

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES STAFF ANALYSIS

BILL #: HB 497 Dentistry and Dental Hygiene Examinations

SPONSOR(S): Buchanan

TIED BILLS: **IDEN./SIM. BILLS:**

REFERENCE	ACTION	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR or BUDGET/POLICY CHIEF
1) Professions & Public Health Subcommittee	17 Y, 1 N	Rahming	McElroy
2) Health & Human Services Committee			

SUMMARY ANALYSIS

The Board of Dentistry, within the Department of Health (DOH), regulates dental practice in Florida, including dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants under the Dental Practice Act. A dentist is licensed to examine, diagnose, treat, and care for conditions within the human oral cavity and its adjacent tissues and structures. A dental hygienist provides education and preventive and delegated therapeutic dental services.

Currently, all applicants for licensure as a dentist or dental hygienist must pass a practical examination developed by the American Board of Dental Examiners, Inc. (ADEX), in addition to meeting other qualifications.

HB 497 authorizes the Board of Dentistry to accept passing scores on the examinations produced by the Western Regional Examining Board for licensure as a dentist or dental hygienist, in addition to the ADEX examinations it currently accepts.

The bill has an insignificant, negative fiscal impact on the DOH, which current resources are adequate to absorb. The bill has no fiscal impact on local governments.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2021.

FULL ANALYSIS

I. SUBSTANTIVE ANALYSIS

A. EFFECT OF PROPOSED CHANGES:

Present Situation

Dentistry

The Board of Dentistry, within the Department of Health (DOH), regulates dental practice in Florida, including dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants under the Dental Practice Act.¹ A dentist is licensed to examine, diagnose, treat, and care for conditions within the human oral cavity and its adjacent tissues and structures.² A dental hygienist provides education, preventive and delegated therapeutic dental services.³

Dental Licensure

Any person wishing to practice dentistry in this state must apply to the DOH and meet specified requirements. Section 466.006, F.S., requires dentistry licensure applicants to sit for and pass the following licensure examinations:

- The National Board of Dental Examiners dental examination (NBDE);
- A written examination on Florida laws and rules regulating the practice of dentistry; and
- The American Dental Licensing Examination, a practical or clinical examination developed by the American Board of Dental Examiners.⁴

To qualify to take the Florida dental licensure examination, an applicant must be 18 years of age or older, be a graduate of a dental school accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation or be a student in the final year of a program at an accredited institution, and have successfully completed the NBDE dental examination.⁵

Dental Hygiene Licensure

Any person wishing to be licensed as a dental hygienist must apply to DOH and meet the following qualifications:⁶

- Be 18 years of age or older;
- Be a graduate of an accredited dental hygiene college or school;⁷ and
- Obtain a passing score on the:
 - National Board Dental Hygiene Examination;
 - Dental Hygiene Examination, a practical or clinical examination developed by the American Board of Dental Examiners, Inc.; and
 - A written examination on Florida laws and rules regulating the practice of dental hygiene.

A dental hygienist may also apply to be certified to administer local anesthesia, under the direct supervision of a dentist, to a non-sedated, adult patient if the dental hygienist is certified in basic or

¹ S. 466.004, F.S.

² S. 466.003(3), F.S.

³ Ss. 466.003(4)-(5), F.S.

⁴ A passing score is valid for 365 days after the date the official examination results are published. The same is true for a passing score on the American Dental Licensing Examination administered in another state on or after Oct. 1, 2011.

⁵ S. 466.006(2), F.S.

⁶ S. 466.007, F.S.

