OBD COVID-19 Frequently Asked Questions

**Licensing**

**Q:** Can I complete the continuing education (CE) required for my license after the deadline since I am unable to attend in-person CE courses?

**A:** You are still required to complete your CE within the licensure period. The Board has no restriction on the amount of CE completed online. The only CE that cannot be completed online is your initial Healthcare Provider BLS and/or ACLS/PALS certification. Recertification can be completed online.

**Q:** What if my BLS lapses during Executive Order (EO) 20-10?

**A:** OAR 818-012-0030(18) requires Licensees to maintain a current BLS for Healthcare Providers certificate or its equivalent at all times. Please look to complete an online recertification course before a lapse occurs to ensure you do not violate the Dental Practice Act.

**Q:** What if my ACLS/PALS lapses during Executive Order (EO) 20-10?

**A:** OAR 818-026-0030(5) & (6) requires Licensees holding an anesthesia permit for moderate sedation, deep sedation, or general anesthesia at all times maintains a current BLS for Healthcare Providers certificate and a current ACLS or PALS, whichever is appropriate for the patient being sedated. Please look to complete an online recertification course before a lapse occurs to ensure you do not violate the Dental Practice Act.

**Q:** Can I still receive my license if I am unable to complete a clinical exam due to COVID-19?

**A:** At this time, the Board has not deferred this requirement for licensure.

**Investigations**

**Q:** Can I do consultations with patients via phone/teleconference?

**A:** These appointments are required to follow ORS 679.543 - Use of telehealth by dental care providers, and will be held to the same standard as an in-person consultation/exam in a Board investigation.

**Q:** Am I required to test heat sterilizing devices weekly if I am only seeing emergency patients? What if the testing agency stops accepting/testing the monitoring strips?

**A:** The Oregon Board of Dentistry does not have the authority to suspend the enforcement of state statutes. That being said, pursuant to OAR 818-012-0040, if in any week you only see unscheduled emergency patients, you do not need to test your autoclaves. If an office is open regular hours to treat emergency patients, they would be expected to test their autoclaves. The exception to the testing requirement is if the office is closed and the doctor sees one or two unscheduled emergency patients. In determining what constitutes unacceptable patient care with respect to infection control, the Board may consider current infection control guidelines, such as those of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Dental Association. There are in-office testing kits that you can obtain and it is perfectly legal to do your own in house biological monitoring of your autoclaves.

**Q:** What if a dental office is still open?

**A:** Governor Kate Brown issued EO 20-10 which requires all elective and non-urgent procedures across all care settings, including dental clinics, to cancel or reschedule patients no earlier than June 15, 2020 for the purpose of conserving and redirecting PPE for the state’s Covid-19 emergency response. Licensees are required to follow EO 20-10, and violating the order may be a violation of the Dental Practice Act pursuant to OAR 818-012-0030.
(19) – Unprofessional Conduct: Conduct unbecoming a licensee or detrimental to the best interests of the public, including conduct contrary to the recognized standards of ethics of the licensee’s profession or conduct that endangers the health, safety or welfare of a patient or the public.

Q: How do I distinguish between urgent and non-urgent procedures?
A: The intent of EO 20-10 is to preserve and redirect PPE. In accordance with EO 20-10, a procedure of surgery is exempt from the limitations of the EO if a three-month delay in the procedure or surgery would put the patient at risk of irreversible harm. Criteria for determining whether irreversible harm exists include but are not limited to: 1. Threat to the patient’s life; 2. Threat of irreversible harm to the patient’s physical or mental health; 3. Threat of permanent dysfunction of an extremity or organ system; 4. Risk of metastasis or progression of staging; and 5. Risk of rapidly worsening to severe symptoms (time sensitive). Ultimately, it is up to the individual professionals’ judgement whether or not a patient meets the above criteria and would be considered urgent. It is important to document a dental diagnosis and a justification as to why the procedure is urgent. Also consider treatment procedures that limit aerosol producing techniques to reduce risk of exposure to the practitioner, staff, and patient.

Q: Can dentists prescribe chloroquine and hydroxychloroquine for presumptive treatment or prevention of COVID-19 infection?
A: Safe prescribing practices do not include prescribing chloroquine or hydroxychloroquine. Please refer to the Oregon Board of Pharmacy’s temporary emergency rule OAR 855-007-0085.

General Questions

Q: How do I notify the state’s PPE Coordinator of surplus PPE supplies, and arrange for delivery of those surplus supplies? What if I am unable to reach the PPE Coordinator?
A: Please notify the state’s PPE Coordinator by calling (971) 900-9952. If you are unable to reach the PPE Coordinator, please contact the Board office at (971) 673-3200.

Q: Is EO 20-10 in effect until June 15, 2020? I recently read it may be extended until September 20, 2020?
A: The Governor’s EO 20-10 prohibiting elective procedures that requires personal protective equipment (PPE) is in effect for 90 days from March 19, 2020, unless terminated earlier or extended. If the Governor does not terminate the Executive Order earlier, or extend it, Executive Order 20-10 will expire June 15, 2020.

Q: Could I volunteer to collect oral samples to test for COVID-19?
A: The Board of Dentistry statutes and rules would not prohibit collection of oral samples by dental professionals. The Board supports all safe efforts to combat this pandemic.

Q: How can I help?
A: The Board supports dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants signing up on the state’s SERV-OR volunteer registry to be a resource for the current pandemic and future events.