

Dental Careers in North Carolina

Careers	Functions	Academic Requirements	Educational Institutions	Additional Training	Licensure Requirements	Work Environment	Average Starting Salary	Professional Organizations
Dentist in Private Practice	Dentists examine patients and treat them for diseased, injured or crooked teeth and diseased gums. Dentists fill cavities, treat gum disease, replace missing teeth or make custom dentures for the patient. They also teach patients proper oral care regarding nutrition and fluorides, and the prevention of gum disease and tooth loss.	Minimum of 96 semester hours of accredited college work required before entering dental school. Graduation from an accredited dental school.	UNC-CH School of Dentistry. North Carolina contracts for spaces at Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, TN.	UNC-CH School of Dentistry, Specialty training available in Endodontics, Geriatric Dentistry, Oral Pathology, Oral Radiology, Oral Surgery Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontics, Prosthodontics	Successful completion of an examination approved by the National Board of Dental Examiners and a state licensing examination.	Work in their own private dental office, a dental or medical group, a hospital, a nursing home or the military. They usually work with a dental hygienist, dental assistant and office personnel.	General Practice: \$150,000 Specialist: \$210,000	NC Dental Society, American Dental Assoc., American Assoc. of Dental Schools and various specialty societies.
Dentist in Public Health	Public health dentists examine the dental needs of people in the community. They plan programs to prevent dental diseases and to educate the community on proper oral care regarding nutrition and fluorides, and the prevention of gum disease and tooth loss.	Minimum of 96 semester hours of accredited college work required before entering dental school. Graduation from an accredited dental school.	UNC-CH School of Dentistry. North Carolina contracts for spaces at Meharry Medical College School of Dentistry in Nashville, TN.	UNC-CH School of Public Health: Specialty training available in Dental Public Health Residency Program and Master of Public Health.	Successful completion of an examination approved by the National Board of Dental Examiners and a state licensing examination. Completion of public health orientation by state dental public health organization.	Work in a public health setting, either a clinic or a community-based education/prevention program. They often work with a public health dental hygienist and a public health dental assistant.	\$51,497 - \$64,782	NC Dental Society, American Dental Assoc., American Assoc. of Dental Schools, American Assoc. of Public Health Dentistry, NC Public Health Assoc.
Dental Hygienist in Private Practice	Dental hygienists take patient histories, examine the teeth and gums, remove plaque and stains, apply fluoride, apply dental sealants, and take x-rays. They also teach patients proper oral care regarding nutrition and fluorides, and the prevention of gum disease and tooth loss.	High School Graduation and graduation from an accredited dental hygiene program.	UNC-CH School of Dentistry, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Cape Fear Community College, Catawba Valley Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, Coastal Carolina Community College, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Guilford Technical Community College, Halifax Community College, Wayne Community College (Associate Degrees, Certificate Programs, and Bachelor's Degrees available)	UNC-CH School of Dentistry, Master of Dental Auxiliary Teacher Education	Successful completion of a National Board Dental Hygiene Examination and a state licensing examination.	Work in a private dental office, a dental or medical group, a hospital, a nursing home or the military under the supervision of a dentist. They usually work with a dentist, dental assistant and office personnel.	\$48,000	American Dental Hygienists' Assoc., NC Dental Hygienists' Assoc.
Dental Hygienist in Public Health	Public health dental hygienists plan dental education and prevention programs for their communities. They do classroom dental screenings and education, and organize and participate in dental sealant promotions and adult education/promotion programs.	High School Graduation and graduation from an accredited dental hygiene program. A B.S. degree is preferred.	UNC-CH School of Dentistry, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Cape Fear Community College, Catawba Valley Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, Coastal Carolina Community College, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Guilford Technical Community College, Halifax Community College, Wayne Community College (Associate Degrees, Certificate Programs, and Bachelor's Degrees available)	UNC-CH School of Public Health, Master of Public Health	Successful completion of a National Board Dental Hygiene Examination and a state licensing examination. Completion of public health orientation by state dental public health organization.	Work in a public health setting, either a clinic or a community based education/prevention program. In a clinic, works under the direct supervision of a dentist. In a community program, works under the general supervision of a dentist.	\$40,030 - \$44,374	American Dental Hygienists' Assoc., NC Dental Hygienists' Assoc., American Assoc. of Public Health Dentistry, NC Public Health Assoc.
Dental Assistant in Private Practice	Dental assistants assist the dentist at chairside, make and develop dental x-rays, perform laboratory procedures, sterilize instruments and help manage the office.	Certified Dental Assistants: High School graduation and graduation from an accredited dental assistant program. Non-certified Dental Assistants: on-the-job training in a dental office by a dentist (not eligible for certification).	UNC-CH School of Dentistry, Alamance Community College, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Brunswick Community College, Cape Fear Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, Coastal Carolina Community College, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Guilford Technical Community College, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, Wake Technical Community College, Wayne Community College, Western Piedmont Community College, Wilkes Community College		Certification Examination by the Dental Assisting National Board (Optional)	Work in a private dental office, a dental or medical group, a hospital, a nursing home or the military under the supervision of a dentist. May work with a dental hygienist and dental laboratory technician.	\$18,000 - \$25,000	American Dental Assisting Association, North Carolina Dental Assistants' Assoc.
Dental Assistant in Public Health	In a clinic, dental assistants assist the dentist at chairside, make and develop dental x-rays, perform laboratory procedures, keep instruments sterile, and help manage the clinic. In the community, they do classroom dental education, adult education/promotion programs and assist with dental sealant promotions.	Certified Dental Assistants: High School graduation and graduation from an accredited dental assistant program. Non-certified Dental Assistants: on-the-job training in a dental office by a dentist (not eligible for certification).	UNC-CH School of Dentistry, Alamance Community College, Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College, Brunswick Community College, Cape Fear Community College, Central Piedmont Community College, Coastal Carolina Community College, Fayetteville Technical Community College, Guilford Technical Community College, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, Wake Technical Community College, Wayne Community College, Western Piedmont Community College, Wilkes Community College		Certification Examination by the Dental Assisting National Board (Optional)	Work in a public health setting, either a clinic or a community based education/prevention program. In a clinic, works under the direct supervision of a dentist. In a community program, works under the general supervision of a dentist.	\$19,624	American Dental Assisting Association, North Carolina Dental Assistants Association, American Assoc. of Public Health Dentistry, NC Public Health Assoc.
Dental Laboratory Technician	Dental laboratory technicians make and repair dentures, dental crowns, braces and other dental appliances using materials such as gypsum, acrylics, ceramics and metals.	High School Graduation before working in a dental laboratory.	Durham Technical Community College		Examination by the National Board of Certification of the National Association of Dental Laboratories (optional)	Work in dental offices, commercial laboratories, research settings and dental schools.	\$24,000	NC Dental Laboratory Assoc.

Sources for salary information: North Carolina Office of State Personnel (2002) and North Carolina Health Education Centers (AHEC) - North Carolina Health Careers 2001-2002
State of North Carolina, Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor, Department of Health and Human Services, Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary, Division of Public Health, Oral Health Section