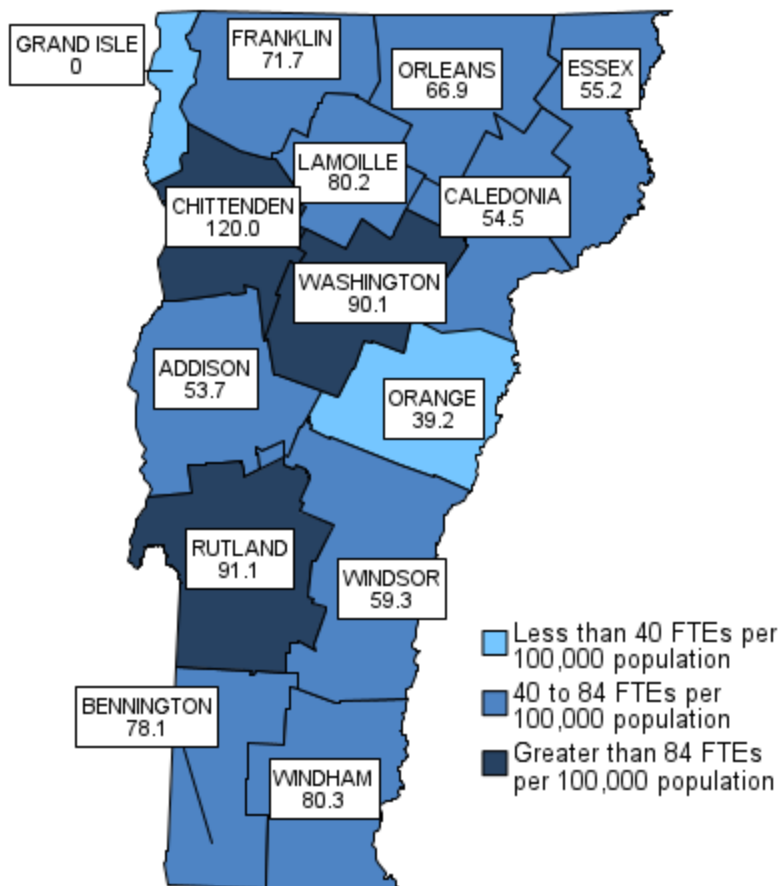


Overview

This dental assistant census is part of the Vermont Department of Health's healthcare provider data program, which is used to monitor and measure the supply of health care providers in our state over time. Vermont dental assistants are relicensed every two years. Data for this report was obtained during the September 2021 relicensing period and represents a snapshot of the profession at that time.

Dental assistants work under the direct supervision of a dentist. They perform a variety of tasks ranging from patient care (including tooth polishing, patient education, taking impressions and assisting the dentist during procedures); to laboratory functions (including creating casts models and instrument sterilization); to administrative tasks such as placing orders for dental supplies.

Dental Assistants FTEs per 100,000 population by county



In Brief

Workforce

Survey period: September 2021
 Response Rate: 98.1%
 Licenses renewed: 726
 Active in VT: 664
 VT Full-time Equivalents: 540.0

Type of Assistant

Traditional: 82.2%
 Certified: 17.8%
 Expanded Function: 9.6%

Demographics

% Female: 97.4%
 Median Age: 38
 % 60 or older: 10.2%

Education and Training

On-the-job training: 48.9%
 Educated in Northeast: 95.3%

Current Employment

Works in a dental office: 89.1%
 Works full-time hours at one site: 25.6%
 Works at multiple sites: 9.3%
 Plans to reduce hours: 2.3%

Geographic Distribution

(FTEs per 100,000 population)
 Highest: 120.0 Chittenden County
 Lowest: No FTEs reported in Grand Isle County