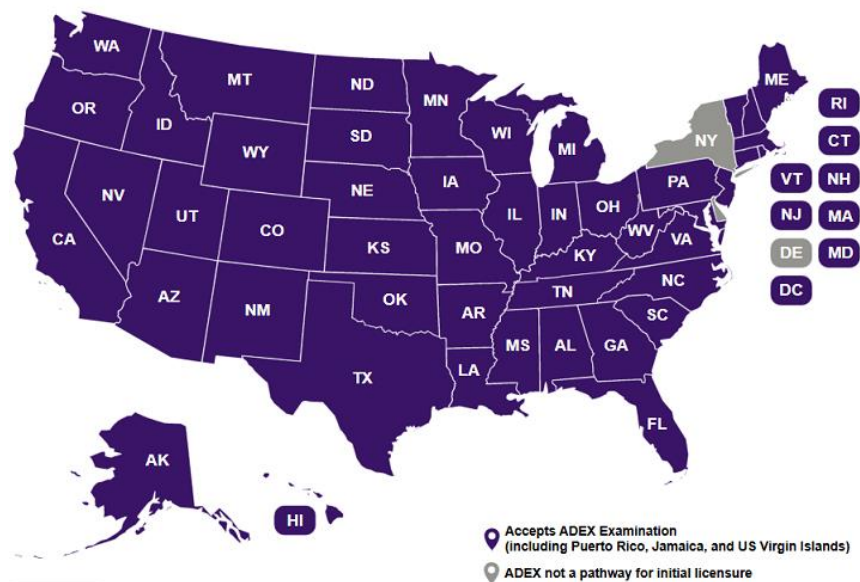
⁷ If the school is not accredited, the applicant must have completed a minimum of 4 years of postsecondary dental education and received a dental school diploma, which must be reviewed and approved by the Board of Dentistry.

advanced cardiac life support and successfully completes an accredited course that includes a minimum of 30 hours of didactic training, 30 hours of clinical experience, and additional training in specified areas.⁸

American Board of Dental Examiners

The American Board of Dental Examiners, Inc. (ADEX) is an organization of state and regional dental boards that provides for the ongoing development of uniform national dental and dental hygiene licensure examinations.⁹ ADEX was created in 2003, with representatives from four regional testing agencies and 12 states. At the time ADEX was created, there were 16 different dental and dental hygiene examinations.¹⁰

The Commission on Dental Competency Assessment (CDCA), formerly known as the Northeast Regional Board, and the Council of Interstate Testing Agencies (CITA) administers the ADEX dental licensure examination to graduates of accredited dental schools and students in their senior year at an accredited dental school.¹¹ The ADEX dental examination consists of three portions: a computer-based examination, simulated clinical examinations, and clinical examinations on live patients.¹² The ADEX examination is widely accepted for dental licensure.¹³



As with the dental examination, CDCA and CITA administer the ADEX dental hygiene examination.¹⁴ The ADEX dental hygiene examination consists of two portions: a computer-simulated examination and a clinical examination on live patients.¹⁵ The ADEX examination is widely accepted for dental hygiene licensure.¹⁶

⁸ S. 466.017(5), F.S.

⁹ American Board of Dental Examiners, Inc., *About ADEX*, <https://adexexams.org/about-adex/> (last visited Feb. 22, 2021).

¹⁰ *Id.*

¹¹ Commission on Dental Competency Assessments (CDCA), *Registration and DSE OSCE Manual: 2020 ADEX Dental Examination Series*, https://www.cdcaexams.org/documents/manuals/Dental_DSE_OSCE2020.pdf (last visited Feb. 22, 2021). The cost of the ADEX dental examinations is \$2,295; however, additional fees may be assessed, such as a facility or score report fee. The fee is reduced for partial exams and retakes. See CDCA, *Dental (ADEX)*, <https://www.cdcaexams.org/dental-exams/> (last visited Feb. 22, 2021).

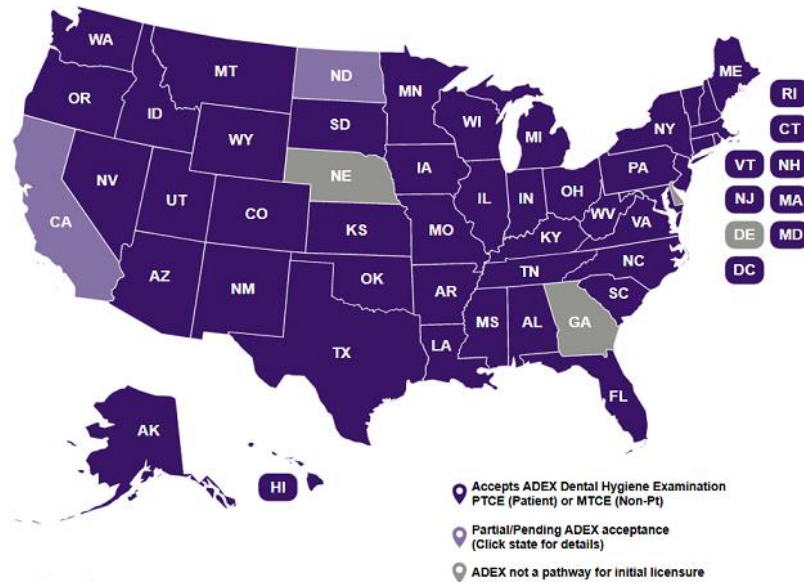
¹² *Id.* at p. 4. The simulated clinical examinations assesses skills related to endodontics and fixed prosthodontics. The clinical examinations on live patients assesses skills related to restorative and periodontal procedures.

