

# DENTAL HYGIENE BOARD OF CALIFORNIA

2024–2028

# Strategic Plan



Adopted: November 15, 2024



Prepared by:  
**SOLID Planning  
Solutions**



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# BOARD MEMBERS

**Dr. Carmen Dones**, President, RDH Educator Member

**Sonia “Pat” Hansen**, Vice President, RDH Member

**Naleni “Lolly” Tribble-Agarwal**, Secretary, RDH Member

**Sherman King**, Public Member

**Michael Long**, RDHAP Member

**Dr. Justin Matthews**, Public Member

**Dr. Sridevi Ponnala**, Dentist Member



**Gavin Newsom**, Governor

**Tomiquia Moss**, Secretary,  
Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency

**Kimberly Kirchmeyer**, Director, Department of Consumer Affairs

**Anthony Lum**, Executive Officer, Dental Hygiene Board of California

## ABOUT THE BOARD

In 2002, the Joint Legislative Sunset Review Committee (JLSRC) agreed that “dental hygienists had reached the point where their responsibilities warranted a regulatory body, separate from the Dental Board of California (DBC).” The Dental Hygiene Committee of California (DHCC, Committee) was created in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009–10 as result of the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 853 (Ch. 31, Statutes of 2008).

In 2018, SB 1482 (Ch. 858, Statutes of 2018) provided the authority for the DHCC to change to the Dental Hygiene Board of California (DHBC, Board). This change was substantial for several reasons. First, the name change legitimized the Board as an independent, autonomous government body and not a subdivision of another entity. Second, the replacement of “Committee” with “Board” emphasized that the Board is not affiliated with or under the purview of the DBC. Although the Committee was never under the purview of the DBC since its inception, it was perceived to be under the DBC because many dental hygiene licensing entities across the nation are structured this way. The Board continues to be the only self-regulating dental hygiene oversight government agency with the mission of consumer protection in the United States.

The Board maintains authority over all aspects of licensing, enforcement, and investigation of California dental hygienists. Additionally, the Board approves all dental hygiene educational programs (DHEPs) in the state, providing the required education to become a licensed dental hygienist. According to the Business and Professions Code (BPC), section 1900, the purpose of the Board is “to permit the full utilization of registered dental hygienists, registered dental hygienists in alternative practice, and registered dental hygienists in extended functions in order to meet the dental care needs of all of the state’s citizens.”

The Board is responsible for overseeing three categories of dental hygienists: registered dental hygienist (RDH), registered dental hygienist in alternative practice (RDHAP), and registered dental hygienist in extended functions (RDHEF). As a self-regulating agency, the Board develops and administers written licensing law and ethics examinations, conducts occupational analyses of the various professional categories, evaluates and approves educational programs and courses, pursues legislation, promulgates regulations, and maintains licensing and enforcement responsibilities for the profession in the interest of consumer protection. Additionally, the Board participates in outreach and support of the dental and dental hygiene community with the goal of ensuring the highest quality of oral healthcare for all Californians. The Board regulates the dental hygiene profession as provided by the authority pursuant to BPC sections 1900–1967.4, California Code of Regulations (CCR), Title 16, sections 1100–1144, in addition to several sections in DBC regulations pertaining to dental hygienists in the Dental Practice Act. The Board is provided the authority to use these regulations until the Board promulgates their own regulations pursuant to 16 CCR section 1906(d).



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Dental Hygiene Board of California, I am pleased to present the Board's Strategic Plan for 2024–2028.

Although intended to serve as a guide for coming years, the plan is reviewed annually to ensure the Board consistently addresses current issues with its stated goals and objectives. The 2024–2028 Strategic Plan evolved from a process that included a survey of stakeholders and Board staff, interviews with Board members, and a planning session facilitated by the Department of Consumer Affairs' (DCA) Office of Strategic Organization, Leadership, and Individual Development (SOLID).

The Board historically carries out its mission of consumer protection through policies and initiatives that originate within its four standing committees: Education, Enforcement, Legislation and Regulation, and Licensing. The committees discuss respective strategic goals, objectives, and policies based on current and anticipated needs and demands of consumers and the dental hygiene profession. The Board is continually working to meet its regulatory, legislative, licensing, and enforcement obligations in protecting the consumer.

The Board's strategic goals and objectives reflect an ongoing commitment to continue improving its policies and performance to better serve consumers, licensees, and the public. In addition, specific objectives are updated annually to keep up with evolving trends in the practice of dental hygiene, such as the removal of the clinical examination requirement after January 1, 2024, for California dental hygiene graduates who apply for the license within three years of their graduation date. Because all Board-approved California dental hygiene educational programs teach a competency-based curriculum and provide dental hygiene services to patients for most of the program, the clinical examination was deemed excessive to obtain the license. We're also working to expand access to dental hygiene care with a focus to promote the Registered Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice who provide these services to persons in underserved areas, the homebound, and in facility settings in the state.

