

April 29, 2020

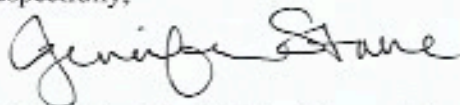
First and foremost, the Arkansas Dental Hygienists' Association would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone who is working so diligently on behalf of the dental profession to keep our healthcare professionals safe while maintaining their practices. The Arkansas Dental Hygienists' Association urges Governor Asa Hutchinson and regulatory authorities to consider the following vital conditions before any non-emergent dental care may resume:

1. Dental offices have the ability to acquire and maintain sufficient PPE and infection control supplies to ensure patient and dental professional safety and meet new CDC and OSHA COVID-19 specific guidelines
2. Dental hygiene procedures requiring the use of aerosol producing instrumentation should continue to be postponed until Phase 3
3. A minimum of two weeks has passed beyond the COVID-19 peak and surge in Arkansas
4. Soft open for dental offices should be considered when proper disinfection, laundering, and patient volume reduction techniques are established

Oral health care settings range from private care to hospitals to public health centers, and the care we provide is just as unique as the populations we serve. Due to the unique nature of these settings, additional infection control considerations should be considered based on the most recent CDC recommendations from April 27, 2020, *Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Dental Settings During the COVID-19 Response*.¹ We feel that additional infection control considerations should be continually updated based on these recommendations from the CDC. We advocate for this to include ongoing training for dental professionals prior to initiating reopening procedures.

We appreciate your consideration of these recommendations and recognition that dental hygienists and other dental professionals are one of the most at risk health care professionals.² The Arkansas Dental Hygienists' Association would like to thank you for the opportunity to represent the concerns of the dental hygienists of Arkansas.

Respectfully,



Submitted on behalf of the Arkansas Dental Hygienists' Association
Jennifer Stane, ArDHA President

¹ Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Interim Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Dental Settings During the COVID-19 Response. CDC, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/dental-settings>

² Occupational Safety and Health Act Administration. Guidance on Preparing Workplace for COVID-19. US Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration. OSHA, 2020. Page 18-19. <https://www.osha.gov/Publications/OSHA3990.pdf>