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March 19, 2021

### Informational Letter Regarding Public Health Dental Hygiene Practice Authority

On April 5, 2020, the Board of Dental Practice (“the Board”) transitioned from its former rule governing Public Health Supervision Status (“PHS”) to its new rule identifying the qualifications by which a dental hygienist can obtain an authority to practice Public Health Dental Hygiene. The purpose of this notification is to identify the transition of dental hygienists who have an active PHS status on file with the Board, as well as identify the steps for a dental hygienist to file an initial application for the practice authority.

Below is an outline of the process to obtain the practice authority as well as renew the practice authority.

#### Initial application to obtain PHS practice authority – See Board Rules, Chapter 2, § IV:

- Initial application and fee required: Dental hygienists seeking to practice with a Public Health Dental Hygiene authority must qualify via the application process and pay the required fee. The qualifications include an approved written practice agreement between the dental hygienist and the supervising dentist that outlines the roles and responsibilities of the collaboration. The application and the written practice agreement can be found on the Board’s website at: <https://www.maine.gov/dental/licensure/forms.html>
- Authority designated on dental hygiene license: Once the practice authority is approved by the Board, the authority will be designated on the dental hygiene license and a new license will be emailed to the dental hygienist.
- Online access to the practice agreement: Once the practice authority is approved by the Board, the signed, written practice agreement will be available online under the licensing records of both the dental hygienist and the supervising dentist. There is also an advanced search option online to find a dental hygienist with a public health dental hygiene practice authority at: <https://www.pfr.maine.gov/almsonline/almquery/SearchIndividual.aspx>

#### Renewal requirements – See Board Rules, Chapter 11 § IV(B):

- No renewal application or fee requirement: The public health dental hygiene authority will not have a separate expiration date or a renewal fee requirement. Rather, the practice authority will follow the dental hygiene licensure status and will automatically be renewed upon successful renewal of a dental hygiene license and upon evidence of a current, valid written practice agreement specific to public health dental hygiene.

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- Expired authorities: The practice authority will expire/terminate if the dental hygiene license remains expired after 90 days. A dental hygiene renewal that is filed late (0-90 days after expiration) will automatically reactive the public health dental hygiene authority so long as the dental hygiene renewal is successful, and demonstrated evidence of a current, valid practice agreement specific to public health dental hygiene.

**Transition of dental hygienists with active PHS status on file with the Board**

- All dental hygienists who have an active PHS status on file with the Board have transitioned to a practice authority which as stated earlier can be viewed online.

Please contact the Board's office should you have any questions regarding this notification:

Board of Dental Practice  
161 Capitol Street  
143 State House Station  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0143

Telephone: (207) 287-3333  
TTY users call Maine relay 711  
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**FMI:**

Dental Board website: [www.maine.gov/dental](http://www.maine.gov/dental)