

2018 Proposed Salary Guide for Registered Dental Assistants

SALARY ACCORDING TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE (DOLLARS PER HOUR)						
YEARS EXPERIENCE	START	1 YR	2 YR	3 YR	4 YR	5YR
2018 HOURLY WAGE	22.76	23.90	24.31	24.72	25.14	25.57
YEARS EXPERIENCE	6 YR	7 YRS	8 YRS	9 YRS	10 YRS	
2018 HOURLY WAGE	26.00	26.44	26.89	27.35	27.81	

KEY: *The 2018 Guide has a proposed 1.7% increase incorporated. Note there is a 5% increase between 'Start' and '1 Year.'*

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

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

NOTES:

The Consumer Price Index for Canada (CPI) increased by 1.6% in the 12 months period of September 2016 - September 2017. Over the same time period the Saskatchewan CPI increased by 1.9%; with Regina increasing by 2.0% and Saskatoon at 2.0%

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

\$22.76 x 35 x 52 = \$41,423.20 per year ÷ 12 = \$3,451.93 per month

\$22.76 x 37.5 x 52 = \$44,382.00 per year ÷ 12 = \$3,698.50 per month

\$22.76 x 40 x 52 = \$47,340.80 per year ÷ 12 = \$3,945.07 per month

COMPARISON OF NEW GRADUATE SALARIES:

Full-time training-related average starting monthly salary (2016 SIAST Graduate Employment Report)

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

Dental Assistant - \$3,467 [Range of \$2,450 to \$4,570; Median \$3,413]

Pharmacy Technician Certificate - \$3,512 [Range of \$2,600 to \$4,649; Median \$3,543]

Medical Lab Technician - \$5,363 [Range of \$4,768 to \$5,525; Median \$5,444]

Dental Hygienist - \$5,915 [Range of \$5,281 to \$6,825; Median \$5,891]



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 SDAA will be conducting a new salary and benefits survey in 2018. This information along with results from the National and Provincial Consumer Price Indexes will again be used to determine a reasonable salary structure and ensure this document remains current. The participation in these surveys is essential to providing an accurate representation of actual wages and shows us where there is room to make improvements.

We are finding that RDAs are remaining in the profession

longer, which is reflective of improved wages. To recognize this trend last year we attempted to incorporate a merit and cost of living increase for RDAs who have been in the profession between 11 - 15 and 16 - 20 years. The range became too broad to be meaningful although it did replicate our survey data from 2016. This year we have removed that section until we devise a better way to reflect the survey data.

However, when an individual reaches these milestones they can be considered an expert in their field. We trust employers will reimburse these valuable employees at a fair market value corresponding to their expertise. The 2016 survey data indicated that these RDAs were being paid in the range of \$19 - \$42 / hour. This is a huge spread with a very disappointing low end wage for someone who has dedicated 15 —20 years to the oral health care profession.

We assert that all dental employees should receive an annual merit and cost of living increase reflective of their attitude, job performance and abilities, which truly recognizes their years of employment.

Many dental assistants have taken advantage of opportunities to expand their competencies with additional postgraduate training. In doing so, these individuals have expanded their roles within the dental office and should be assigned additional duties and reimbursed accordingly.



In General: There remains a shortage of qualified, skilled Registered Dental Assistants in the province. We are trying to rectify this but until the balance shifts this is the reality.

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 has become 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. We recognize that 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 licence with the SDAA 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 competency list as defined in *The Dental Disciplines Act (2010)*. A currently licensed Saskatchewan Dental Assistant may only perform skills that are listed with the SDAA. A current list of licensed RDAs can be found on the SDAA website. All dental assistant practice is based on formal training. The RDA's personalized competency 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 an employment agreement template 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. These documents can be found on the SDAA website.

<http://www.sdaa.sk.ca/site/contracts>

LABOUR STANDARDS:

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

Issues related to hours of work, wages, overtime, holidays or holiday pay, meal or coffee breaks, maternity/parental leave etc, are all covered under Part II of *The Saskatchewan Employment Act*. It is important to know your rights and responsibilities in the workplace.

