

Iowa Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Table of Contents

Copyright	1
Table of Contents	2
Introduction	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Questions	5
Answers	8
Explanations	10
Next Steps	15

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. Which of the following is explicitly listed as an RDA authorized function related to infection control?**
 - A. Infection control/ use of hazardous materials**
 - B. Sealants**
 - C. Place/remove matrix/ wedges**
 - D. Coronal polishing**

- 2. What is the term for the obligation to keep patient information confidential?**
 - A. Privacy**
 - B. Confidentiality**
 - C. Veracity**
 - D. Beneficence**

- 3. Which classification describes a crime punishable by death or by more than one year in prison?**
 - A. Felony**
 - B. Discrimination**
 - C. OSHA**
 - D. Rules**

- 4. Do Trainees and RDA's have to both complete courses and pass exams in infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence?**
 - A. Yes**
 - B. Only Trainee**
 - C. Only RDA**
 - D. Neither**

- 5. Who should be contacted for questions about national certification?**
 - A. DANB**
 - B. ADA**
 - C. Iowa Dental Board**
 - D. CDC**

- 6. Who is responsible for determining what acts may be delegated to qualified personnel?**
- A. Hygienist**
 - B. RDA**
 - C. Office Manager**
 - D. Dentist**
- 7. Under the doctrine of respondeat superior, who is liable for the negligence of employees?**
- A. Dentist is responsible for negligence of employees**
 - B. Iowa dental board**
 - C. OSHA**
 - D. Rules**
- 8. Which legal doctrine describes the employer's liability for employees' actions?**
- A. Respondeat superior**
 - B. Discrimination**
 - C. Rules**
 - D. Standard of Care**
- 9. Which supervision level requires the dentist to be present in the facility but not necessarily in the treatment room when performing delegated acts?**
- A. Personal**
 - B. General**
 - C. Direct**
 - D. Indirect**
- 10. Who must be licensed to operate dental radiography equipment in Iowa?**
- A. Dentists, dental hygienists, or others qualified by the Iowa dental board**
 - B. Dentists only**
 - C. Dental hygienists only**
 - D. All staff members**

Answers

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1. A
2. B
3. A
4. A
5. A
6. D
7. A
8. A
9. C
10. A

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Explanations

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1. Which of the following is explicitly listed as an RDA authorized function related to infection control?

- A. Infection control/ use of hazardous materials**
- B. Sealants**
- C. Place/remove matrix/ wedges**
- D. Coronal polishing**

Infection control tasks and handling hazardous materials are explicit responsibilities tied to the RDA role because they directly keep patients and staff safe from infection. This includes following proper aseptic techniques, preparing and maintaining sterile fields, cleaning and sterilizing instruments, and safely managing hazardous materials and waste according to guidelines. These duties are specifically about preventing contamination, cross-infection, and occupational exposure, which is why this option is the best choice. The other items are clinical procedures rather than infection-control duties. Sealants are preventive restorative materials used on teeth; placing or removing matrix and wedges is part of restorative technique; coronal polishing is a cosmetic/cleaning procedure. While RDAs may assist with these tasks under supervision, they aren't identified as infection-control functions.

2. What is the term for the obligation to keep patient information confidential?

- A. Privacy**
- B. Confidentiality**
- C. Veracity**
- D. Beneficence**

Confidentiality is the professional duty to keep patient information private. Once sensitive details are shared in the patient-provider relationship, the provider must protect that information and disclose it only with the patient's consent or when legally required or necessary for care, payment, or operations. Privacy, while related, refers to the patient's right to control access to their information, not the obligation of the provider. Veracity means telling the truth, and beneficence is acting in the patient's best interest; neither captures the specific duty to protect disclosed information.

3. Which classification describes a crime punishable by death or by more than one year in prison?

- A. Felony**
- B. Discrimination**
- C. OSHA**
- D. Rules**

Crimes are classified by the severity of punishment. A crime punishable by death or by more than one year in prison is a felony. This category sets apart serious offenses from misdemeanors, which are punished by up to a year in jail. The other options don't describe a formal crime class defined by potential punishment: discrimination isn't a standard crime category by term length; OSHA refers to the safety regulatory agency, not a type of crime; and rules are general guidelines, not a classification of crimes. So the best answer is felony.

4. Do Trainees and RDA's have to both complete courses and pass exams in infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence?