¹³ CDCA, *2021 ADEX Acceptance Map*, <https://www.cdcaexams.org/adex-acceptance-map/> (last visited Feb. 22, 2021).

¹⁴ CDCA, *Candidate Registration and CSCE OSCE Manual: 2020 ADEX Dental Hygiene Examination*, available at https://www.cdcaexams.org/documents/manuals/Dental_Hygiene_Candidate_Registration2020.pdf (last visited Feb. 22, 2020). The cost of the ADEX dental hygiene examinations is \$995; however, additional fees may be assessed, such as a facility or score report fee. See CDCA, *Dental Hygiene (ADEX)*, <https://www.cdcaexams.org/dental-hygiene-adex-exam/> (last visited Feb. 22, 2021).

¹⁵ *Id.*

¹⁶ CDCA, *supra* note 13.



Florida only accepts the ADEX examinations and the Legislature found, when specifying the ADEX examination for use in dental licensure, that the ADEX examinations, in both structure and functions, consistently meet generally accepted testing standards and that it adequately and reliably measures an applicant's ability to practice dentistry.¹⁷ The DOH contracts with the CDCA to administer the ADEX examinations, as well as the jurisprudence examinations.¹⁸ In Fiscal Year 2019-2020, 869 dentists and 562 dental hygienists applied to take the ADEX examinations.¹⁹

Western Regional Examining Board

The Western Regional Examining Board (WREB) was created in 1976, after Utah and Oregon made an arrangement to have a simultaneous dental licensure examination.²⁰ WREB offered its first dental examination in 1977 and its dental hygiene examination in 1979.²¹

The WREB dental examination consists of three sections: operative, endodontics, and comprehensive treatment planning.²² The operative section is performed on a live patient and the candidate must complete up to two restorative procedures. The endodontics section is simulated and the comprehensive treatment planning section is a computer-based written examination. A periodontal examination, which is performed on a live patient, and a prosthodontics examination, which is a simulated examination, are available for candidates in those states that require the examinations.²³

The WREB dental hygiene examination assesses the candidates on patient qualification, extraoral and intraoral evaluation, calculus detection and removal, tissue management, periodontal assessment, and professional judgment.²⁴

¹⁷ S. 466.006(1)(a), F.S.

¹⁸ Florida Department of Health (DOH), *2021 Agency Legislative Bill Analysis for HB 497*, p. 3 (Feb. 24, 2021).

¹⁹ *Id.*

²⁰ Western Regional Examining Board (WREB), *About Us*, available at <https://wreb.org/about-us/> (last visited Mar. 1, 2021). The members of the Western Regional Examining Board include Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, Washington, West Virginia, and Wyoming. California and Hawaii are dental member states only.

