

# PSI California Dental Law and Ethics Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. What is the role of the California Dental Board regarding prescription records?**
  - A. To oversee insurance claims**
  - B. To enforce compliance with record-keeping laws**
  - C. To promote new dental technologies**
  - D. To conduct patient satisfaction surveys**
- 2. Who is responsible for maintaining the security of private health information (PHI) in a dental office?**
  - A. Only licensed dental professionals**
  - B. Only the office manager**
  - C. Everyone in the dental office**
  - D. Only the dental hygienist**
- 3. What does the dental materials fact sheet provide information about?**
  - A. Cost efficiency of dental materials**
  - B. Comparative risks and benefits of dental restorative materials**
  - C. The latest advancements in dental technology**
  - D. Legal implications of using dental materials**
- 4. True or False: Diversion programs can help dental professionals avoid further investigations.**
  - A. True**
  - B. False**
  - C. Only for behavioral issues**
  - D. True, but only for hygienists**
- 5. How many sedation permit types are currently recognized in California?**
  - A. One**
  - B. Two**
  - C. Three**
  - D. Four**

- 6. What is NOT a procedure an unlicensed DA is allowed to perform?**
- A. Taking intraoral impressions**
  - B. Sterilization**
  - C. Coronal polishing**
  - D. Exposing radiographs**
- 7. When a patient requests a second opinion after visiting another dentist, what should you do?**
- A. Only provide treatment if they schedule an appointment**
  - B. Perform a comprehensive evaluation and inform her of your findings**
  - C. Advise her to return to her original dentist for further questions**
  - D. Recommend she perform her own research on treatment options**
- 8. True or False: Controlled substances are regulated by the Drug Enforcement Administration.**
- A. True**
  - B. False**
  - C. Only in hospitals**
  - D. Only for dentists**
- 9. What should not be mixed with medical "red bag" waste according to regulatory guidelines?**
- A. Only extracted teeth**
  - B. Amalgam and elemental mercury**
  - C. Broken dental instruments**
  - D. Only used dental gloves**
- 10. How many practicing dentists are required to be members of the Dental Board of California?**
- A. 8**
  - B. 5**
  - C. 10**
  - D. 3**

## **Answers**

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

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What is the role of the California Dental Board regarding prescription records?**

- A. To oversee insurance claims**
- B. To enforce compliance with record-keeping laws**
- C. To promote new dental technologies**
- D. To conduct patient satisfaction surveys**

The California Dental Board plays a crucial role in ensuring that dental practitioners adhere to various laws and regulations, particularly concerning record-keeping. By enforcing compliance with record-keeping laws, the Board ensures that dental professionals maintain accurate and thorough documentation of patient prescriptions. This is vital for several reasons, including promoting patient safety, allowing for effective communication among healthcare providers, and ensuring that patient records are available for legal and medical review when necessary. Maintaining proper prescription records is not just a regulatory requirement but also an ethical obligation that enhances the quality of care that patients receive. By focusing on compliance with these laws, the California Dental Board helps establish standards that protect both patients and practitioners in the dental field.

**2. Who is responsible for maintaining the security of private health information (PHI) in a dental office?**

- A. Only licensed dental professionals**
- B. Only the office manager**
- C. Everyone in the dental office**
- D. Only the dental hygienist**

Maintaining the security of private health information (PHI) in a dental office is a collective responsibility that involves everyone in the dental practice. This includes not just licensed dental professionals, but also administrative staff, dental assistants, and any personnel who may have access to patient records. The importance of this collective responsibility stems from regulations like the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), which mandates that all staff must be trained in privacy and security protocols to safeguard patient information. It is essential for a culture of compliance and protection of PHI to permeate through all levels of the practice, as any employee can inadvertently contribute to a breach if they are not aware of the necessary precautions. While certain roles may carry specific duties related to PHI, such as the office manager implementing policies or the dentist overseeing compliance, it ultimately falls upon every individual in the office to be vigilant and proactive in protecting patient information. This is crucial for maintaining patient trust and adhering to legal obligations.

**3. What does the dental materials fact sheet provide information about?**

- A. Cost efficiency of dental materials
- B. Comparative risks and benefits of dental restorative materials**
- C. The latest advancements in dental technology
- D. Legal implications of using dental materials

The dental materials fact sheet primarily focuses on providing information regarding the comparative risks and benefits of dental restorative materials. This resource is valuable to dental professionals because it outlines the safety, durability, effectiveness, and potential adverse effects associated with various materials used in dental procedures. By understanding these aspects, practitioners can make informed decisions that prioritize patient safety and treatment outcomes. While cost efficiency, technological advancements, and legal implications are important topics within dentistry, they are not the primary focus of the dental materials fact sheet. Cost efficiency may influence a dentist's choice of materials but is not typically detailed in a fact sheet dedicated to material properties. Similarly, advancements in technology and legal considerations related to dental materials are covered in other resources or contexts, but they do not fall under the specific scope of comparative analysis that the dental materials fact sheet provides. This reinforces its purpose as a clinical guide for dentists assessing the suitability of different restorative materials for their patients.

**4. True or False: Diversion programs can help dental professionals avoid further investigations.**

- A. True
- B. False**
- C. Only for behavioral issues
- D. True, but only for hygienists

The assertion that diversion programs can help dental professionals avoid further investigations is best understood by considering the purpose and function of these programs. Diversion programs are designed to provide an alternative to traditional disciplinary action for individuals facing personal issues, such as substance abuse or behavioral health problems, that may affect their professional conduct. The correct answer being false indicates that diversion programs do not inherently allow dental professionals to completely evade further investigations. While these programs can provide support and treatment opportunities that may facilitate rehabilitation and possibly lessen the impact of disciplinary actions, they do not eliminate the requirement for investigations into professional conduct. The processes usually involve monitoring and compliance elements that are still overseen by regulatory bodies or professional organizations. Therefore, dental professionals may still be subject to investigations depending on the circumstances, even if they are enrolled in a diversion program. The other options imply limitations on the application or scope of diversion programs, such as being applicable only to behavioral issues or specific groups like hygienists, which does not reflect the overall purpose that these programs serve across the profession.