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

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.

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, however they can require a reasonable damage deposit when a uniform is supplied. Uniforms are **not** considered additional benefits.

All employees are entitled to regular wages for ten public holidays a year. Contact Labour Standards regarding the payment formula as well as a complete list of dates for 2017.

Harassment is prohibited in the OHS Act and The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code. Allegations of harassment and discrimination in the workplace are generally dealt with by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission or through the OHS Division. Each office

must have written policy regarding workplace harassment as well as an internal complaint process.

Definitions of harassment and help in creating a harassment policy can be found at:

<https://www.saskatchewan.ca/~media/files/lrws/ohs/harassment%20prevention%20guide.pdf>

The Saskatchewan Employment Act allows for 'Modified Work Arrangements' (MWA), 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. MWA agreements cannot exceed 2 years. 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.

Every time an employee is asked to report for work (other than for overtime), they are to be paid for a minimum of three hours at their 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

BENEFIT OPTIONS FOR PERSONNEL:

Benefit plans are an excellent way to attract and retain valuable employees. An employer could absorb professional fees, time loss, and registration fees for mutually beneficial professional development. For example, a sick leave policy should be established that is reasonable to both parties.

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. The SDAA Benefit Plan is located at 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.

BLOOD OR BODY FLUID EXPOSURE:



In case of needle stick / sharps injury / human bite remove gloves or clothing covering the injured area; ensure it bleeds and is washed well with soap and water. Use alcohol gel if soap and water is unavailable. If exposure results from a splash to eyes flush eyes with running water for 15 minutes at nearest eye wash station, or if unavailable, with running water out of a tap. If the exposed person wears contact lenses, the lenses need to be removed before eyes are flushed. If splash occurs to nose or mouth; flush the area well with running water for 15 minutes. If splash to nose, blow nose first then flush. Non Intact Skin – wash area well with soap and running water for 15 seconds. Use alcohol gel if soap and water is unavailable. Go immediately to the emergency department of your local hospital. *If possible take the client with you for testing.* HCW are treated in accordance with the HR protocols for hospital staff. The worker is to inform their supervisor that the incident has occurred. The supervisor will complete an incident report with the Workers' Compensation Board. More information and PEP kit locations can be found on the SDAA Website.

<http://sdaa.in1touch.org/site/needlestickprotocols>

IMMUNIZATION GUIDE

Health care workers (HCW), including those in oral health care, are at risk of exposure to communicable diseases through contact with patients/clients (diagnosed or undiagnosed) or their environment. There is also a risk that HCW could transmit an undiagnosed vaccine-preventable disease to others.

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.

Employers need to be aware of immunization recommendation for adults as noted in the Saskatchewan 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.

WORKERS COMPENSATION:

Oral care facilities operating under SK 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.

Employers are within their rights to 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:** Immunization is recommended if there is no evidence of immunity. Hep-B infections can result from exposure to infectious body fluids, notably blood, through:

- Eyes
- Mucous membranes

• **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. Early

- 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 then recommended that employers offer appropriate follow-up titre testing.

• **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 HCWs with frequent contact with children and who do not have a reliable, documented history of immunity to the virus. *Vaccination is contraindicated during pregnancy.*

treatment results in lower compensation costs overall; this 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.

• **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.*

• **Dentistry Mission Trip:** Humanitarian relief and overseas refugee workers in cholera-endemic countries or areas where hepatitis A, typhoid, Japanese encephalitis, tick-borne encephalitis, or yellow fever are present may be at significantly increased risk of exposure and may benefit from immunization. Re-vaccination may be recommended if the risk of exposure is ongoing. Be sure to consult a travel medicine expert.

<https://www.ehealthsask.ca/services/Manuals/Documents/sim-chapter1.pdf>

• **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