



College of
Dental Hygienists
of Ontario

Protecting your health and your smile

A Guide to the Process of Becoming
Registered as a Dental Hygienist in Ontario

**For Graduates of Non-Accredited
Dental Hygiene Programs**

Before Getting Started

This guide is intended to outline the registration requirements and process for applicants who have graduated from a dental hygiene program that was not accredited by either the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA). This includes anyone who completed their dental hygiene education outside of Canada or the United States. If you do not fit into this applicant category, please refer to the CDHO website at www.cdho.org for the appropriate application guide.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before accessing the *Application for Registration* online, you will be required to pay a \$75 application fee. This fee is non-refundable and it is valid for 1 year from the date of payment. If you do not complete the registration process within the year, you will be required to pay an additional application fee before being able to continue with your application.

How to Use this Guide

This guide will provide you with important information about the requirements for registration specific to your applicant group, including what you need to know or do before you can start the process of applying for registration, how to put together a complete application package, and what you can expect after submitting your application to the College. This guide is optimized for online use so that you can easily access the links contained within it.

Please see *Before Getting Started*, above, to ensure that you are using the correct application guide prior to proceeding.

Technical Requirements

You will need a device with Internet access and a printer in order to access and complete the application process. It is possible to enter the information on a mobile device. However, we strongly recommend that you use a laptop or desktop computer with a full keyboard and a good Internet connection. Please also ensure that your operating system and web browser are up to date. The Self-Service Portal and the online application process work best with the current version of either Internet Explorer or Google Chrome. If the online process doesn't appear to be working properly, please try moving to a different computer, using a different web browser, or updating your device as needed.

Email

It is a requirement under CDHO Bylaw No. 5 that all registrants provide the College with a valid email address to which only they have access. Most communications from CDHO are sent via email, including the status updates and instructions you will be sent during the application process. We strongly recommend adding the domain **@cdho.org** to your safe senders list in your email account so that all emails from the College are sent directly to your email inbox. When you are registered with us, you will be responsible for ensuring that you are receiving and reviewing all communications from the College.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or require assistance, please check our [Contact Us](#) page.

PRIOR TO APPLYING FOR REGISTRATION

This section of the guide will go over important information you need to know and things you need to do *before* you can begin the process of applying for registration. For information about the application process itself, please refer to the *Online Application Process* section below. For more detailed information about what to include in a completed application package and notes on supporting documentation, refer to the section on *Submitting the Application*.

Understanding Dental Hygiene Regulation in Ontario

In Ontario, the practice of dental hygiene is regulated under the [Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991](#) (RHPA) and the [Dental Hygiene Act, 1991](#) (DHA). Dental hygienists must comply with the regulations made under the RHPA and DHA, as well as [Bylaw No. 5](#) and the standards of the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario. Copies of relevant legislation, bylaws, standards, and guidelines relating to the practice of dental hygiene are available on the CDHO website. You are expected to know and understand what your responsibilities will be as a registered dental hygienist in Ontario prior to becoming registered.

Overview of the Application Process

Before applying for registration, you will need to pass the requisite exam(s), details of which will follow below. After that, you can [create your Self-Service account](#) and pay the application fee. Once you are logged in to your account, you will have access to the required online Jurisprudence Education Module and exam, as well as the online application process. After entering your information in the *Application for Registration* online, you will need to print the forms made available to you and follow the *Application Checklist* to ensure that you have all required supporting documentation before submitting the completed application package to the CDHO office for review.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have ever started an application for registration with CDHO, no matter how long ago or how far into the application process you were at the time, your information will already be in our system. Please do not start a new account. You can contact our office for details on how to gain access to the old account.

Fees and Payments

You will pay the \$75 application fee online as part of the account setup process. The initial registration fee is paid *after* your application has been approved. The registration fee amount will vary depending on when you graduated, so please refer to your *Application Checklist* for the correct amount. You can also refer to the CDHO website for a current list of the various other [Fees Related to the Application for Registration](#).

CDHO can accept payment online using Visa or MasterCard only, including Visa Debit and Debit MasterCard. Prepaid or gift cards will likely not process properly. If you prefer, you can select “Offline Payment” during the application process and then submit a Certified Cheque or Money Order with your completed application package. We are not able to accept personal cheques or cash.

Education Requirements

It is a non-exemptible requirement for registration as a dental hygienist in Ontario that an applicant has graduated from a dental hygiene program that was, at the time of graduation, accredited by either the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), or that an applicant graduated from a dental hygiene program that is considered to be substantially equivalent to that of an accredited program.