**5. How many sedation permit types are currently recognized in California?**

- A. One**
- B. Two**
- C. Three**
- D. Four**

In California, the dental profession recognizes three types of sedation permits. These permits are designed to ensure that dental professionals administer sedation safely and effectively, depending on the level of sedation administered. The types include a permit for minimal sedation, another for moderate sedation, and a third for deep sedation/general anesthesia. This structure allows for different levels of patient management and care, catering to the diverse needs of patients in various dental procedures. Each permit type has specific requirements, including education, training, and experience, which practitioners must fulfill to ensure patient safety and adherence to regulatory standards. Understanding these distinctions is crucial for compliance with California dental law and ethics, especially for those involved in administering sedation in dental practices.

**6. What is NOT a procedure an unlicensed DA is allowed to perform?**

- A. Taking intraoral impressions**
- B. Sterilization**
- C. Coronal polishing**
- D. Exposing radiographs**

An unlicensed dental assistant (DA) is not permitted to expose radiographs due to the significant training, knowledge, and skill set required to safely and effectively perform this task. Exposing radiographs involves understanding radiation safety protocols, anatomy, and potential health risks to patients. This procedure requires a level of professional expertise that ensures patient safety and compliance with regulatory standards. In contrast, other tasks, such as taking intraoral impressions, sterilization, and coronal polishing, can be performed by unlicensed dental assistants, provided they are under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist and adhere to specific guidelines outlined by the Dental Board of California. These tasks, while important, do not carry the same level of risk associated with radiography, making them more accessible for unlicensed individuals with appropriate oversight.

7. When a patient requests a second opinion after visiting another dentist, what should you do?
- A. Only provide treatment if they schedule an appointment
  - B. Perform a comprehensive evaluation and inform her of your findings**
  - C. Advise her to return to her original dentist for further questions
  - D. Recommend she perform her own research on treatment options

When a patient requests a second opinion after visiting another dentist, performing a comprehensive evaluation and informing them of your findings is the most appropriate response. This approach demonstrates professionalism and a commitment to patient care. It allows the practitioner to assess the patient's current dental health, review any existing treatment plans, and understand the patient's concerns fully. Conducting a thorough evaluation also provides an opportunity to build trust with the patient, as it shows that you are taking their concerns seriously and are willing to invest time in ensuring they receive the best possible care. By informing the patient of your findings, you can help them make a more informed decision regarding their dental treatment options, ensuring they understand the implications of various choices and any potential consequences. This approach aligns with ethical standards in dentistry, as it prioritizes the patient's well-being and ensures that they receive unbiased advice based on a comprehensive assessment, rather than solely relying on information from their previous dentist. It also fosters an open conversation about the patient's treatment and options, which is essential in maintaining a good patient-provider relationship.

8. True or False: Controlled substances are regulated by the Drug Enforcement Administration.
- A. True**
  - B. False
  - C. Only in hospitals
  - D. Only for dentists

Controlled substances are indeed regulated by the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), which is a federal agency. The DEA is responsible for enforcing the controlled substances laws and regulations of the United States. This includes the classification, distribution, and use of drugs that can potentially be abused or misused, such as opioids, stimulants, and certain sedatives. The classification system divides controlled substances into schedules based on their potential for abuse, accepted medical use, and safety or dependence liability. This makes it essential for healthcare professionals, including dentists, who prescribe or dispense these substances to comply with DEA regulations to ensure they are used safely and legally. Understanding the role of the DEA helps healthcare providers navigate the complexities of prescribing controlled substances and ensures they remain compliant with federal laws regarding these medications.

**9. What should not be mixed with medical "red bag" waste according to regulatory guidelines?**

- A. Only extracted teeth**
- B. Amalgam and elemental mercury**
- C. Broken dental instruments**
- D. Only used dental gloves**

The correct answer is that amalgam and elemental mercury should not be mixed with medical "red bag" waste. This distinction is essential due to the hazardous nature of these materials. Amalgam and elemental mercury are considered toxic and potentially harmful to the environment and human health. Regulations mandate that these substances be handled separately to ensure proper disposal methods that prevent contamination and comply with environmental regulations. In contrast, while extracted teeth, used dental gloves, and broken dental instruments may also require careful disposal, they do not pose the same level of environmental risk as amalgam and mercury. Extracted teeth are typically considered biohazard waste and can be disposed of in red bag waste, while used gloves and instruments must also adhere to safe infection control protocols but do not carry the same toxicity. Therefore, amalgam and elemental mercury are specifically singled out for separate handling due to their hazardous properties.

**10. How many practicing dentists are required to be members of the Dental Board of California?**

- A. 8**
- B. 5**
- C. 10**
- D. 3**

A total of 8 practicing dentists are required to be members of the Dental Board of California. This structure is established to ensure that the board has a comprehensive representation of the dental profession, allowing for a diversity of perspectives and expertise within the decision-making process. This composition helps in addressing the needs and concerns of the practice of dentistry in California effectively, as these members bring practical insights into the regulatory considerations affecting dental care and governance. This is essential since the board's responsibilities include protecting public health and safety as well as regulating dental practitioners. Having a substantial number of practicing dentists on the board ensures that the policies and regulations are informed by current professional practices and challenges faced by those in the field.