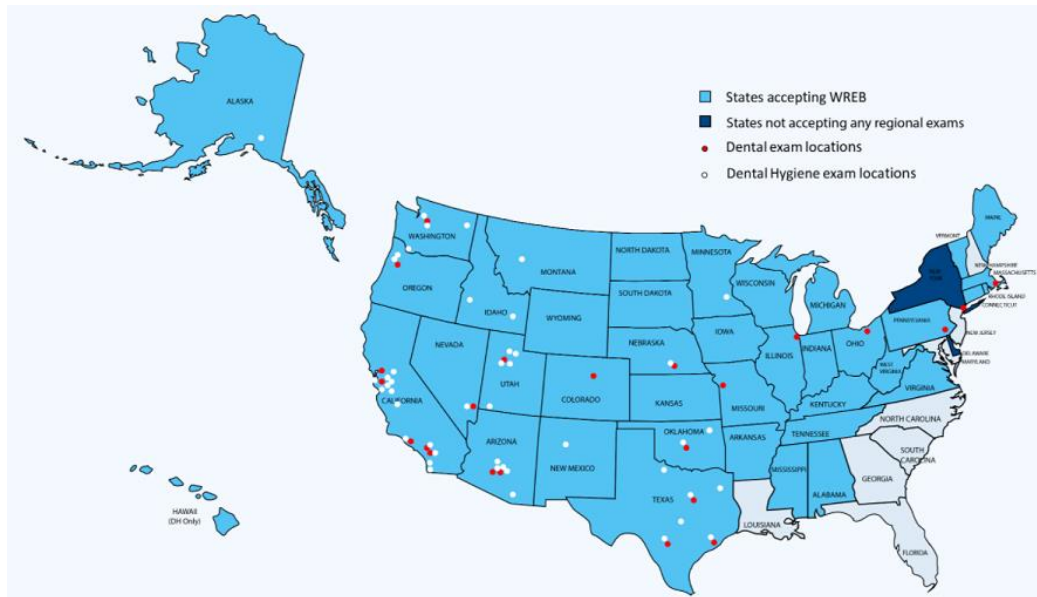
²¹ *Id.*

²² Western Regional Examining Board, *2021 WREB Exam Procedures*, available at https://wreb.org/Candidates/Dental/2021_Dental_PDFs/2021_WREB_Exam_Procedures.pdf (last visited Feb. 11, 2021). The WREB dental examination costs \$2,560 plus an additional school use fee that varies by site. See Western Regional Examining Board, *2021 Dental Exam Fees*, available at <https://wreb.org/dental-candidates/2019-dental-exam-fees/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2021).

²³ *Id.* Florida requires a periodontal examination for licensure.

²⁴ WREB, *2020 Dental Hygiene Examination Candidate Guide*, available at https://wreb.org/Candidates/Hygiene/hygienePDFs/2020_DH_Forms/2020_WREB_Candidate_Guide_HYG_v11012019.pdf (last visited Feb. 22, 2021). The WREB dental hygiene examination costs \$1,175 plus a school use fee, which varies by site. See Western Regional

The Western Regional Examining Board's licensure examinations are widely accepted for licensure.²⁵



The WREB does not administer a state-specific jurisprudence examination. Florida does not accept the WREB dentist or dental hygiene examinations for licensure.

Effect of Proposed Changes

HB 497 authorizes the Board of Dentistry to accept passing scores on the examinations produced by the Western Regional Examining Board for licensure as a dentist or dental hygienist, in addition to the ADEX examinations it currently accepts.

The bill provides an effective date of July 1, 2021.

B. SECTION DIRECTORY:

Section 1: Amends s. 466.006, F.S., relating to examination of dentists.

Section 2: Amends s. 466.007, F.S., relating to examination of dental hygienists.

Section 3: Provides an effective date of July 1, 2021.

II. FISCAL ANALYSIS & ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

A. FISCAL IMPACT ON STATE GOVERNMENT:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

The DOH will experience a non-recurring increase in workload and costs associated with updating the Licensing and Enforcement Information Database System (LEIDS) to record examination results received from the WREB dental examination. Additionally, a new web service will be required to support receiving examination results from the WREB on candidates applying for licensure in Florida, which current resources can absorb.²⁶

²⁵ WREB, *supra* note 20.

²⁶ DOH, *supra* note 18, pp. 5-6.

B. FISCAL IMPACT ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

1. Revenues:

None.

2. Expenditures:

None.

C. DIRECT ECONOMIC IMPACT ON PRIVATE SECTOR:

Dentists and dental hygienists who have received acceptable scores on the WREB examinations will not incur additional expenses to take the ADEX examinations when applying for Florida licensure.

D. FISCAL COMMENTS:

None.

III. COMMENTS

A. CONSTITUTIONAL ISSUES:

1. Applicability of Municipality/County Mandates Provision:

Not applicable. The bill does not appear to affect county or municipal governments.

2. Other:

None.

B. RULE-MAKING AUTHORITY:

The Board of Dentistry has sufficient rulemaking authority to implement the bill.

C. DRAFTING ISSUES OR OTHER COMMENTS:

None.

IV. AMENDMENTS/ COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE CHANGES