If you did not complete an accredited program, you can contact the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB) to have your education and credentials assessed in order to determine if you are eligible to participate in the required NDHCB exam. More information about the NDHCB exam follows in the Examinations section below.

If the NDHCB determines that you are not eligible to participate in the NDHCB exam and you still wish to proceed with an application for registration, your application can be referred to the Registration Committee to determine if your course of study meets the education requirements. Please review the [Guide to the Assessment of Educational Credentials and Qualifications](#) for more information or contact CDHO directly.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Non-accredited dental hygiene programs completed within Canada or the United States on or after March 26, 2015, will not be considered to meet the registration requirements and are not eligible for assessment by either the NDHCB or CDHO. This ineligibility period does not apply to dental hygiene programs completed outside of Canada or the US.

National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB) Exam

Following the assessment of your education (see Education Requirements above) your next step to becoming registered as a dental hygienist in Ontario is to successfully complete the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB) exam. To arrange to sit the exam, please contact the NDHCB directly. Contact details for NDHCB, along with additional information about exam fees, dates for the exam, and how to prepare for the exam, can be found on the NDHCB website at www.ndhcb.ca.

Canadian Performance Exam in Dental Hygiene (CPEDH)

As a graduate of a non-accredited dental hygiene program, you will also be required to participate in the Canadian Performance Exam in Dental Hygiene (CPEDH). You cannot apply to participate in the CPEDH until after you have successfully passed the NDHCB exam (see above).

The CPEDH is a practical examination that evaluates an applicant’s clinical skills. The purpose of this exam is to ensure that all candidates possess the breadth and depth of clinical skills to safely and effectively enter

professional dental hygiene practice in Canada. The CPEDH is a two-part performance-based exam, which will assess the competency of an entry-to-practice dental hygienist's knowledge and/or skills in both a simulated-based setting and in an authentic clinical context delivered over two days.

For more information about the CPEDH, including fees, format, and the next available date, please email exams@cdho.org.

Jurisprudence

You will also need to complete the mandatory online [Jurisprudence Education Module](#) prior to applying for registration. The module is comprised of an interactive online course, a self-build study guide, and a final exam, all of which are available in both English and French on the CDHO website.

Applicants must demonstrate familiarity with the rules and regulations governing the practice of dental hygiene in Ontario by achieving a mark of 100% on the exam in order to pass. There is no limit to the number of attempts you can take to complete the exam. However, each exam attempt will include a different set of questions and, where questions are repeated, the answers will be shuffled around. The exam is designed this way so that applicants must know the information in order to pass, rather than recall the answers from a previous exam attempt.

There is no fee to complete the Jurisprudence Education Module. However, the \$75 application fee must be paid online prior to being granted access to the exam or the online application process.

ONLINE APPLICATION PROCESS

This section will cover the step-by-step process for the online portion of the application. For more information on what is included in the application package and notes on required supporting documentation, please refer to the *Submitting the Application* section below.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You will need your **NDHCB certificate number** and your **professional liability insurance** policy information for the *Application for Registration*. Please do *not* begin the application process unless you know your NDHCB certificate number, which is on the certificate that was mailed to you after you successfully complete the NDHCB exam, and you already have your insurance policy.

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Click the “Apply for Registration” link available under the *Registration* heading in your menu; this will begin the online application process.
2. Follow the prompts on each page of the application process, reading carefully and ensuring that the information you enter is accurate and truthful. You can leave the online process at any time and return later to finish it.

3. When asked whether you are currently registered as a dental hygienist elsewhere in Canada, do not check this box. If that *does* apply to you, then you are using the wrong application guide for registration. Please refer to the guide for applicants eligible to apply under the Canadian Free Trade Agreement ([CFTA](#)).
4. Your personal details will be pre-populated using the information you entered when you set up your account. If anything is incorrect but you find you are unable to edit it (e.g. your name, NDHCB certificate number, etc.) you can make changes by hand on the printed application form. Please initial next to any changes made.
5. When you get to the Declaration questions, please ensure that you fully understand what you are answering. If you have questions, or you are not sure whether you are required to declare something, please contact our office for assistance *before* answering. If you answer 'yes' to any of these questions, an explanation is required and you may be asked to submit additional documentation. Your application will be referred to the Registrar and/or Registration Committee for consideration, which may delay your application processing time.
6. Choose "Online Payment" if you plan to pay online with your Visa or MasterCard after your application has been approved. Choose "Offline Payment" if you will be including a Certified Cheque or Money Order when you submit your application to the College.
7. After clicking "Finish", download and print each of the documents listed. Follow the *Application Checklist* to ensure that you have all of the required supporting documentation and that everything has been signed and/or notarized, as needed.

