

The SDAA has developed a template employment agreement that can be downloaded and customized for your use. Employer and employees should have input in the development of this document and both should have a copy of the finalized signed agreement.

The methodology of airing grievances should be established for both employer and employee prior to employment.

LABOUR STANDARDS:

Labour Standards and Occupational Health and Safety govern the Saskatchewan workplace. Employers and employees should be familiar with their policies.

The dentist / employer generally has control over the conditions of work and therefore hold responsibility for health and safety in the workplace.

If the employee has a latex allergy the employer must provide non-latex gloves, offer alternative work duties that do not involve contact with latex products, and/or develop a latex safe work environment.

It is the responsibility of the dentist/employer to provide effective personal protective equipment, in accordance with **standard** precautions.

All employees are entitled to regular wages for ten public holidays a year (New Years Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Saskatchewan Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day and Christmas Day). Contact Labour Standards regarding the payment formula.

The Saskatchewan Employment Act allows for 'Modified

Work Arrangements', which allow the employer and employees to agree to average hours of work over one, two, three or four weeks. The daily maximum that can be agreed to before overtime applies is 12 hours. As well, while maintaining the 40 hour work week, two work arrangements are permitted in the legislation – eight hours per day for five days per week or 10 hours per day for four days per week.

If employees work more than the hours set by their agreed upon work arrangement overtime must be paid at 1.5 times their regular hourly wage.

Part-time employees are eligible for overtime for all hours worked in excess of eight hours in a day.

Wage deductions are mandatory for statutory requirements such as: Income tax, CPP, EI, pension plans or union dues. Voluntary deductions agreed upon by a majority of employees can also be made for such items as group insurance plans or other employee benefits. All deductions must be identified on the employees pay statement.

www.saskatchewan.ca/work

WORKPLACE HARASSMENT:

Harassment is prohibited in the OHS Act and The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code.

Harassment Based on Prohibited Grounds: this includes any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a person that: is made on the basis of race, creed, religion, colour, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability, physical size or weight, age, nationality, ances-

try or place of origin; Including sexual harassment, which is conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature that is offensive, unsolicited or unwelcome.

Personal harassment (Bullying): this includes any inappropriate conduct, comment, display, action or gesture by a person that: adversely affects a worker's psychological or physical well being.

www.lrws.gov.sk.ca/harassment-prevention-guide

BENEFIT OPTIONS FOR PERSONNEL:

The office uniform and dress code must be fully understood prior to employment. Any employee who is required to wear a uniform must be provided with a uniform at no cost. An employer cannot deduct any costs for uniforms from the employee, they can require a reasonable damage deposit when a uniform is supplied. Uniforms are **not** considered additional benefits.

A sick leave policy should be established that is reasonable to both parties.

The employer could absorb professional fees, time loss, and registration fees for mutually beneficial continuing education.

Job sharing opportunities could be made available to dental assistants. Part-time employees should receive benefits at a pro-rated amount. Employers hiring part-time or hourly paid employees should make benefit policies clearly understood at the time of employment.

Personal days should be available to all employees.

The employer may wish to provide the employee with benefits through some type of insurance coverage. Insurance premiums could be covered completely as an office expense or the employer and employee may wish to agree on a fifty - fifty or some other type of arrangement.

www.sdaabenefits.ca

Employers wishing to see the current employee plans supplemented offer group Registered Retirement Savings Plans. Their intention is to increase the retirement benefit and provide for the possibility for early retirement. The role of the employer may be limited to providing the payroll deduction framework within which the plan operates, or to promote enrollment in the plan by absorbing plan expenses or the RRSP.

WORK SAFE SASKATCHEWAN

Below you will find a list of the most common risks and injuries to health care workers.

Back Injury & Lifting: By far the most common injury reported in the health care sector is back-related injuries and strains. Learning proper lifting techniques and knowing the risks goes a long way in helping you avoid injury.

Slips, Trips & Falls: In Canada, some sixty thousand workers get injured annually due to slip, trip and fall accidents. Workers in the health care sector are at high risk for these types of injuries.

Workplace Violence: HCW's must interact closely with patients and their families, often under difficult circumstances. Most people think of workplace violence as a physical assault, however violence in the workplace includes a much broader variety of problems. It can be characterized as any act in which a person is abused, threatened, intimidated or harassed in his or her place of employment.

Work place injuries must be reported to the WCB.