- A. Yes**
- B. Only Trainee**
- C. Only RDA**
- D. Neither**

The requirements you're being tested on are regulatory training standards that apply to both Trainees and RDAs. In Iowa, anyone working as a dental assistant under supervision and those already registered as RDAs must complete Board-approved courses in infection control, hazardous materials, and jurisprudence and must pass exams in those areas. This approach ensures a consistent, baseline level of knowledge for safe patient care, proper handling and disposal of chemicals and waste, and solid understanding of state laws and board rules. Why this is the best answer: infection control training ensures proper sterilization, PPE, and infection-prevention practices to minimize the risk of disease transmission. Hazardous materials training covers safe use, storage, and disposal of chemicals and waste, protecting both people and the environment. Jurisprudence training makes sure you know the rules, duties, and limitations of practice so you operate legally and ethically. Because these topics reflect fundamental responsibilities of the profession, both Trainees and RDAs are required to complete the courses and demonstrate competency through exams before practicing and while maintaining licensure.

5. Who should be contacted for questions about national certification?

- A. DANB**
- B. ADA**
- C. Iowa Dental Board**
- D. CDC**

National certification for dental assistants is issued and administered by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB). If you have questions about achieving, maintaining, or renewing national certification, DANB is the right point of contact because they handle the credentialing process, eligibility requirements, and exam details. The American Dental Association (ADA) is a professional association that provides resources and guidance but does not issue national certifications. The Iowa Dental Board regulates state licensure and practice within Iowa, not national credentials. The CDC focuses on public health and infection control guidelines, not certification. So for questions about national certification, reach out to DANB.

6. Who is responsible for determining what acts may be delegated to qualified personnel?

- A. Hygienist**
- B. RDA**
- C. Office Manager**
- D. Dentist**

The supervising dentist determines what acts may be delegated to qualified personnel. The dentist is responsible for patient care, diagnosis, and treatment planning, and must ensure that any delegated procedures are within the staff member's licensed scope and that proper training and supervision are in place. While hygienists and RDAs can perform many tasks under supervision and regulatory guidelines, they do not set the delegation scope themselves—the dentist does. Office managers handle administrative duties, not clinical delegation.

7. Under the doctrine of respondeat superior, who is liable for the negligence of employees?

- A. Dentist is responsible for negligence of employees**
- B. Iowa dental board**
- C. OSHA**
- D. Rules**

Respondeat superior makes the employer legally responsible for the negligent acts of employees when those acts are performed within the scope of employment and in the course of their duties. In a dental practice, that means the dentist (as the employer and supervisor) is liable for the negligent actions of dental assistants, hygienists, or other staff when they are carrying out tasks authorized by the dentist. Regulatory bodies like the Iowa dental board enforce standards and discipline, and OSHA focuses on workplace safety; neither is liable for a patient's harm due to an employee's negligence.

8. Which legal doctrine describes the employer's liability for employees' actions?

- A. Respondeat superior**
- B. Discrimination**
- C. Rules**
- D. Standard of Care**

Respondeat superior is the legal principle that an employer can be held liable for the actions of its employees when those actions occur within the scope of their employment. In a dental practice, that means if a dentist's staff member, while performing their duties under the dentist's supervision, commits negligence or a wrongful act, the employer can be responsible for the harm to the patient—even if the dentist did not personally commit the act. The emphasis is on actions taken during work and within the authority given by the employer. Discrimination addresses bias in treatment or employment decisions, not the employer's liability for an employee's actions. Rules refer to general guidelines or policies, not a doctrine about liability. The standard of care is about the level of professional skill and conduct expected of the clinician, not about the employer's liability for an employee's conduct.

9. Which supervision level requires the dentist to be present in the facility but not necessarily in the treatment room when performing delegated acts?

- A. Personal**
- B. General**
- C. Direct**
- D. Indirect**

Supervision levels define how closely the dentist must oversee delegated acts. The scenario describes the dentist being on the premises but not required to be in the treatment room during the procedure. In the Iowa RDA framework, that arrangement aligns with direct supervision: the dentist is present in the facility to supervise and provide immediate guidance, but does not have to be in the operatory for every step. This setup lets the assistant perform delegated tasks under direct oversight while still allowing the dentist to intervene if needed. Personal supervision would require the dentist in the treatment room; indirect supervision involves being available in the facility to assist without being in the room, and general supervision allows more separation or different oversight arrangements. Therefore, the level described is direct supervision.

10. Who must be licensed to operate dental radiography equipment in Iowa?

- A. Dentists, dental hygienists, or others qualified by the Iowa dental board**
- B. Dentists only**
- C. Dental hygienists only**
- D. All staff members**

In Iowa, using dental radiography equipment is controlled by the Iowa Board of Dentistry, which sets who is allowed to operate it. The license or board-approved qualification isn't limited to one profession; dentists and dental hygienists can operate radiographs, and other staff can also be authorized to do so if they meet the board's standards. This ensures anyone taking radiographs has demonstrated the necessary training and competence in technique, safety, and radiation protection. So, the person operating the equipment must be licensed or specifically qualified by the Iowa dental board, not just any staff member, and not restricted to a single profession.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://iowarda.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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