IMPORTANT NOTE: On the printed version of this application form, you will be required to sign an additional declaration statement indicating that all of the information provided by you during the application process is complete and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief. Making a false or misleading statement on your application could result in the rejection of the application, or, if it is discovered after you have become registered, it could result in disciplinary measures up to and including revocation of your certificate of registration.

SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

The following section provides more information about what you need to include in your application package when you submit it. Completed application packages can be mailed or hand-delivered to the CDHO office. Our office address and business hours, along with contact telephone numbers and staff email directory, can be found on the [Contact Us](#) page on our website.

Application Package

A complete application package for graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs includes the following documents:

- **Form A** is the main application form, to be completed in full by the applicant and then signed and notarized (*). A passport photo should be glued in the designated box on the first page of the application.

- **Form B** is the *Certificate of Professional Conduct*, which is submitted to the CDHO office directly by the issuing body. See below for more information about the *Certificate of Professional Conduct* and whether it applies to you.
- **Form C** is the certificate completed by the dean or principal from the college of graduation, which is submitted to the CDHO office directly by the issuing school or institution. Form C must be accompanied by an official transcript.
- **Form D** authorizes CDHO to verify or obtain additional information respecting an application. It needs to be signed by the applicant and included in the completed application package.
- A copy of proof of **professional liability insurance** is required. See below for more information about requirements for suitable insurance.
- The original or a notarized copy (*) of a **Criminal Record Check** dated no earlier than 12 months prior to becoming registered. See below for important information about obtaining a suitable Criminal Record Check.
- A notarized copy (*) of one of the following **identification documents** demonstrating that you are currently eligible to work within Canada: Canadian birth certificate, Canadian passport, Canadian citizenship certificate, permanent resident card, or valid work permit. If the document bears an expiration date, it must still be valid at the time of registration.
- A notarized copy (*) of documentation to support a **name change**, if applicable.
- Proof of successful completion of an **approved refresher course or professional competency assessment**, if you graduated more than three years ago and you have not been practising dental hygiene since you graduated. See below for more information if this applies to you.
- The **Application Checklist**, signed and dated by the applicant, having checked all items that apply.

(*) Documents marked with an asterisk above must be notarized by a lawyer, Notary Public, or Commissioner of Oaths. Alternatively, the applicant may bring the original documents to the CDHO office for authentication.

Translations

All documents submitted in languages other than English or French must be accompanied by an official translation in either English or French.

Criminal Record Check

A Criminal Record Check is a name-based search against the RCMP's Canadian Police Information Centre (CPIC) system. This consists of a check of the National Repository of Criminal Records based on a person's name and date of birth and may also include searches of other national and local databases.

For the purposes of registration, your Criminal Record Check must show that a search was done on all names you are currently using or have ever used, including your first, middle, and last name(s), any other names listed on your legal documents, your name at birth, or any other former or assumed names. This may include nicknames, aliases, preferred names, or alternate spellings of your name, if applicable. If you fail to include a

name on your Criminal Record Check, or if a name has been misspelled or we are unable to verify that a name was included, you will be required to obtain a new one before you can be approved for registration.

You can obtain a Criminal Record Check from your local police service department anywhere in Canada. Record checks from jurisdictions outside of Canada are not accepted. The [RCMP website](#) can provide you with more details about what information is included on a standard Criminal Record Check.

Certificate of Professional Conduct (Form B)

If you have been registered as a dental hygienist in another jurisdiction, either inside or outside of Canada, or if you have been registered in any other regulated profession anywhere in the world, a completed Certificate of Professional Conduct (Form B) is required from each regulatory authority with which you have been registered. This requirement applies even if you have never practised the profession after registering with the regulator.

The completed Form B must be mailed directly to the CDHO office by the issuing body and it must have been signed by the issuer within the three-month period prior to becoming registered in Ontario.

Good Conduct

It is a requirement for registration that, “Nothing in the applicant’s conduct affords reasonable grounds for the belief that the applicant will not practise the profession safely and with decency, integrity and honesty, and in accordance with the law” (S. 32.1 of [General Regulation Part VII – Registration](#), made under the *Dental Hygiene Act, 1991*).

For the purposes of applying for registration, “good conduct” is determined based on the results of the Criminal Record Check, the Certificate of Professional Conduct (if applicable), and the responses to the declaration questions that you answered during the online application process.

