

Board of Dentistry and Dental Hygiene

Delaware Health Force Team

The primary objective of the Delaware Board of Dentistry and Dental Hygiene is to protect the general public from unsafe and unprofessional practices. The Board must also maintain standards of professional competence and service delivery. To meet these objectives, the Board

- develops standards for professional competency,
- promulgates rules and regulations,
- adjudicates complaints against professionals and, when necessary, imposes disciplinary sanctions.

The Board issues licenses to dentists, dentist academics, dental hygienists and dental residents. The Board also issues three types of permits to dentists and dentist academics who administer anesthesia.

The Board's statutory authority is in [24 Del. C., Chapter 11](#).

The dental profession is the branch of healthcare devoted to maintaining the health of the teeth, gums and other tissues in and around the mouth.

What is a Dentist?¹

A dentist is a doctor, scientist and clinician dedicated to the highest standards of health through prevention, diagnosis and treatment of oral diseases and conditions (see Figures 1, 2, 3, and 4).

Dentists play a key role in the early detection of oral cancer and other systemic conditions of the body that manifest themselves in the mouth. They often identify other health conditions, illnesses, and other problems that sometimes show up in the oral cavity before they are identified in other parts of the body.

What does a Dentist do?

- Evaluates the overall health of their patients while advising them about oral health and disease prevention;
- Performs clinical procedures, such as exams, fillings, crowns, implants, extractions and corrective surgeries;
- Identifies, diagnoses and treats oral conditions; and
- Performs general dentistry or practices in one of nine dental specialties.
- Advances in dental research, including genetic engineering, the discovery of links between oral and systemic diseases, the development of salivary diagnostics and the continued development of new materials and techniques, make dentistry an exciting, challenging and rewarding profession.

What is a dental hygienist?²

Dental hygienists are preventive oral health professionals who have graduated from an accredited dental hygiene program in an institution of higher education, licensed in dental hygiene to

provide educational, clinical, research, administrative and therapeutic services supporting total health through the promotion of optimum oral health.

In performing the dental hygiene process of care, the dental hygienist assesses the patient's oral tissues and overall health determining the presence or absence of disease, other abnormalities and disease risks; develops a dental hygiene diagnosis based on clinical findings; formulates evidence-based, patient-centered treatment care plans; performs the clinical procedures outlined in the treatment care plan; educates patients regarding oral hygiene and preventive oral care; and evaluates the outcomes of educational strategies and clinical procedures provided.

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Dental hygienists provide clinical services in a variety of settings such as private dental practice, community health settings, nursing homes, hospitals, prisons, schools, faculty practice clinics, state and federal government facilities and Indian reservations. In addition to clinical practice, there are career opportunities in education, research, sales and marketing, public health, administration and government. Some hygienists combine positions in different settings and career paths for professional variety. Working in education and clinical practice is an example.

What is a Dentist Academic License?

A Delaware Dentist Academic license is given to practitioners who are full-time directors, chairpersons, or attending faculty members of a hospital-based dental, oral and maxillofacial surgery or other dental specialty residency program. The program must be:

- based in Delaware, and
- accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association (CODA) for the purposes of teaching, has received initial CODA accreditation or is in the process of establishing CODA accreditation

The academic license allows a practitioner to practice dentistry or oral and maxillofacial surgery only in the institution designated on the license and only on patients in an academic setting for teaching purposes.

What are Restricted Permits?

Restricted Permit I

A Restricted Permit I allows a practitioner to induce only conscious sedation by parenteral, enteral, or rectal routes, as well as nitrous oxide inhalation, at a specific location. (This does not prohibit the usual and customary pre-operative oral sedation.)

A Restricted Permit I does not allow induction using:

- deep sedation
- general anesthesia

Restricted Permit II

A Restricted Permit II allows induction of conscious sedation by nitrous oxide inhalation. It does not allow:

- deep sedation
- general anesthesia

Unrestricted Permit

An Unrestricted Permit applies only to one office location where anesthesia is administered. The two types of Unrestricted Permits are Individual and Facility. The type of permit selected determines who is allowed to administer anesthesia at that location:

An Unrestricted Permit-Individual allows the dentist to administer conscious sedation, general anesthesia and deep sedation, as defined by the Board's Rules and Regulations governing anesthesia, at the location. If a certified registered nurse anesthetist (CRNA) is employed for deep sedation or general anesthesia at an office location, the facility must also have at least one individual with an Unrestricted Permit-Individual.

