

# 2012 Proposed Salary Guide

YEARS EXPERIENCE	START	6 MO	1 YR	1.5 YR	2 YRS	3 YRS	4 YRS
RDA Hourly Wage	17.16	17.85	19.49	19.82	20.19	20.52	21.05
YEARS EXPERIENCE	5 YRS	6 YRS	7 YRS	8 YRS	9 YRS	10 - 15YRS	15 YRS +
RDA Hourly Wage	21.57	22.15	22.66	23.16	23.79	24.43– 28.32	29.17*

## SALARY ACCORDING TO YEARS OF EXPERIENCE (DOLLARS PER HOUR)

**KEY:** The 2012 Guide has incorporated a proposed 2.6% increase.

**RDA** means trained Registered Dental Assistant holding provincial registration & current licensure.

**START** means no previous work experience in a dental office, generally a new graduate.

**Years of Experience** means actual "years of practice"; not time with current employer

\* EMPLOYEES WITH GREATER THAN 15 EXPERIENCE YEARS SHOULD RECEIVE THE PROPOSED INCREASE OF 2.6% PLUS AN APPROPRIATE MERIT INCREASE FOR THE CURRENT YEAR OF SERVICE.

- Note that the Consumer Price Index stands at 3.4% for Saskatchewan and 3.2% for Canada (September 2011) .
- Note that the core inflation index for Saskatchewan is experiencing unusual increases and as of September 2011 was 2.2%.
- Our guide addresses dollar compensation only.

### CALCULATION TO DETERMINE MONTHLY SALARY:

"Start" Hourly Rate x Hours in a week x 52 = Yearly Salary ÷ 12 = Monthly Salary

\$17.16 x 35 x 52 = 31,231.20 per year ÷ 12 = 2,602.60 per month

\$17.16 x 37.5 x 52 = 33,462.00 per year ÷ 12 = 2,788.50 per month

\$17.16 x 40 x 52 = 35,692.80 per year ÷ 12 = 2,974.40 per month

### COMPARISON OF NEW GRADUATE SALARIES:

Full-time training-related average starting monthly salary (SIAST 2008-2009, October 2010)

("Average" starting hourly wage reported within first 6 months of employment)

Dental Assistant ~ \$2,627 [Range of \$1,500 to \$3,300; Median \$2,700]

Combined Lab & X-Ray Technician ~ \$3,411 [Range of \$2,550 to \$3,725; Median \$3,599]

Pharmacy Technician Certificate ~ \$2,870 [Range of \$2,550 to \$3,279; Median \$2,700]

Dental Hygienist ~ \$5,201 [Range of \$1,388 to \$7,500; Median \$5,100]



## THE SALARY SCHEDULE:

The guide is designed to provide a range of salaries appropriate to the practice experience of a dental assistant. It is suggested that salary recognize educational training, experience and status rather than specific to a job description.

This guide suggests an hourly wage along with a formula to assist in calculating a monthly salary dependent on "base pay", hours worked per day, and days worked per month.

The first cell indicates an initial salary level that is recommended for an individual, presumably a new graduate; who has never had any experience in the duties of a licenced dental assistant. Years of experience are identified after the "start" cell in the table. It is presumed that dental assistants with experience would start a new position at the step appropriate to their years of experience in dentistry. Acknowledging experience and merit is an important part of staff retention and managing a successful practice.

The Salary Guide for dental assistants extends to 15+ years. After 15 years of experience there are so many variables, it is often difficult for veteran assistants to negotiate an appropriate rate of pay. A dental assistant with 15+ years experience is considered an expert in their field. We trust employers will reimburse these valuable employees at a fair market value commensurate with their ex-

perience. This value could be as much as an additional 4.6% (2.6% + 2) annually (note: merit is calculated into the steps from start to 15 years). We assert that all dental employees should receive an annual merit and cost of living increase reflective of their abilities, which truly recognizes their years of employment.

Those individuals completing additional postgraduate training have also expanded their roles in the dental office and should be reimbursed accordingly.

**Cost of Living Factors:** Cost of living increases have been quoted to be a result of increased cost in transportation (gasoline 28%), food, fuel oil and electricity.

**In General:** Salaries are one of the workplace stressors in all sectors of the labour force. Dentistry is no exception, although for the most part, both employers and employees seem to be able to reach amicable agreements. We are hopeful this will continue to be the situation, and that the "Proposed Salary Guide" can provide some framework for the process.

Why are negotiations important? A high staff turnover rate will create a lack of profitability within any office. Our members tell us that in many instances they have preferred to resign a position when higher salaried employment became available. Resigning was in preference to entering negotiations with the employer-dentist.