Applicants are required to answer all questions on the declaration with honesty and integrity. If an applicant answers “yes” to any of the declaration questions, or if concerns are identified as a result of any of the other supporting documentation, your application may be referred to the Registrar and/or the Registration Committee for consideration. If your application is referred to the Registration Committee, you would be notified in writing and given 30 days to respond. The Registrar/Registration Committee will consider whether or not the issues identified will affect your suitability to practise the profession.

Applicants who are not satisfied with a registration decision can appeal the decision to the [Health Professions Appeal and Review Board](#) (HPARB).

Professional Liability Insurance

Under [CDHO Bylaw No. 5](#), all registrants must maintain professional liability insurance with a minimum of \$1,000,000 coverage for each occurrence, annual aggregate coverage of no less than \$5,000,000, and a deductible of no more than \$4,000 per occurrence. Run-off coverage (sometimes called enduring or tail coverage) is required for a minimum of two years. The insurer must be licensed with the Financial Services Commission of Ontario or

the Office of the Superintendent of Financial Institutions Canada. The insurance must include a sexual abuse therapy and counselling fund endorsement that,

- i. Provides coverage for therapy and counselling for every person eligible for funding under subsection 85.7(4) of the Code; and
- ii. Provides coverage, in respect of each such eligible person, for the maximum amount of funding that may be provided for the person under the Act, for therapy and counselling as a result of sexual abuse by the Registrant.

Applicants are required to have coverage in place *before* being registered. Professional liability insurance can be obtained from either the [Canadian Dental Hygienists Association](#) (CDHA), the [Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association](#) (ODHA), or any other insurance broker of your choice as long as the insurance policy meets the requirements outlined above.

Refresher Course / Professional Competency Assessment

If you graduated more than three years prior to registration and you have not practised dental hygiene in a recognized jurisdiction within the last three years, you will need to successfully complete either an approved clinical refresher course or a professional competency assessment. Please contact CDHO for more information and a list of approved courses.

WHAT TO EXPECT AFTER SUBMITTING

We understand that you are anxious about becoming registered and we endeavour to process all applications in a timely manner. **In the interests of fairness to all applicants, applications are reviewed and processed in the order in which they are received and we do not have a rush process under any circumstance.** Every effort is made to provide immediate assistance on the phone and by email and to get everyone registered as quickly as possible, though there are certain times of the year that responses may take longer than others – this is particularly true in December and January while we are busy with the annual renewals of existing registrants, as well as in June and July when we receive over 300 new applications following the May session of the NDHCB exam.

Timelines

All applications take approximately **10 business days** to process. This is calculated starting on the first full business day after your application is received in our office and it does not include weekends or holidays. You will be informed by email or by phone about any missing or incomplete information, which may result in longer processing times.

Notifications Regarding Application Status

An automated email is sent out once your application has reached our office and been tracked into our database. If any information is identified as missing or incomplete, you will receive another email from a CDHO staff member letting you know what is required and how you can submit what is needed. In some cases, we may also call you.

Once your application is approved, a confirmation email will be sent letting you know that you can make payment online, unless a Certified Cheque or Money Order was submitted with the application. Finally, once payment has been processed, a confirmation email is sent letting you know that you are registered and providing you with your new six-digit registration ID number.

Welcome Package

You can begin practising as a dental hygienist in Ontario as soon as you receive your registration number by email. About 2 to 3 weeks after your initial registration date, you will receive the formal welcome package, which will include your new wall certificate and RDH lapel pin. Additional copies of the wall certificate can be purchased in your Self-Service account at a cost of \$20 each. An annual wallet certificate and receipt for your registration fees will be available in your account to print at any time.

Confidentiality and Retention of Records

Application files are confidential. Release of information to a third party (i.e. employer, spouse, agency) requires written authorization from the applicant.

The College will hold an application for a period of one year from the date it is received at our office. If the applicant has not completed the registration process within one year, the application will be canceled and attempts will be made to return any documentation submitted by the applicant. If the applicant cannot be reached or does not want their application documents back, they will be securely destroyed. A record of the application status will be kept in the College database permanently.

Documents submitted to the College directly by a third party (e.g. transcripts, certificates of professional conduct) are not returned. Records of appealed registration decisions are kept indefinitely. More information can be found in the [Retention and Safeguarding Policy for Records Containing Personal Information](#).

Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium (ORAC)

The Ontario Regulators for Access Consortium (ORAC) offers an online education program for internationally educated professionals. [Orientation to Regulation of Professions in Ontario](#) is a 1-hour, web-based program that may help you develop strategies for working more effectively with regulatory bodies. To access this program at no cost, please visit the ORAC website at www.regulatorsforaccess.ca.

If you did not find the information you were looking for in this guide, please refer to the [Registration FAQs](#) for answers to common questions about applying for registration.