
April 30, 2020

Iowa Dental Board Members,

The Iowa Dental Association (IDA), on behalf of its more than 1,700 dentist members, and the Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association (IDHA), offer this carefully developed proposal to responsibly reopen Iowa dental offices in a safe and systematic method for the Iowa Dental Board's (Board) review and consideration. This proposal is submitted to the Board in good-faith so as to ensure the utmost protection to Iowans' overall public health and safety¹ and to allow our small business members the option, like so many other businesses across the state, to return to a limited form of operation as soon as possible. We submit this proposal based upon new developments that have occurred since the Iowa Dental Board submitted information to the Governor's office regarding the reopening of dental offices on Saturday, April 25.

On Monday, April 27, Governor Reynolds signed the proclamation of disaster emergency that opened restaurants, fitness centers, malls, libraries, race tracks, and other retail establishments in 77 Iowa counties beginning at 5:00 AM on May 1, 2020. In that same proclamation, the Governor extended the suspension of elective dental procedures statewide through 11:59 PM on May 15, 2020. It is our understanding that the Governor's office has asked for consensus among the dental community as we look to open back up.

On Monday, April 27, the American Dental Association (ADA) Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit was made available to all IDA members as a resource to assist in safely reopening dental practices. That same day, the IDA convened a task force made up of representatives from the Board, Iowa Dental Hygienists Association, Iowa Department of Public Health, University of Iowa College of Dentistry, Delta Dental of Iowa, and IDA. The unanimous consensus of this group is that the ADA's guidance is exceptional and should be used by all dental professionals as they begin re-opening offices.

Considering these important developments as well as the rationale for ordering dental office closures, the IDA and IDHA respectfully request the Board publicly support dental offices promptly and safely reopening in Iowa in accordance with these provisions below and convey such support to the Governor's office as soon as possible:

1. Recommend to Governor Reynolds the opening of Iowa dental offices for nonessential or routine care immediately throughout Iowa, provided the offices have appropriate PPE available.²
2. Recommend that dentists adopt and follow guidance outlined in the ADA Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit.
3. Request Governor Reynolds grant the Board authority to enforce its guidelines, consistent with applicable CDC guidance for dental settings during the COVID-19 pandemic.

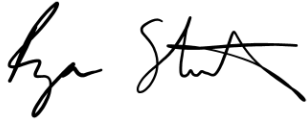
¹ Considering first and foremost the current public health emergency as well as Iowans' overall health.

² At the very least, opening should be permitted in the same 77 counties where it has been deemed other businesses may reopen given the reduced risks and related concerns.

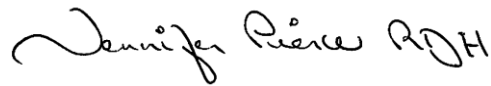
4. Acknowledge that Iowa dentists who follow the recommendations outlined in the ADA Return to Work Interim Guidance Toolkit and the Board's guidelines may use their professional judgment in deciding when to safely reopen their offices.

We are hopeful we can come together - for Iowans and our health care profession as a whole – and agree that the ADA and CDC guidelines provide appropriate guidance for Iowa dentists to safely reopen their offices – allowing³ our small business members to begin providing important oral health care services that Iowans need. We respectfully ask that the Board join the IDA and IDHA in publicly supporting dental offices complying with guidelines outlined by the ADA and CDC such that Governor Reynolds may order offices be opened immediately.

Respectfully,



Ryan Stuntz, DDS
IDA President



Jennifer Pierce, RDH
IDHA President

³ Dental offices would not be “mandated” to open, but rather, be permitted to open at their own discretion and in accordance with the guidelines.