What is Dentist-FQHC Provisional License?

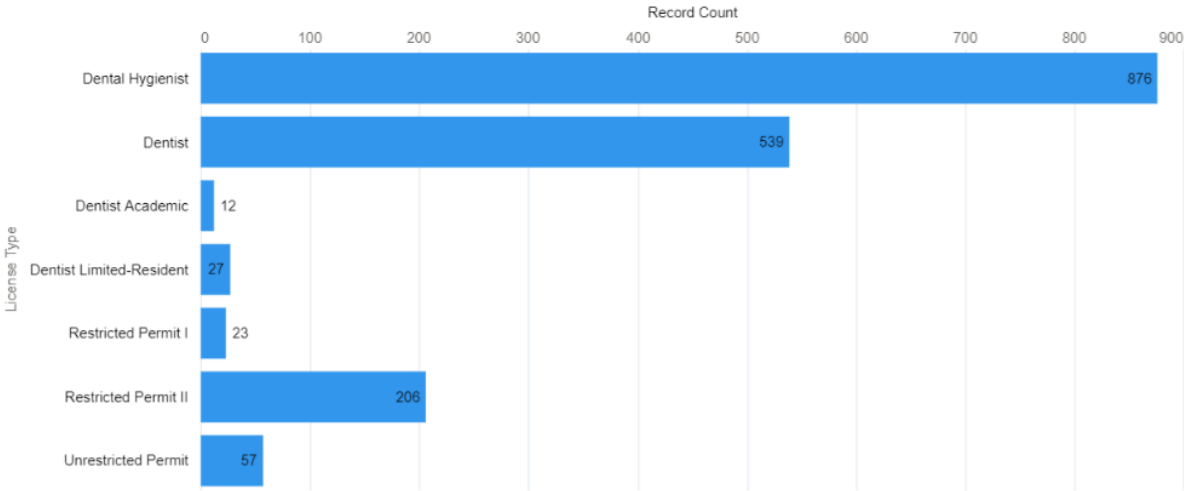
This type of dental licensure is specific to dentists contracted to practice at a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Delaware. The Dentist-FQHC Provisional license allows the practice of dentistry in Delaware...

- before the three examinations required for full Dentist licensure have been passed,
- only at the FQHC named on the license, and
- only under the general supervision of a Delaware-licensed dentist.

A Dental Resident is a license for dentists who will be starting a residency program in Delaware.

Figure 1. Active Dental Licenses by Type*, N=1,740

Dental Board - Active

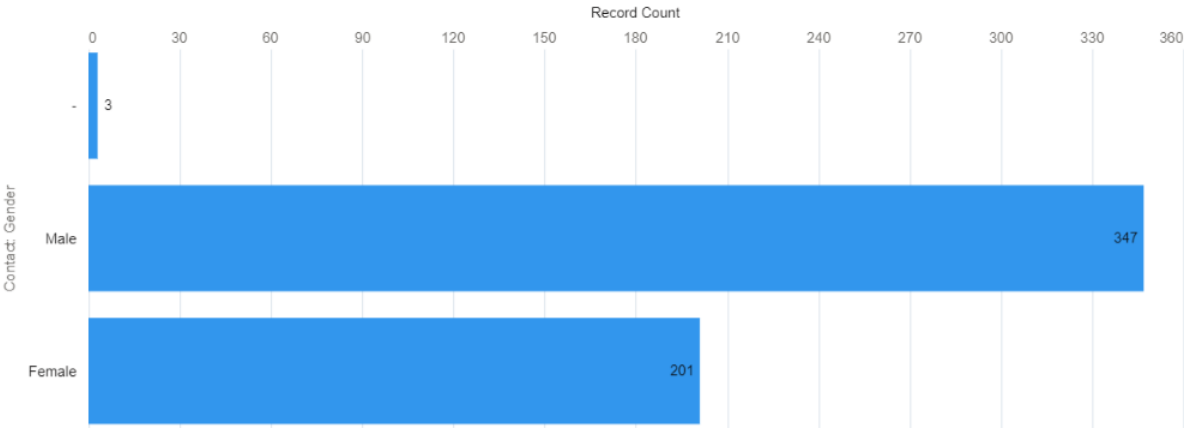


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Note. An active license does not guarantee an individual is actively seeing patients.

