

# Dental Hygienists

A guide for newcomers to British Columbia



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## 1. Working as a Dental Hygienist [NOC 3222]

### *Job Description*

**Dental hygienists** work with dentists to provide care for people's teeth, gums, and mouths. You help maintain the oral health of your patients.

As a dental hygienist you perform the following duties:

- Talk to patients about their dental care needs
- Do initial dental assessments
- Take dental impressions
- Remove stains and deposits from teeth to prevent tooth and root decay
- Clean the gums to prevent gum disease
- Apply fluoride treatment
- Take and develop X-rays
- May perform restorative and orthodontic procedures under the direction of a dentist
- May supervise dental assistants

Source:

WorkBC Career Profile <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3222>

## Industry Overview

The job outlook for Dental Hygienists is good throughout BC. There is particularly high demand for hygienists in the rural regions of the province.

Dental hygienists may have a much broader scope of responsibilities than in the past. You may be a dental health-care educator who instructs patients in oral hygiene procedures and promotes community dental health programs. The role of dental hygienists in areas outside clinical practices, such as community health centres and residential care facilities is expected to increase.

## Job Outlook in BC

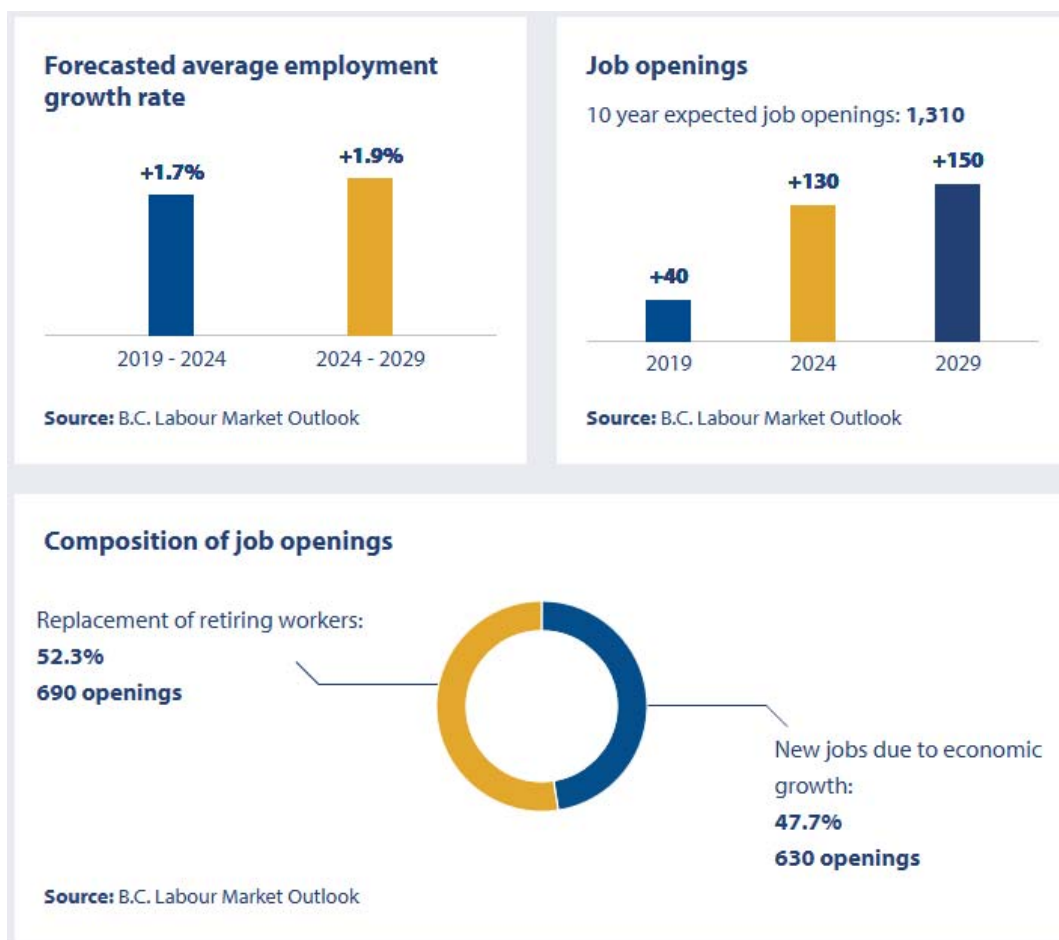


Chart from WorkBC

WorkBC provides job openings in BC regions from 2019-2029:

Region	Employment in 2019	Average Annual Employment Growth	Expected Number of Job Openings
Vancouver Island / Coast	520	1.5%	210
Lower Mainland / Southwest	1,860	1.8%	760
Thompson-Okanagan	470	1.8%	220
Cariboo	130	1.7%	40
Kootenay	60	1.6%	20
Northeast	70	2.6%	30
North Coast & Nechako	50	2.9%	30

You can learn more about working as a dental hygienist in BC from:

- **WorkBC Careers** at <http://www.workbc.ca/Job-Seekers/Career-Profiles/3222>
- **Career Cruising**  
<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/career-cruising/> [profile for Dental Hygienist]  
Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

### ***Types of Employers***

Many dental hygienists work in private dental offices. You may also find employment in hospitals, clinics, educational institutions or government agencies and private industry.

## Salary

The median annual salary for dental hygienists working full-time in BC is \$85,280.

In addition to a salary, most full-time dental hygienists receive health and dental benefits, paid sick days, and paid vacations.

