



PALOMAR COLLEGE'S  
REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTING  
(RDA) PROGRAM

**Denise Rudy**  
Director

# OVERVIEW OF THE RDA PROFESSION

# WHAT IS AN RDA?

- An RDA is short for Registered Dental Assistant.
- Dental assistants with RDA licenses are able to legally perform a wider range of specific duties than those who are unlicensed, which makes them more marketable to employers. RDA's have a higher salary as compared to unlicensed dental assistants
- Who oversees such licensing and regulation? In California, these responsibilities fall on the Dental Board of California.

## WHAT IS AN RDA?

An RDA is short for  
Registered Dental Assistant.



There are 2 types  
of Dental Assistants: one  
with a license (RDA) and  
one without (DA)



DAs take x-rays and help  
the dentist.



RDAs have direct duties  
and can work without the  
supervision of a doctor.

# OVERVIEW OF THE RDA PROFESSION

## PRACTICE PROFILES

RDA's work is all types of dental offices:

- Large clinics
- Private offices
- Orthodontics
- Oral Surgery
- Pediatrics
- Other Specialty Practices

## JOB OPPORTUNITIES

In California, the number of Dental Assistants is expected to grow much faster than average growth rate for all occupations.

Jobs for Dental Assistants are expected to increase by 13.5 % between 2019 and 2029.

*Data from CA Employment Development  
Department [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov)*

# OVERVIEW OF THE RDA PROFESSION

## SALARY

\$22- \$25+ per hour

This is a starting salary.

Most alumni have informed us that they start at the higher end of this range.

Our students are also highly sought after, even without receiving their licenses.

## JOB AVAILABILITY

- RDA jobs cannot be outsourced
- Part-time and Full-time opportunities
- Pleasant Working Conditions

Employment opportunities are posted online from dental offices and clinics that contact our department.

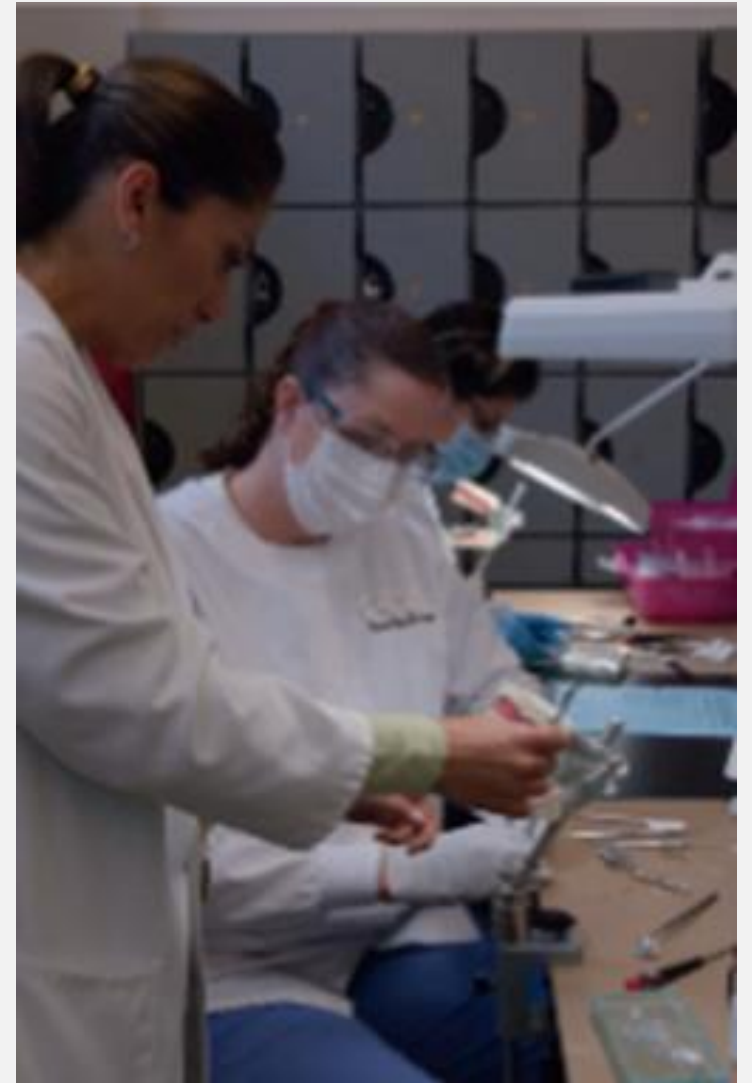
[www.palomar.edu/dental](http://www.palomar.edu/dental) on the Employment opportunities tab

PALOMAR  
COLLEGE'S  
RDA PROGRAM

## RDA PROGRAM MISSION & CORE VALUES

The purpose of the Registered Dental Assisting Program is to provide the community with Registered Dental Assistants who can work with the dental team to attain the shared goal of providing the best possible care for their patients and abide by ethical principles of the Dental Assisting profession.

The Registered Dental Assisting Program is committed to giving students opportunities to gain knowledge and develop skills while utilizing critical thinking as an integral part of the process as well.





# RECOGNITION

- Palomar College and Mesa College RDA Programs are the ONLY programs in San Diego County that are recognized by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB), allowing you to become a Certified Dental Assistant (CDA).
- **If life should take you to another state, make sure your hard-earned education will transfer and be recognized.**
- The RDA Program at Palomar College qualifies students to take both California state (RDA) and national (CDA) examinations at NO extra cost!

