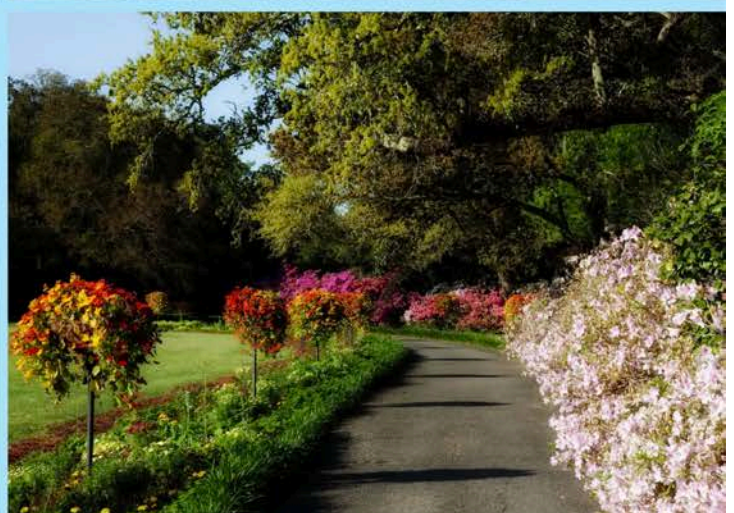


Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama



Advancing Together Transparency, Trust, and Professional Excellence

The Board's mission is—and always has been—to protect the public. However, we understand protecting the public does not have to mean opposing the profession. Rather it involves, developing, interpreting and ensuring standards of care for the citizens of our state through respecting, supporting, and collaborating with Alabama's licensed dental professionals. Protecting the public is most effectively accomplished by listening to those who elected them — the dedicated licensees whose skill, integrity, and licensing fees sustain the Board's very ability to exist, function, and fulfill its mission.

This newsletter is one way we are working to keep you informed, engaged, and prepared. Proactive communication is a powerful tool in promoting public protection through professional success. Our goal is to provide clear, timely information that helps licensees avoid compliance issues before they arise. Aiming to help our licensees avoid trouble makes our task easier and more pleasant. This approach is a win-win.



New Initiatives to Strengthen Communication

Updated Website and iGov Platform

We are excited to announce the launch of a redesigned Board website. The new site is more user-friendly, mobile-compatible, and easier to navigate. It serves as a resource hub for rules, forms, updates, and FAQs to better assist licensees. Additionally, we would like to extend a thank you Dr. Austin Stiles and Dr. Mary Beth Finn for their help, ideas, and direction in this board endeavor.

Board Meeting Livestreams

Beginning later this year, the Board intends to live stream its public meetings. We believe that offering greater access fosters transparency, builds trust, and encourages professional engagement with Board activities. The board is currently collecting bids for the necessary hardware to make livestreaming a reality.

Town Halls and Outreach Sessions

We are committed to conducting semi-annual Town Hall meetings:

- UAB Alumni Weekend (February)
- ALDA Gulf Coast Dental Conference (June)

Additionally, your members are attending and participating in their local district meetings as their time allows. These sessions offer a chance for direct dialogue, reminders, and updates between the Board and our licensees. We hope to see many of you in person!



Compliance Corner

Staying Ahead of Common Pitfalls

As part of our duty we must ensure that licensees meet their obligations — not just to the Board, but to their patients and communities. Our approach is not just about enforcement; it's about education and partnership. Unfortunately, over the last 24 months, the board has seen a dramatic increase in non-disciplinary administrative compliance cases. The total number of cases has grown to the following:

257 cases which generated \$105,000 in total fines

Please understand, we want to reverse this trend! Review the items below to help us help you.

Common Issues Observed:

- **Timely Renewal of Dental / Hygiene License AND All Permits:**
Remember that all licenses and permits expire on October 1st of each year. Please complete this task annually to avoid fines and disciplinary proceedings. This includes an active DEA license for those prescribing controlled substances.
- **Sedation and Anesthesia Compliance:**
Licensees offering sedation services must ensure they meet all equipment and training requirements, including proper permits, ACLS and/or PALS certification.
- **Incomplete Continuing Education Reporting:**
Remember, CE must now be submitted annually into your CE Broker account. When you renew your license, you are attesting to having completed the prior year's requirements.
- **Failure to create a PDMP Account.**
- **Prescribing outside the scope of dentistry. (Weight loss medications for example)**
- **Failure to Update Contact Information:**
Licensees are required to keep current addresses, emails, and phone numbers on file with the Board. Please ensure your information is current so you remain abreast of the latest news, requirements, and communications.
- **Employing Unlicensed Professionals:**
Dentists should ensure that all personnel they employ have active an active license and permits for any duties they are asked to perform. This is especially relevant to employing hygienists.