Trends in Statewide FTEs

2017: 484.8
 2019: 528.0
 2021: 540.0

Dental Assistants 2021

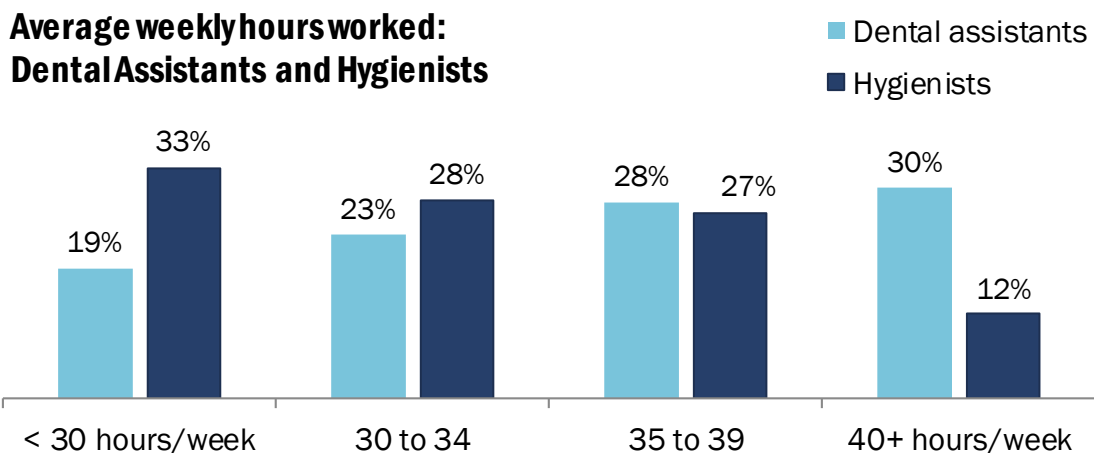
Vermont has three levels of dental assistants. Traditional Dental Assistants primarily receive on-the-job training. Certified Dental Assistants have completed coursework and passed their Dental Assistant National Board exam. Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs) have additional training allowing them to complete "reversible" procedures such as filling teeth prepared by the dentist.

Workforce

- 726 dental assistants renewed their licenses during the survey period and 712 of these completed the workforce survey for a response rate of 98.1%.
- Out of the 712 respondents, 664 (93.3%) indicated they are actively practicing as dental assistants in Vermont.
- Of the 48 respondents reporting a non-active status, 8 (16.7%) indicated they are planning to start work as a dental assistant in Vermont within the next 12 months.
- The remainder of this report is based on the 664 dental assistants who reported actively working in Vermont.

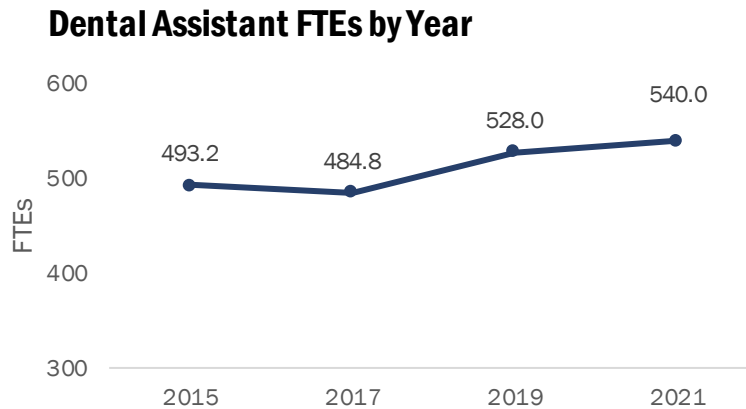
Full Time Equivalent (FTEs)

- 663 dental assistants provided 540.0 total FTEs (one dental assistant was missing FTE data).
 - 545 traditional dental assistants provided 445.5 total FTEs.
 - 118 certified dental assistants provided 94.5 total FTEs.
- 49.4 FTEs, or 9.2% of total FTEs, were provided by 68 dental assistants aged 60 or older.
- 29.1% (193) of dental assistants worked on average 40 or more hours per week.
- Dental assistants worked more hours per week compared to dental hygienists who were surveyed separately during the same time period. The average weekly hours for dental assistants were 32.8, while the average weekly hours for hygienists was 29.3.