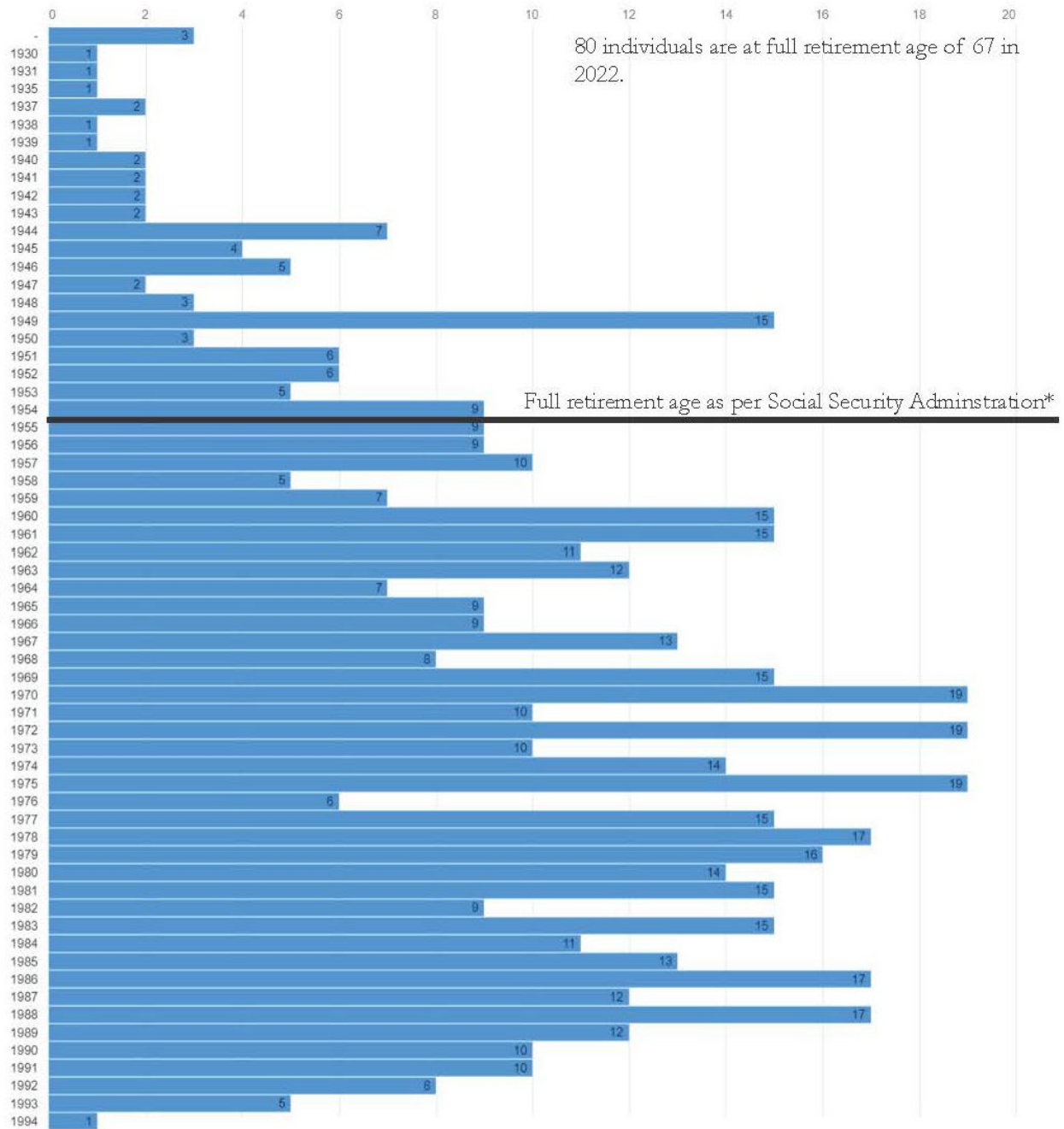
Figure 2. Active Dental Licenses by Gender, all types (when reported)