Key Reminder:

Many compliance issues are unintentional and easily preventable. If you have questions or uncertainties, reach out to your Board staff sooner rather than later. We are here to help you stay compliant and avoid unnecessary disciplinary actions.

Contact your board with any questions or concerns:

(205) 985-7267

info@dentalboard.org

www.dentalboard.org



Continuing Education Explained

Alabama CE Requirements for Dentists

- **Total Hours:**
Dentists must complete 20 hours of CE annually for license renewal.
- **Live Training:**
At least 10 hours must be obtained through live, in-person courses.
- **Online/Distance Learning:**
Up to 10 hours can be completed via online courses, journals, publications, or other distance-based education formats.
- **Charitable Hours:**
Up to 4 hours annually may be reported for charitable dentistry at ratio of 1 hour credit per 2 hours of charitable dentistry.

Mandatory Course Topics

- **Basic Life Support (BLS):**
Maintain current certification through the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, or an equivalent program.
- **Infectious Disease Control:**
Complete a minimum of 1 hour annually.
- **Prescribing Controlled Substances:**
Complete a minimum of 1 hour annually.
- **Ethical Considerations:**
Complete a minimum of 1 hour annually.
- **Sedation/Anesthesia:**
Dentists holding an OCS Permit must complete a minimum of 2 hours sedation topic annually. Dentists holding ANY sedation permit must have a current ACLS / PALS certification.
- **Federally mandated 8 hour course for DEA license holders:**
8 hours of one-time training on the treatment and management of patients with opioid or other substance use disorders.



Get to Know Your Board Members

Dr. Melodie A. Jones, President



Melodie has over 32 years of private practice experience, delivering compassionate, comprehensive dental care to patients of all ages. A graduate of Auburn University (B.S. in Chemistry) and the University of Alabama School of Dentistry (D.M.D.), she has dedicated her career to helping families achieve healthy, confident smiles. Melodie stays active in numerous professional organizations, including the American Dental Association, the Alabama Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Association of Dental Boards. She serves on the Executive Alumni Council and as Vice President of the UAB School of Dentistry Alumni Association. In addition to her role as President of the Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama, she is President-Elect of the Alabama Academy of General Dentistry and an examiner for CDCA-WREB-CITA/ADEX.

Outside of dentistry, Melodie enjoys reading, traveling, photography, and participating in medical and dental mission trips. She is an active member of Trinity Presbyterian Church, where she sings in the choir. Melodie and her husband, Cody, have two adult sons and a daughter-in-law.

Dr. Kevin Sims, Vice President



Kevin is currently in his 8th year of service during his second term on the Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama. He is a diplomate of the Board of Periodontology, limits his practice to periodontics and dental implants. Since 1997, his practice has been in Hoover, Alabama. Kevin is married to Dr. Pamela J. Sims and has two married children and two grandchildren. When not treating patients or serving on the Board, his passion is to be at his lake house (The Cedars) or spending time at his farm (Long Leaf). Kevin is a member of Double Oak Community Church at Mt. Laurel, Alabama.

Dr. Mark R. McIlwain, Secretary/Treasurer



Mark is a native of Butler, Alabama. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Alabama and a 1982 Graduate of the University of Alabama School of Dentistry, receiving the Dean's Medal. Mark practiced General Dentistry in Tuscumbia, Alabama for 5 years. He received his Medical Degree from Vanderbilt University and was elected to Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society. After an Internship in General Surgery, Mark completed a residency in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. He founded Oral and Facial Surgery of the Shoals, where he is a Board Certified partner for the last 33 years. He is married to Connie Gargis McIlwain and they live on their family farm in Tuscumbia. They have two children MaryEllen and Joe with two grandchildren Milas and Murphy. Mark is dedicated to improving patient outcomes and safety. Serving on the Board of Dental Examiners satisfies his need to give back to our wonderful profession.

Dr. Holt Gray, Member



Holt was born, raised, educated, and currently practices in Birmingham, Alabama. With a family history of dentistry in Alabama dating back over 100 years, he is committed to serving on the Board of Dental Examiners to help return the favor to a profession that has been so personally influential. Holt graduated from the UAB – SOD in 2004 and completed the UAB Graduate Prosthodontic residency in 2007. He has been in a group private practice in the Birmingham area for the last 18 years. When he is not busy treating patients, Holt enjoys time with his wife Laura and their 2 daughters, Rebekah and Rachael. He and his family have been active members of Altadena Valley Presbyterian Church since 2008. Pickleball and board game design are hobbies Holt is passionate about for exercise and leisure.