Trends in Statewide FTEs

- Dental assistant FTEs increased by 34.8 from 493.2 in 2015 to 528.0 in 2019.
- From 2019 to 2021, FTEs increased by 12.



Demographics

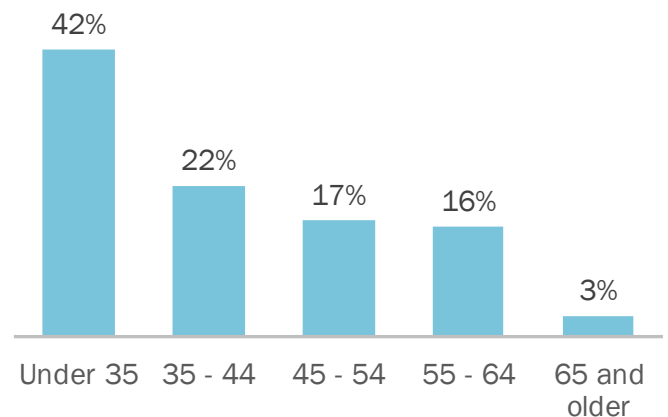
Gender

- 97.4% of the dental assistants in Vermont (642) are female.
- 2.4% (16) are male.
- Less than 1% were another gender.

Age

- 42.0% (279) are under 35 years of age.
- 39.5% (262) are between 35 and 54 years of age.
- 18.6% (123) are 55 years of age and older.

Age Distribution of VT Dental Assistants



Race and Ethnicity

Respondents were asked to select their race and could select multiple responses or choose not to answer. Therefore, numbers may not equal the total number of dental assistants.

- 92.5% of dental assistants were white, 1.8% were Asian, 1.7% were Black, 0.5% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, <0.5% were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 1.4% preferred to self-describe their race. Twenty-two preferred not to answer or were missing data about race.
- 14 dental assistants (2.1%) were Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin, and 622 (94.4%) were not. Twenty-eight dental assistants preferred not to answer the question or were missing data for ethnicity.

Education and Trainings

- When reporting their highest degree or certificate relevant to their dental assistant practice, 48.9% identified on the job training, 39.7% technical school training or a certificate/diploma, and 11.5% an Associate or other degree.
- 17.8% (118) of the dental assistants were certified.
- Certified dental assistants can complete additional training to become expanded function dental assistants (EFDAs). 64 of the certified dental assistants completed the training. 58 of them said they use that certification in their work.
- Most of the 664 dental assistants in Vermont in 2021 completed their training in the Northeast (95.3%).

| Region where training/educ. occurred | Number | Percent |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Vermont | 545 | 83.3% |
| New Hampshire | 29 | 4.4% |
| Northeast excluding VT & NH | 49 | 7.5% |
| South | 14 | 2.1% |
| Central | 6 | 0.9% |
| West | 8 | 1.2% |
| Outside of US | 3 | 0.5% |
| * Missing data from 10 individuals | | |

Practice Characteristics

Number of sites

- 90.7% of dental assistants (602) worked at a single practice site.
- 9.3% (62) worked at two or more sites.

Practice Setting

- Most dental assistants work in dental offices rather than a healthcare setting.

| Main Practice Setting | Traditional | Certified (non EFDA) | Certified EFDA | Total |
|------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Solo Practice | 177 (33%) | 15 (28%) | 15 (23%) | 207 (31%) |
| Practice of 2 dentists | 159 (29%) | 18 (33%) | 14 (22%) | 191 (29%) |
| Practice of 3 dentists | 158 (29%) | 13 (24%) | 22 (34%) | 193 (29%) |
| Hospital/Clinic | 3 (0.6%) | 2 (4%) | 1 (2%) | 6 (1%) |
| Health Center | 43 (8%) | 5 (9%) | 10 (16%) | 58 (9%) |
| Other setting | 5 (0.9%) | 1 (2%) | 2 (3%) | 8 (1%) |
| Total | 545 | 54 | 64 | 663 |