# ACCREDITATION

## **RDA PROGRAM**

- Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) of the American Dental Association (ADA)
- Dental Board of California (DBC)
- Dental Assisting National Board (DANB)

## **PALOMAR COLLEGE**

- Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC)
- Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)



## PROGRAM GOALS

- Prepare the dental assisting student for **employment** as a dental health care professional.
- Prepare the dental assistant to be a **safe and competent** dental health care professional, by being in compliance with both Federal and California state standards and regulations.
- Prepare the dental assisting student with academic knowledge and skill competence to **qualify for both** the California Registered Dental Assistant Examinations and the Dental Assisting National Board examinations.
- Provide curriculum that will offer opportunities for the dental assisting student to develop competency in **basic practice management procedures**.
- **Certify students** for performing radiography procedures within the State of California.
- Provide curriculum that will give the dental assisting student the knowledge and understanding of the **laws, professional duties, and ethical behaviors** of the California Registered Dental Assistant.

## PROGRAM OUTCOMES

At Palomar College you can receive a *Certificate of Achievement in Dental Assisting* or earn an *Associate's Degree in Dental Assisting*.

You will complete **over 300 hours** of experience while interning in dental offices or clinics.



## OUR RDA EXAM PASS RATES

- 2022/23: combined Pass Rate 100%
- 2021/22: combined Pass Rate 100%
- 2020/21: combined Pass Rate 100%
- 2019/20: combined Pass Rate 100%
- 2018/19: combined Pass Rate 100%

This information can be found on the Dental Board of California [website](#).



*Disclaimer: A valid Social Security Number is required for exams and licenses.*



## AFTER GRADUATION

Continuing your education

- RDA Expanded Functions 2
- Hygiene School
- College degrees/Dental School

This experience and training can lead to other career options, like:

- Dental Office Management
- Dental Sales
- Instructor/Trainer/Professor

# OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM STRUCTURE

## **Fall Semester\***

- DA 60, 65, 70, 75 & 82
- 14 units, 5 days a week, Mon-Fri

## **Winter Intersession\***

- DA 71
- 10 days in January

## **Spring Semester**

- DA 83, 85, & 90
- 12 units, 2 days a week
- Internships\*\* on other 3 days

## **Reliable transportation is needed.**

Students intern shifts can be between 7am to 7pm.

*\*All classes must be passed before moving on to the following term.*

*\*\*Students may be drug tested for internship participation.*

# PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS

## EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

- HS diploma or higher degree
- DA 50- Intro to Dental Sciences and Occupations
- DA 57- Dental Sciences & Anatomy
- ENG 100\* or equivalent- English Composition

\*ENG 100 is a corequisite and can be completed during the 1st term of the program.

## PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Medical requirements
  - Excellent vision and hearing
    - Need to be able to see as small as .5 mm
  - Hand dexterity to use small dental instruments
- Good communication skills
- Ability to comprehend and interpret written information



# ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Must be at least 18 years of age.

Proof of high school diploma, GED, or college degree

Have a cumulative 2.5 GPA (for college)

Pass DA 50 & 57 with a "C" or better @ Palomar College

- DA 50- within 2 years
- DA 57- within 5 years

# ADMISSION PROCESS

## HOW TO APPLY

- ✓ Complete Palomar College application
  - Application period: 2 weeks in June  
(next application period will start on June 3)
- ✓ Complete RDA online application form
  - Upload copies of:
    - HS diploma or final HS transcripts showing date of graduation
    - Palomar College & other college transcripts

## AFTER APPLICATION IS SUBMITTED

- You will receive a confirmation email that your application has been received.
- Allow 1 month after application deadline for your application to be reviewed.
- Admission offers are sent to email listed on application.
  - Once you accept our offer, onboarding instructions will be sent out.

# ONBOARDING REQUIREMENTS

TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE FALL SEMESTER

Complete medical, dental, and vision clearances

BLS CPR Certification Card

Provide verification of the following immunizations:

- Hepatitis B, TDap, MMR, Varicella,
- Negative TB test (2-step PPD or QuantiFERON)
- COVID-19 (Based on intern site, a booster may be required)
- Flu Shot (between Sept 1 & Oct 31)



## TUITION, FEES, & MATERIALS

**The Dental Assisting Program at Palomar College is VERY affordable!**

Enrollment fees are \$46 per unit

- Out of State students have additional fees – (contact Admissions Office)
- **If eligible for the California Promise, the \$46/unit will be waived.**

Uniforms, books, supplies & materials are all required at the beginning of the program in August.

The cost of the ENTIRE program including uniforms, instruments, supplies, books, and tuition is **less than \$4,500.00\***

*\*The total above does not include transportation expenses*



## FINANCIAL AID OFFICE

Phone:

(760) 744-1150

ext.2366

Email:

[finaid@palomar.edu](mailto:finaid@palomar.edu)



## CONTACT INFORMATION

- Phone:  
(760)744-1150, ext.2571
- Email:  
[dentalassist@palomar.edu](mailto:dentalassist@palomar.edu)
- Website:  
[palomar.edu/dental](http://palomar.edu/dental)