

Guidance Document: Temporary Flexibility in Accreditation Standards to Address Interruption of Education Reporting Requirements Resulting From COVID-19 for the Class of 2021

Below is the *temporary flexibility* guidance on select Accreditation Standards. Only those Accreditation Standards which include *temporary flexibility* are included, all others have been retained as written in the current published Accreditation Standards document.

Temporary flexibility, as noted in this guidance document, is to be used only if necessary based upon restrictions placed upon the program in its local environment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Should a program make changes on a permanent basis, these changes should be reported to CODA through a Report of Program Change.

Advanced Dental Education in Dental Public Health

Alternative Assessment Methods (for example, patient vs simulation)

For the Class of 2021, when needed due to disruptions from the pandemic, alternative assessment methods are allowed, as long as the program director can use them to determine competence in meeting the Standards. Thus, for example but not limited to, temporarily, in-person assessments can be changed to on-line assessments, written exams can be changed to oral exams, research presentations at national meetings that were cancelled can be done locally, online, by telephone, or in writing but appropriate feedback is still required. The need for adequate assessments, and need to maintain components of assessment, apply to the program's main site as well as any off-campus site used by the program during this pandemic.

Modification/Reduction of Curriculum Content or Curriculum Requirements (for example, modification/reduction of program-dictated requirements, CODA competency requirements, and/or CODA quantitative numbers-based requirements)

For the Class of 2021, programs have the flexibility to modify program-dictated requirements as long as the modifications continue to meet standards required by CODA and the program confirms graduates are competent upon completion of the program.

Program Length or Program Component Length (for example, rotations, services, etc.)

For the Class of 2021, the program length requirement is maintained. The use of distance education technology offers the programs flexibility in providing the required educational experiences.

Accreditation Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Dental Public Health

DPH Standard 4-2

The program must provide instruction at the advanced level in the following:

- a. Epidemiology;**
- b. Biostatistics;**
- c. Behavioral science;**
- d. Environmental health; and**
- e. Health care policy and management.**

DPH Standard 4-3

Two-year dental public health programs must incorporate instruction specified in standard 4-2.

DPH Standard 4-4

Directors of one-year programs must review each student's/resident's previous public health training and supplement it, where necessary, to ensure that instruction identified in Standard 4-2 is covered.

Temporary Guidance for Standards 4-2, 4-3, and 4-4: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have received "Instruction" in each of the areas under Standard 4-2, while each program has a curriculum plan that may be more specific. Specific courses, seminars, and/or hours of instruction in these curricular areas can be modified and changes made in quantitative benchmarks or specific plans, as long as the director can attest that the "program provided instruction at the advanced level" in the specified areas.

DPH Standard 4-5

The program must provide instruction in the following competencies:

- a. Manage oral health programs for population health;**
- b. Evaluate systems of care that impact oral health;**
- c. Demonstrate ethical decision-making in the practice of dental public health;**
- d. Design surveillance systems to measure oral health status and its determinants**
- e. Communicate on oral and public health issues;**
- f. Lead collaborations on oral and public health issues;**
- g. Advocate for public health policy, legislation, and regulations to protect and promote the public's oral health, and overall health;**
- h. Critically appraise evidence to address oral health issues for individuals and populations;**
- i. Conduct research to address oral and public health problems; and**
- j. Integrate the social determinants of health into dental public health practice.**

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have received “Instruction” in each of the areas under Standard 4-5, while each program has a curriculum plan that may be more specific. Specific courses, seminars, and/or hours of instruction in these curricular areas can be modified and changes made in quantitative benchmarks or specific plans, as long as the director can attest that the “program provided instruction” in the specified areas.

DPH Standard 4-6

Each student/resident in a dental public health program must have a written curriculum plan, designed to build upon and augment previous education and experience, and which describes the competencies to be developed during the program, activities necessary to develop the stated competencies, and methods to evaluate the competencies.

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have a curriculum plan and should update it, as needed, to reflect changes made due to the pandemic. Each student’s/resident’s log of activities should continue to reflect actual activities, and the program director should continue to review it even in light of the pandemic.

DPH Standard 4-7

The program must include a supervised field experience at a location determined by the program director which requires the students/residents to gain an understanding of one or more of the competencies listed in Standard 4-5.

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have received “field experience” training. Rotations to specific locations can be modified, as long as the director can attest that the “program provided a supervised field experience”. If it is not possible to conduct all or some of the field experience “on-site” due to the pandemic, alternative methods are acceptable. For example, these can include distance learning experiences, multiple shorter field experiences, etc.

DPH Standard 4-8

The program must include a supervised research experience for each student/resident, approved by the program director, that demonstrates application of dental public health principles and sound research methodology and is consistent with the competencies listed in Standard 4-5. (Also see Standard 6)

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have received “a supervised research experience for each student/resident, approved by the program director that demonstrates application of

dental public health principles and sound research methodology and is consistent with the competencies listed in Standard 4-5.” Specific research plans can be modified as long as the director can attest that the program included “a supervised research experience for each student/resident, approved by the program director that demonstrates application of dental public health principles and sound research methodology and is consistent with the competencies listed in Standard 4-5.”

DPH Standard 4-9

A two-year dental public health program must encompass a minimum of two academic years in duration.

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, the program length requirement will not be modified. Temporary flexibility is provided through the use of alternative educational and assessment methods while ensuring competence of the program graduates.

DPH Standard 4-10

A one-year dental public health program must encompass a minimum of 12 months in duration.

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, the program length requirement will not be modified. Temporary flexibility is provided through the use of alternative educational and assessment methods while ensuring competence of the program graduates.

Advanced Dental Education Standard 5 – Evaluation

A system of ongoing evaluation and advancement must ensure that, through the director and faculty, each program:

- a. Periodically, but at least semiannually, assesses the progress toward (formative assessment) and achievement of (summative assessment) the competencies for the discipline using formal evaluation methods;**
- b. Provides to students/residents an assessment of their performance, at least semiannually**

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have been assessed at least semiannually and have been provided an assessment of their performance at least semiannually. However, should it be necessary, alternative methods may be used to deliver the performance assessment.

DPH Standard 6-3

Students/Residents must complete one or more residency research projects after a review of the literature and approval of a comprehensive protocol; they must also produce evidence of engagement in scholarly activity based on the research.

Temporary Guidance: For the Class of 2021, programs should continue to document that their students/residents have completed one or more projects and that the program director reviewed it even in light of the pandemic. The specifics of the manner by which the student/resident demonstrates completion of the research project can be modified, as long as the director can attest that they have received a completed project.