IMMUNIZATION GUIDE

Health Care Workers (HCW) have the potential for exposure to patients and/or to infectious materials (e.g., body substances, contaminated medical supplies and equipment, contaminated environmental surfaces and air). HCWs are at risk of exposure to communicable diseases (diagnosed or undiagnosed) because of their contact with patients or material from infectious patients.

Should a HCW become exposed, infected, or knowingly have an increased risk of exposure (e.g. needle stick incident) their immunization schedule would be determined by the circumstances involved. Maintenance of HCW immunity against vaccine-preventable diseases is an integral part an occupational health program. Optimal usage of immunizations among HCWs will not only safeguard the health of staff members but may also protect patients from becoming infected by HCWs.

Employers need to be aware of immunization recommendation for adults as noted in the Sas-

katchewan Immunization Manual. (SIM) There is an employer duty to inform workers about recommended immunizations for their profession, and arrange, with the employee's consent, for the vaccinations to be completed during their normal work time and to reimburse them for the associated costs. Employers can require mandatory vaccinations for new hires.

The most recent edition of the SK Immunization Manual (SIM) recommends the following vaccines for HCW's

•**Td / Tdap: Diphtheria, Tetanus & Pertussis (Whooping Cough):** Td (tetanus / diphtheria) immunization is recommended every 10 years after primary series. Pertussis is an infection of the respiratory system caused by the bacterium *Bordetella pertussis* (or *B. pertussis*). Adults 18+ are eligible for one Tdap vaccine to replace a Td booster.
IPV: Polio The employer should encourage workers to determine if they received the 3 dose primary series as children.

Boosters for IPV are not required for HCWs.

•**HB: Hepatitis B** Workers can get Hepatitis B infections from exposure to infectious body fluids, notably blood, through:

- Eyes
- Mucous membranes
- Damaged skin
- Skin punctures
- Saliva is considered potentially infectious.

Full immunization involves three doses: an initial dose, a booster one month later and a final booster, one or more months after the first booster, depending on the vaccination used. Up to 10% of the population may not respond properly to the vaccination, it is recommended that employers offer appropriate follow-up titre testing to workers receiving the Hepatitis B vaccination.

Influenza: It is recommended that all HCWs and others who have significant contact with people identified as being at high risk of acquiring influenza, should be offered and receive annual vaccinations, unless

they have medical reasons not to.

Varicella (chicken pox): A live-virus vaccination is recommended for HCW's with frequent contact with children and who do not have a reliable, documented history of immunity to the virus. *Vaccination is contraindicated during pregnancy.*

•**MMR: Measles, Mumps Rubella;** Vaccination is recommended for those with no history of MMR. Persons born since January 1, 1970 are eligible to receive 2 doses of MMR vaccine 4 or more weeks apart. Those born before January 1, 1970 are assumed to be immune to measles, mumps and rubella. However, if a client is a healthcare worker/student and their antibody titres for measles, mumps and/or rubella indicate they are non-immune, they qualify to receive the MMR vaccine. *Vaccination is contraindicated during pregnancy.*

<http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/sim-chapter7>

WORKERS COMPENSATION

All dental offices operating under Saskatchewan's legislation, who employ workers on a regular, casual or contractual basis, must register and establish an account with the WCB. WCB coverage provides financial protection, medical treatment and rehabilitation services to workers and their dependents in cases of injury or death arising out of, and in the course of, employment. These benefits are funded by premiums collected from employers by WCB.

Injury Reporting: Once you are aware of a work-related injury that requires medical attention, you as an employer, by law, **must** report it to the WCB within five days by submitting the Employer's initial report of injury (E1) form. If you do not report within five days, you may be subject to a fine. You should also make sure the worker submits a Worker's initial report of injury (W1) form.

Prompt reporting allows for quick response to the injured

worker's medical needs. This in turn results in lower compensation costs overall, which can positively affect your experience rating and save you money. These reports are also important for you in tracking and preventing injuries in your workplace. It is important to track no time loss claims (NTL) and time loss claims (TLC).

No-Time-Loss Claims: All injuries that require medical attention must be reported to the

WCB, even those that do not result in time away from work.

Time-Loss Claims: Refer to injuries that do result in time away from work. The WCB will pay the injured worker's medical and applicable travel expenses, and provide wage-loss benefits.

Case Management Services: If the injury is more serious, or if recovery doesn't go as expected, the WCB assigns a case management team.

www.wcbask.com