

Dental laboratory accountability bill signed into law in Washington State

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Olympia, Wash. — The Washington State Dental Association and Washington State Dental Laboratory Association worked together to lead a successful legislative effort to implement ADA policy on dental laboratory registration.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee signed the dental laboratory registration and disclosure bill into law April 19, which will take effect on Jan. 1, 2020.

Commencing on New Year's Day, all dental labs serving dentists in Washington state will be required to:

- Register with the state department of health.
- Disclose in writing to the dentist what materials are in each device or prosthetic.
- Disclose in writing to the dentist the city, state and country where each device or prosthetic was made.
- Have at least one lab technician annually complete 12 hours of continuing education or who is a certified dental technician.

“Registration of dental labs can help assure compliance with point of origin and material disclosure,” said Dr. Liddell, vice chair of the ADA Council on Dental Practice. “It’s aligned with existing ADA policy that supports dental laboratories’ disclosure to the dentist if the prescribed dental prostheses, components or materials are to be manufactured or provided by a foreign dental laboratory.”

The ruling passed in Washington requires out-of-state labs that make restorations pursuant to work orders/prescriptions from Washington licensed dentists to register. Similar requirements exist in Texas, Kentucky and South Carolina.

The bill’s language was carefully crafted to ensure that there would be no additional burden for the dentist, according to Dr. Chris Delecki, Washington State Dental Association president.

“We need to do everything in our power to guarantee that we are receiving the most accurate information about the prosthetics restorations that we are placing,” Dr. Delecki said. “[This bill] accomplishes an accountable method for ensuring we receive the information necessary to provide the highest standard of care for our patients.”

Emily Lovell, director of government affairs for the Washington State Dental Association, said that after meetings with the Washington State Dental Laboratory Association, WSDA provided a letter of support and gave the Washington State Dental Laboratory Association a green light to proceed with a legislative proposal.

“Once our leadership considered the proposal and after addressing some initial questions, the WSDA was fully on board with supporting the Washington State Dental Laboratory Association in their legislative efforts,” Ms. Lovell said.

The National Association of Dental Laboratories also supported the legislation, said NADL President Travis Zick.

“Dental laboratories support dental laboratory registration and required disclosure of material

content and point of origin as means to a level playing field,” Mr. Zick said. “We are pleased to see the leadership of the Washington State Dental Association and hope that more state dental societies will recognize how important enacting materials disclosure and point-of-origin disclosure is to patient safety.”

According to the National Association of Dental Laboratories only 13 states have enacted any type of dental laboratory requirements and only six have fully implemented the ADA policies. State dental associations interested in implementing system to protect the public through the registration of dental labs can contact NADL for guidance and possible support.

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