* Missing data from 1 individual

Dental Assistants 2021

Specialties

- All three levels of dental assistants work primarily for dentists with a specialty in general practice.
- 64.7% (427) work for dentists with a specialty in general practice.
- 1.0% (66) work for dentists with a specialty in orthodontics.

| Specialty at main location | Traditional | Certified (non EFDA) | Certified EFDA | Total |
|--------------------------------|-------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| General Practice | 332 (61%) | 41 (77%) | 54 (86%) | 427 (65%) |
| Pediatric Dentistry | 16 (3%) | 1 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 17 (3%) |
| Orthodontics | 61 (11%) | 3 (6%) | 2 (3%) | 66 (10%) |
| Periodontics | 12 (2%) | 1 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 13 (2%) |
| Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery | 53 (10%) | 3 (6%) | 0 (0%) | 56 (8%) |
| Prosthodontics | 2 (0.4%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (3%) | 4 (1%) |
| Endodontics | 14 (3%) | 2 (4%) | 0 (0%) | 16 (2%) |
| Multi-specialty practice | 38 (7%) | 1 (2%) | 2 (3%) | 41 (6%) |
| Public Health | 5 (0.9%) | 1 (2%) | 2 (3%) | 8 (1%) |
| Other | 11 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (2%) | 12 (2%) |
| Total | 544 | 53 | 63 | 660 |

* Missing data from 4 individuals

Current Experience

- Median time since first licensed as a dental assistant: 9 years.
- 16.7% (109) of dental assistants started working in Vermont over 25 years ago.

Future Plans

- 91.5% (604) plan to continue working as they had been in the next 12 months.
- 3.0% (20) plan to increase their hours in the next 12 months.
- 2.3% (15) plan to reduce their hours.
- 1.4% (9) plan to retire or seek a job in a different field.

Key Takeaways

- Dental assistant FTEs have risen, with an increase of almost 50 FTEs between 2015 and 2021.
- Relative to population, dental assistants were most common in Chittenden, Rutland and Washington counties.
- Dental assistants in Vermont were predominately female and relatively young, with a median age of 38.
- Over 80% of dental assistants received their training in Vermont.

For more information, contact: AHS.VDHPhysicianCensus@vermont.gov

Appendix

Active Dental Assistant

A dental assistant who reported working in Vermont as a dental assistant (regardless of how many hours) is considered active.

Census

The census was taken during the biennial dental assistant relicensing process which ended on September 30, 2021. The data include all licensed dental assistants except for new licensees enrolled less than three months before the renewal date (July - September 2021), as their license was valid until the next renewal date of September 30, 2023. Census questions are available upon request.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Full time is defined as 40 or more working hours in Vermont per week, 48 weeks or more per year. A dental assistant reporting more than 40 hours per week is defined as one FTE regardless of the number of hours over 40 per week worked.

Main Practice, Site, Setting, and Specialty

The main practice, site, setting, or specialty refer to the practice in which the dental assistant worked the greatest number of annual hours.

Map Quartiles

Map colors define quartiles. The lowest 25% of FTE equivalents to population ratio is displayed in the lightest color, the middle 50% in medium, and highest 25% in the darkest color.

Missing data

Unless otherwise noted, missing data are excluded from tables. Thus, totals may vary from table to table.

Population Estimates

Population estimates are for July 2019 and were provided by the Department of Health.

Primary Practice, Site, Setting, and Specialty

The primary practice, site, setting, or specialty refer to the practice with the greatest number of reported annual hours per individual.

Weekly Hours

Average weekly hours are based on hours and weeks reported, adjusted to a full-time 48-week working year (hours * (weeks/48)). Thus, the average weekly hours for a dental assistant working 40 hours a week for half the year (24 weeks), is 20.