Both dentists and dental assistants should recognize that the salary guide is provided to assist your office in arriving at a reasonable and equitable salary structure. Dentists must recognize that the guide is based on the principle of establishing a salary level sufficient to attract and maintain high quality oral health professionals. Practice profitability and salaries of other dental personnel all have a bearing on an appropriate salary. Employers who value professional, committed staff must offer salaries to entice and retain these individuals.

**Other Relevant Data:** The Canadian Dental Assistants' Association [Online Salary and Benefits Survey 2011](#) demonstrated that general practice chairside dental assistants in Saskatchewan are receiving average hourly earnings of \$22.72. Speciality assistants in Saskatchewan averaged a wage of \$25.14. Of the respondents, 66% of Saskatchewan dental assistants are working in general practice chairside positions, 18% are working in specialties, and 7% are working a combination of both.

32% of Saskatchewan respondents indicated that their annual license fees were paid by their employer. 72% indicated that continuing education courses are being paid by the employer and 33% indicated that their employer provided a uniform allowance.

**WORKPLACE:** The Dental Assistant must hold a valid license and must practice in accordance with the Dental Disciplines Act, Regulatory Bylaws and the General Competency document.

Only licensed individuals are eligible to perform intra oral procedures. Employers must not ask allied personnel to practice outside of their scope of practice as defined in The Dental Disciplines Act (2010). A currently licensed Saskatchewan Dental Assistant can only perform skills that are listed with the SDAA. All dental assistant practice is based on formal training. The RDA's personalized skill list should be reviewed during an interview.

For a mutually beneficial working environment dental assistants want to be treated with courtesy, respect and appreciation.

A written 'Agreement for Employment' stating hours, wages, benefits, holidays and job expectations should be drafted. Employer and employee should mutually develop the document and both should have a copy of the agreement.

A performance appraisal would be beneficial to both parties on a yearly basis following the initial probation.

The methodology of airing grievances should be established for both employer and employee prior to employment.

## LABOUR STANDARDS:

**Labour Standards and Occupational Health and Safety** govern the Saskatchewan workplace. Employers and employees should be familiar with their policies.

All employees are entitled to a harassment free work environment. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code and The Occupational Health and Safety Act prohibit harassment in the work place. Everyone deserves to be treated with respect. To this end, in 2008 the Saskatchewan Government introduced legislation into the Occupational Health and Safety Branch to address "bullying in the workplace".

If the employee has a latex allergy the employer must provide non-latex gloves, offer alternative work duties that do not involve contact with latex products, or develop a latex safe work environment.

All employees are entitled to regular wages for ten public holidays a year. (New Years Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada

Day, Saskatchewan Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day and Christmas Day.) Contact Labour Standards regarding the payment formula.

It is the responsibility of the dentist/employer to provide effective personal protective equipment, in accordance with **standard** precautions.

Overtime (time and one-half) must be paid to employees who work more than 8 hours in a day or 40 hours in a week. Dental offices are eligible to apply for an Averaging Permit, which allows employee's hours of work to be averaged over a longer period of time. Permits are granted for a period of up to 3 years, keep in mind that offices are not notified when these permits expire.

**Questions about Labour Related Issues:** Labour Standards Offices are located in eight centres throughout the province. If you need information or assistance, please use the blue government pages in your phone book. Website: [www.labour.gov.sk.ca](http://www.labour.gov.sk.ca)

## BENEFIT OPTIONS FOR PERSONNEL:

A sick leave policy should be established that is reasonable to both parties.

Employees required to conform to a uniform code could be provided with a minimum of two uniforms per year.

The employer could absorb professional fees, time loss, and registration fees for mutually beneficial continuing education.

Job sharing opportunities could be made available to dental assistants. Part-time

employees should receive benefits at a prorated amount. Employers hiring part-time or hourly paid employees should make benefit policies clearly understood at the time of employment.

Personal days should be available to all employees.

The employer may wish to provide the employee with

benefits through some type of insurance coverage. Insurance premiums could be covered completely as an office expense or the employer and employee may wish to agree on a fifty - fifty or some other type of arrangement.

[www.cdaabenefits.ca](http://www.cdaabenefits.ca).

The CDAA Benefit Plan includes among others; life insurance, extended health benefits, critical illness insurance and dental coverage and could be considered a great tool for attracting and maintaining a quality dental team.

Employers who would like to see the current employee plans supplemented offer group Registered Retirement Savings Plans. Their intention is to increase the retirement benefit and provide for the possibility of early retirement. The role of the employer may be limited to providing the payroll deduction framework within which the plan operates, or to promote enrollment in the plan by absorbing plan expenses for the RRSP.