We invite stakeholders to review this Strategic Plan and to monitor and support the Board's progress toward its goals and objectives by participating in Board meetings, rulemakings, and other activities. Information can be found on the Board's website, [www.dhbc.ca.gov](http://www.dhbc.ca.gov), and by signing up to receive email notification and information from the Board.

**Dr. Carmen Dones**

# BOARD MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES



## Mission

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To protect the public and consumers by meeting the oral health needs of all Californians through equitable regulation, enforcement, and dental hygiene educational oversight.

## Vision

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Access to high quality oral health care for all Californians.



## Values

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- Accessibility
- Collaboration
- Communication
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Integrity
- Public Service
- Transparency



## LICENSING

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The Board establishes and maintains licensure and regulatory standards for access to licensure in the profession.

- 1.1** Simplify renewal application language in BreZE.
- 1.2** Streamline the continuing education process to promote compliance.
- 1.3** Explore a Spanish-language version of the California Law and Ethics exam to increase access.
- 1.4** Improve information provided to schools to better prepare students for the California Law and Ethics examination.



## ENFORCEMENT

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The Board protects the health and safety of California consumers through the enforcement of laws and regulations governing the practice of dental hygiene.

- 2.1** Increase the percentage of continuing education audits performed to improve compliance.
- 2.2** Identify efficiencies in the enforcement process to reduce processing times.
- 2.3** Develop a stronger onboarding and cross training process to support transition of new staff.
- 2.4** Educate Board members on their role in the enforcement process to communicate expectations.
- 2.5** Increase licensee awareness about the enforcement process.
- 2.6** Develop accessible resources that assist consumers in filing complaints.
- 2.7** Review and amend disciplinary guidelines to ensure clarity and understanding.





## LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

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The Board advocates for statutes and adopts regulations, policies, and procedures that strengthen and support its mandates, mission, and vision.

- 3.1** Review current anesthesia supervision requirements and make recommendations for possible amendment to increase access to patient care.
- 3.2** Perform a comprehensive review of current scope of practice requirements and make recommendations for possible statutory changes to increase access to patient care.
- 3.3** Pursue regulations to transfer CCR Title 16 authority applicable to dental hygiene (Division 11) from existing Dental Board regulations (Division 10).

Note: Any scope of practice issues will be a collaborative effort between the Board and stakeholders which suits the best interest for consumer protection.



## EDUCATIONAL OVERSIGHT

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The Board regulates and enforces dental hygiene educational standards to improve both consistency and quality of the programs.

- 4.1** Evaluate workload and seek additional staff resources if needed to increase site visits and improve oversight.
- 4.2** Propose new laws to further define acceptable non-hygiene dental courses that fulfill continuing education requirements.
- 4.3** Update regulations to allow credit for initial coursework from accredited programs.
- 4.4** Encourage expanded use of satellite campuses and distance education settings to provide access to care in rural settings.
- 4.5** Encourage schools to include student work in health care environments as curriculum related community service hours to increase access to public health care.



## ADMINISTRATION

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The Board builds and maintains an organization with effective governance, strong leadership, and qualified management.

- 5.1** Evaluate workload, reorganize, and/or seek additional management-level staff resources to improve oversight and increase effectiveness.
- 5.2** Improve methods of organizing and distributing meeting materials to Board members.
- 5.3** Update the Board Member Procedural Manual to ensure Board members are well-informed.
- 5.4** Collaborate with DCA to update the Board's website to improve ease of use and accessibility.



## OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATION

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The Board provides communication, education, and information to stakeholders regarding the practice and regulation of the dental hygiene profession.

- 6.1** Provide more information to students about the licensing process.
- 6.2** Increase outreach to consumers, applicants, and licensees through social media, newsletter, and website.
- 6.3** Improve communication with stakeholders.
- 6.4** Evaluate workload and seek additional staff resources if needed to perform more diverse outreach.

# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To understand the environment in which the Board operates as well as identify factors that could impact the Board's success in carrying out its regulatory duties, SOLID conducted an environmental scan of the Board's internal and external environments by collecting information through the following methods:

- Phone/online interviews with Board members and executive leadership during July through September of 2023.
- Online surveys distributed to Board management and staff, as well as external stakeholders, during the months of July and August of 2023.

The most significant themes and trends identified from the environmental scan were discussed by Board members, Board leadership and staff, and members of the public during a strategic planning session facilitated by SOLID on March 22, 2024. This information guided the Board in the development of its strategic objectives outlined in this 2024–2028 Strategic Plan.





# DHBC

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Board of California

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Strategic Plan adopted on November 15, 2024.

This Strategic Plan is based on stakeholder information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the Dental Hygiene Board of California on March 22, 2024.

Subsequent amendments may have been made after the adoption of this plan.



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF  
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