

May 8, 2020

Dear New Jersey Dental Hygienists,

In response to the NJDA statement released earlier today, we have reached out to several sources for better clarification with regards to the hygienists in our state and have received some.

As of right now, [Executive Order 109](#) is still in effect. However, a dentist has the discretion to deem whether performing prophylaxis or periodontal treatment is considered essential or non-essential to their patients. If they deem that postponing a prophylaxis or periodontal treatment is NOT detrimental to their patient's health, the procedures are classified as non-essential, and they must continue postponing treatment. If they deem that postponing prophylaxis or periodontal treatment will harm their patient's health, then it is classified as "essential", and the procedures may be performed. The dentist will need to justify that whatever care is provided is essential if they are called out on it. We encourage open and respectful communication with your specific employers in regards to any concerns you may have.

HOWEVER, proper PPE must be made available and utilized per [CDC](#) and [OSHA](#) guidelines, since New Jersey Board of Dentistry has not issued their own guidelines yet, while treating any patient for any procedures. If your office is not providing the recommended PPE, you are not to return to work. We have provided a link to the [Department of Consumer Affairs – Board of Dentistry](#) as well as the Governor's [Violation Complaint Form](#) to utilize if you are not provided the proper PPE. We have also submitted our Return to Work Recommendations to the proper governing bodies and have provided a copy on www.njdha.org for you to utilize and refer to.

We are aware there are concerns for returning to work while young children are off from school and child care is still closed. Please see the unemployment questions section [here](#) for guidance.

Sincerely,

Kim Attanasi, PhD, MS, RDH

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NJDHA President