

Seven States Introduce Interstate Dental & Dental Hygiene Licensure Compact Legislation

AADB spearheads effort to protect patient safety and state authority in dental licensure

CHICAGO, Ill. (February 20, 2025) - The American Association of Dental Boards (AADB) is pleased to announce that seven states—Oklahoma, Missouri, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Texas, and now Kentucky—are taking a significant step toward improving workforce mobility by introducing legislation to join the Interstate Dental & Dental Hygiene Licensure Compact (IDHLC). This initiative seeks to streamline licensing, uphold rigorous patient safety standards, and reinforce state authority over dental regulations. Bills are expected to be introduced in other states soon.

"The IDHLC upholds the highest standards of patient safety and professional competence while establishing a uniform criteria for dental standards, just like medical standards," said Arthur Chen-Shu Jee, DMD, President of the Board of Directors of AADB. "By maintaining rigorous standards, including the notoriously challenging hand-skills examinations, we're ensuring that only qualified dental professionals can practice across state lines."

A recent survey of 1,863 registered U.S. voters, conducted from December 30, 2024, to January 9, 2025, found that 82% of Americans agree hand skills examinations are necessary to assess a dentist's ability to perform procedures safely. The survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.28 percentage points.

Key components of the IDHLC include:

- Addressing workforce shortages while maintaining care quality. By facilitating mobility for qualified professionals, it aims to improve access to dental care for constituents across participating states.
- Operating without imposing additional costs on states. All expenses are covered by fees from dental professionals who voluntarily seek compact licenses. This approach promotes workforce mobility without impacting taxpayers.
- Mandating full reporting of all disciplinary actions and criminal history, providing state boards with comprehensive information to protect patients. This level of transparency maintains public trust in the dental profession.

"The IDHLC preserves state authority, allowing dental boards to maintain control over licensing and disciplinary actions within their jurisdictions," Dr. Jee added. "This approach respects individual state laws while creating a uniform standard that enhances regulatory consistency across member states."

Legislation that would opt states into the IDDHLC is pending in the following states:

- **Texas** – The IDDHLC has been introduced in the Texas House of Representatives as HB 1799.
- **Oklahoma** – The IDDHLC has been introduced in the Oklahoma Senate as SB 765 and has been referred to the Health and Human Services Committee.
- **Missouri** – The IDDHLC has been introduced in the Missouri Senate as SB 109 and has been referred to the Emerging Issues and Professional Registration Committee.
- **Maryland** – The IDDHLC has been introduced in the Maryland House of Representatives as HB0534, cross-filed with SB0538 in the Senate.
- **Massachusetts** – The IDDHLC has been introduced in the Massachusetts Senate as SD2010, cross-filed with HD3459 in the House of Representatives.
- **Mississippi** - Mississippi's House of Representatives passed the IDDHLC compact legislation without opposition. The bill, HB 674, has now been transmitted to the Mississippi Senate for consideration.
- **Kentucky** – HB 762 was introduced to the Kentucky House of Representatives, sponsored by Representative Chris Freeland.

For more information about the IDDHLC, please visit <https://aadbcompact.org/>.

About the American Association of Dental Boards (AADB)

The American Association of Dental Boards is a national association that encourages the highest standards of dental education by promoting higher and uniform standards of qualification for dental practitioners. Its mission is to serve as a resource by providing a national forum for the exchange, development, and dissemination of information to assist dental regulatory boards with their obligation to protect the public. Membership is comprised of boards of dentistry, advanced education boards, present and past members of those boards, board administrators, board attorneys, educators, practitioners, and other oral health stakeholders. Learn more at aadbtealboards.org.

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