## NEEDLESTICK INJURY?

In case of a needlestick injury; allow bleeding from the wound to reduce contact with blood or body fluid. Wash area with soap and water. Swab wound with antiseptic.

Immediately call Public Health Services in your health region. Their staff will be able to direct you to the appropriate care.

The EMPLOYER **must** file an injury report with the Workers Compensation Board within five days.

Document everything!



## SUPERVISION?

Registered Dental Assistants in Saskatchewan holding FULL PRACTISING LICENSURE can practice without supervision provided that the dentist has **delegated** the treatment, the dental assistant is formally trained to provide the service and the skill is listed on their personal skill list.

Please note that every dentist/ employer has the authority to stipulate that a dentist must be on site during the provision of allied services.

A Dental Assistant practising on a "RESTRICTED" licence must work under direct supervision of a dentist, dental assistant, dental hygienist or dental therapist.

## WORKERS COMPENSATION & REPORTING:

All employers operating in industries covered under Saskatchewan's legislation, who employ workers on a regular, casual or contractual basis, must register and establish an account with the WCB. Exempted industries and occupations are listed in the Exclusion Regulations.

WCB coverage provides financial protection, medical treatment and rehabilitation services to workers and their dependents in cases of injury or death arising out of, and in the course of, employment. These benefits are funded by premiums collected from employers by WCB.

### **Injury Reporting:**

Employers have a legislated duty to report worker injuries within five days of being made aware of the injury. The WCB makes it easy to report an injury.

Prompt reporting allows for quick response to the injured worker's medical needs. This in turn results in lower compensation costs overall, which can positively affect your experience rating and save you money.

Late reporting or non-reporting can result in fines or prosecution. Late reporting can also delay payment of

benefits to the injured worker, often causing hardship and hindering their recovery.

[www.wcbask.com](http://www.wcbask.com)

**No-Time-Loss Claims:** All injuries that require medical attention must be reported to the WCB, even those that do not result in time away from work. These no-time-loss injuries account for approximately 60% of all WCB claims. Most of these injured workers recover and return to work relatively easily. The WCB will pay for travel and medical expenses the injured worker may incur as a result of the injury.

**Time-Loss Claims:** Injuries that do result in time away from work are referred to as time-loss claims. The WCB will pay the injured worker's medical and applicable travel expenses, and provide wage-loss benefits. Of total time-loss claims, 80-85% are short-term with the worker returning to work within four weeks. The remaining 15-20% are long-term claims, usually of a more serious nature or those in which recovery does not progress as expected. These are assigned to case management teams.



## IMMUNIZATION GUIDE—OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH & SAFETY:

Employers should inform their employees of the vaccinations recommended for their profession and arrange, with the employee's consent, for the vaccinations to be completed during their normal work time and reimbursement for the associated costs.

The most recent edition of the Canadian Immunization Guide (CIG) recommends that all adults, including workers who may be exposed to infectious organisms in the workplace, receive the following vaccinations:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Influenza for adults 65 or older, or those under 65 at risk of influenza-related complications and certain occupational groups
- Pneumococcal pneumonia for adults over 65 or those under 65 with conditions putting them at increased

risk of pneumococcal disease

- Measles for all adults born in 1970 or later who are susceptible
- Rubella only for susceptible women of child-bearing age and health care workers
- Mumps only for adults born in 1970 or later with no history of mumps

**Hepatitis B:** Workers can get Hepatitis B infections from exposure to infectious body fluids, notably blood, through:

- Eyes
- Mucous membranes
- Damaged skin
- Skin punctures

Saliva is considered potentially infectious.

Full immunization involves three doses: an initial dose, a booster one month later and a final booster, one or more months after the first booster, depending on the vaccination

used. Up to 10% of the population may not respond properly to the vaccination, it is recommended that employers offer appropriate follow-up titre testing to workers receiving the Hepatitis B vaccination.

**Influenza Vaccination:** It is recommended that Health Care Providers and others who have significant contact with people identified as being at high risk of acquiring influenza, should be offered and receive annual vaccinations, unless they have medical reasons not to (CIG).

**Varicella:** A live-virus vaccination is recommended for health care workers with frequent contact with children and who do not have a reliable, documented history of immunity to the virus.

**BCG:** May be considered for health care workers at high

risk of exposure to TB and/or multi-drug resistant TB, and where normal protective measures and control precautions against infection transmission are inadequate. Known TB patients must be treated within a special facility.

**Diphtheria, Tetanus:** The CIG recommends primary immunization (three doses) and an immunization booster in the last 10 years. When a worker receives a tetanus-prone wound at work, a booster may be needed.

**Polio:** The employer should encourage workers to determine if they were immunized as children. Workers who were immunized as children should be advised that vaccinations are available for adults.