Dr. Sonya White, Member

Sonya has been practicing dentistry since 1996 and is licensed in both Alabama and Mississippi. She has owned and operated White Smile Center since 1997. Throughout her career, Sonya has held numerous leadership roles within local and state dental societies and associations across both states. She is the founder and executive director of Dedicated Dentist, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization providing free dental care to underserved communities. Sonya is a member of Friendship Baptist Church, where she serves on the Women's Ministry, Health Ministry, and Greeter's Ministry. She has been married to Darryl Porter for 25 years, and they are the proud parents of three adult sons: Robert, Ryan, and Ross Porter.



Dr. John York, Member

Upon graduation from the UAB School of Dentistry in 1993, John returned to his hometown of Arab, AL. For the last 32 years he has owned and operated North Alabama Smiles, PC, focusing on dental digital technology, esthetics, and strongly emphasizing the patient experience. John is very happy to serve the public and his fellow dentists by serving on the Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama. He understands that by working together and providing transparency the dentists of our state will understand the process of both law and rulemaking for the safety of our patients. In his free time, John enjoys golf, hunting, and yardwork. He is also very involved in serving at Gilliam Springs Baptist Church, where he is a part of the audio-visual team, as well as leading a Tuesday morning men's group. He and his wife Janna have four children – Wesley, Lindsey, Aly and John III, and have one grandson, Lincoln.



Ms. Kay Alexander, RDH, Member

Kay has had a long career in the dental profession. She acquired her dental hygiene license through the Alabama Dental Hygiene Program in 1969. She is a Life Member in the American Dental Assistants Association and the DANB Certified Dental Assistants Organization. Kay was the 3rd dental hygienist elected to serve on the Board of Dental Examiners. She has worked extensively with CITA, a regional testing agency, as a test site administrator for dental and dental hygiene exams in the Southeastern states. Kay is now an examiner with the CDCA-WREB-CITA organization that administers the ADEX exam for dental hygienists and has served three tenures on the BDEA from 2000-2005, 2010-2015, and 2020-2025.



Staff Updates

Welcome Executive Director Stephen Morris

Mr. Stephen Morris has officially joined the Board as Executive Director. His background in regulatory administration and public service will help us enhance operations, improve responsiveness, and continue building a Board that works collaboratively with licensees in a positive and constructive manner.

Stephen brings over 25 years of leadership experience to his role as Executive Director of the Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama (BDEAL). With a unique background spanning both private enterprise and public service, Stephen understands the challenges dental professionals face from multiple perspectives. Before joining the BDEAL, Stephen built and sold successful businesses including BillStatus, a legislative tracking platform. His government experience includes directing governmental affairs for the Alabama National Guard/State Military Department and the Alabama Department of Labor, where he developed a talent for navigating complex regulatory environments.

A proud family man, Stephen is married to Frances and has raised three children and delights in his two granddaughters. When not advocating for Alabama's dental profession, you might find him serving his community through various board positions, including Lake Martin Mission Church and Real Island Volunteer Fire Department.

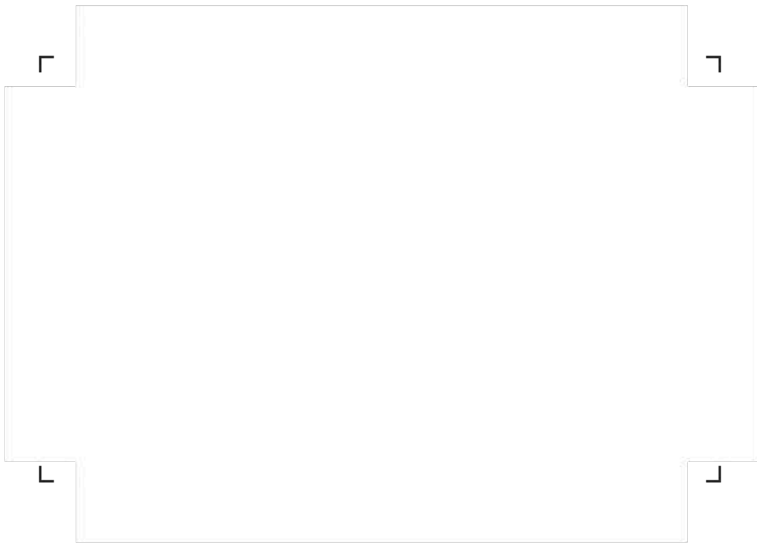




Stay proactive. Stay compliant. Stay connected.



We are committed to doing the same for each of you.



Place
Stamp
Here

Board of Dental Examiners of Alabama
2229 Rocky Ridge Road
Birmingham, AL 35216