Dentists - Active Licenses G



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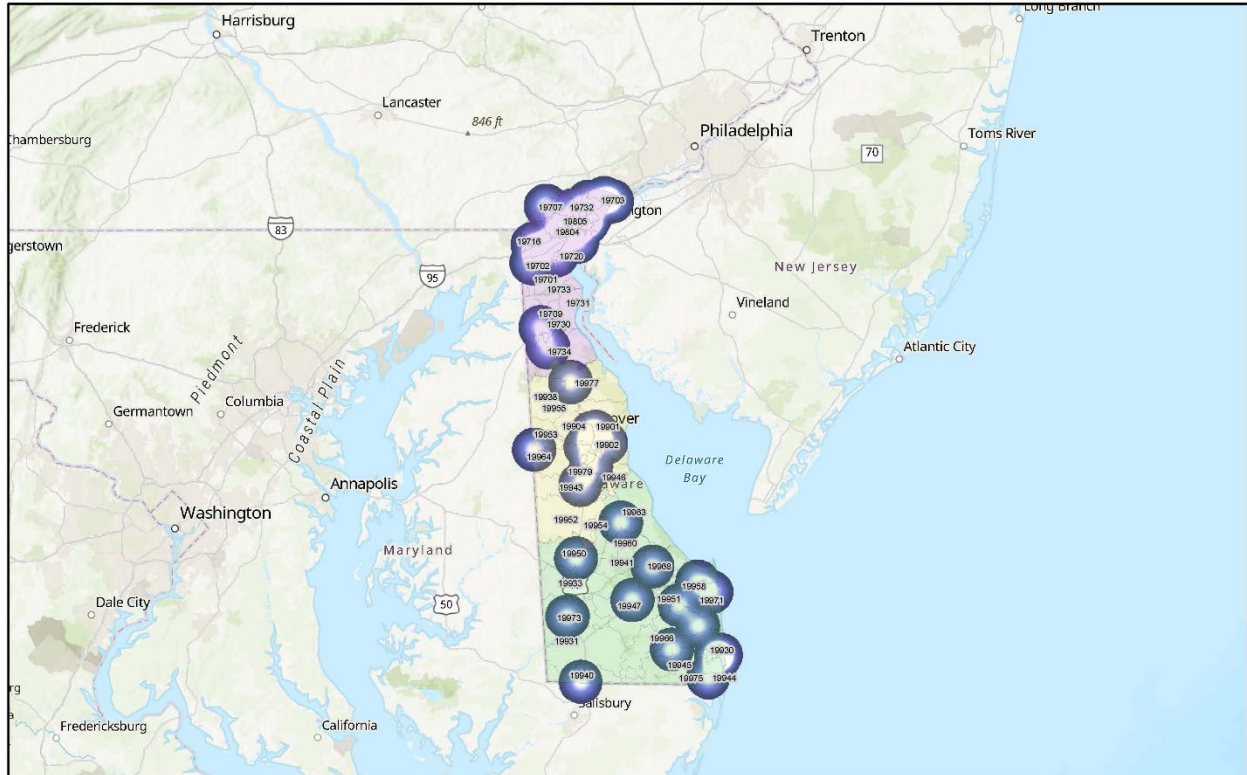
Figure 3. Dentists ONLY - Active Licenses by Birth Year (when reported)



Note. Three individuals did not provide a year of birth

* According to the Social Security Administration “Full retirement age is the age when you can start receiving your full retirement benefit amount. The full retirement age is 66 if you were born from 1943 to 1954. The full retirement age increases gradually if you were born from 1955 to 1960, until it reaches 67. For anyone born 1960 or later, full retirement benefits are payable at age 67.”

Figure 4. Numerical Distribution of Active Dentists and Dental Academics by ZIP code



Note. Map in Figure 4 shows most, *but not all*, ZIP codes due to scaling limitations. Hot spots are employed to bring perspective to viewing the overall map and distribution of healthcare professionals and should not be interpreted as valuing value without referring to the numbers listed in the chart above.

References

1. American Dental Education Association. (n.d.). “Dentistry 101.” https://www.adea.org/GoDental/Dentistry_101.aspx
2. Explore Health Careers. (n.d.). Dental Hygienist. Retrieved from <https://explorehealthcareers.org/career/dentistry/dental-hygienist/>

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