Job Bank Canada provides hourly wages for Dental Hygienists in BC regions:

Community/Area	Wages (\$/hour)		
	Low	Median	High
<b>British Columbia</b>	<b>20.00</b>	<b>42.00</b>	<b>47.00</b>
<b>Cariboo Region</b>	20.00	42.00	47.00
<b>Kootenay Region</b>	40.38	43.00	47.75
<b>Lower Mainland-Southwest Region</b>	33.65	42.00	48.00
<b>Thompson-Okanagan Region</b>	20.00	42.00	47.00
<b>Vancouver Island and Coast Region</b>	20.00	41.00	47.00

Source: Job Bank Wage Report [http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook\\_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/wage-outlook_search-eng.do?reportOption=wage) [Search 3222]

Source: WorkBC

## Working Hours

Full-time dental hygienists usually work a 5-day, 32-40 hour week. Overtime may be necessary on occasion.

Some hygienists work on a part-time schedule or work evenings and weekends.

## 2. Skills, Education and Experience

### ***Skills***

- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Well organized and detail oriented
- Ability to solve problems and make decisions
- Should have a strong back, good eyesight and a high degree of manual dexterity
- Enjoy working with people and as part of a team

### ***Education and Experience***

To work as a dental hygienist in BC you require:

- completion of an accredited two-year diploma or bachelor-level degree program in dental hygiene
- registration with the College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia (CDHBC)

### ***Qualifications***

***This occupation is regulated in British Columbia.***

You must be registered with the **College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia (CDHBC)** in order to work as a Dental Hygienist in BC.

In order to register you require:

- graduation from a Dental Hygiene Program recognized by the College
- Certification by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board
- Graduation from a CHHBC approved Local Anesthesia course and/or eligibility to perform Local Anesthesia in your jurisdiction of practice within the past three years
- Demonstration of current Continuing Competency (CC) credits;
- Completion of the Jurisprudence Education Module
- Possession of professional negligence insurance
- Demonstration of good standing in every jurisdiction in which you are currently or previously registered to practice dental hygiene
- Demonstration of good character
- Authorization for a criminal record
- Submission of a complete registration application form and the applicable fees.

For more information see:

### **College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia (CDHBC)**

- General Information <http://www.cdhbc.com/>
- Registered Dental Hygienists Registration Requirements  
<http://www.cdhbc.com/Registration-Renewal/First-Time-Applicants.aspx>

### **Internationally Trained Dental Hygienist**

In order to be eligible for registration in BC, foreign-trained dental hygienists must successfully complete the **Canadian Performance Exam in Dental Hygiene (CPEDH)**. This College approved exam determines your competence and readiness to practice.

For more information on the **CPEDH Exam** see:

- <http://www.cdhbc.com/Registration-Renewal/Clinical-Examination.aspx>

### 3. Finding Jobs

You'll find job advertisements in local newspapers, trade journals, and electronic sources, as well as through professional association publications.

#### ***Local Newspapers***

You can look at the *Vancouver Sun* & *The Province* at Vancouver Public Library for free. Check the job postings daily and the careers section in the *Vancouver Sun* on Wednesdays and Saturdays and in *The Province* on Sundays.

#### ***Job White Pages***

- Available in print at the Central Library or online at <http://jobfreeway.com/memberdocs/vpl-home.htm>

**NOTE:** You can only access this database from the Central Library or VPL branch libraries. Access is NOT available from home or outside the Library.

#### ***Online Job Postings***

- **Indeed.com**  
[http://ca.indeed.com/advanced\\_search](http://ca.indeed.com/advanced_search)  
Find jobs posted on a multitude of company career sites and job boards
- **UBC Faculty of Dentistry – Job Postings**  
<https://www.dentistry.ubc.ca/professional-posting-services-for-alumni/>
- **Neuvoo.ca**  
<http://neuvoo.ca/en>

#### ***Professional Associations' Career Resources***

- **British Columbia Dental Association – Job Postings**  
<https://bcdental.org/job-postings/>



## ***Identifying the Right Position***

When you browse job advertisements, you'll find a range of different job titles that are relevant.

For dental hygienists look for these related job titles

- registered dental hygienists
- dental nurse
- dental hygiene technician
- community dental hygienist

Source: NOC <https://noc.esdc.gc.ca> [search 3222]

## ***Creating a List of Potential Employers***

You can use directories to produce lists of dentist offices and health care clinics in BC. Contact them directly to find out if they are hiring.

- **Guide to Canadian health care facilities**

Available at the Central Library

362.105 C212ca

- **Reference Canada**

<http://www.vpl.ca/digital-library/reference-canada>

Click on "Start Search" beside Canadian Businesses, then select the "Advanced Search" button. Select both "Keyword/SIC/NAICS" under Business Type and "City" under Geography. In the top search box enter "*dentists*" and click SEARCH. Select the appropriate headings. Lower down, select the Province, choose the cities, and click the "View Results" button.

Available from the VPL Digital Library | Explore our Digital Library page

**NOTE:** You can access this database from a Library computer. If you are using a computer from outside the Library, you will need a Vancouver Public Library card to login to this database. After clicking on the database name, you will be asked to enter your library card number and PIN (usually last four digits of your telephone number).

## 4. Applying for a Job

In Canada, employers usually expect to receive a resume or curriculum vitae and a cover letter. These should identify the position you are applying for and summarize your relevant experience.

Use the library catalogue, <http://vpl.bibliocommons.com/> to find books on writing resumes and cover letters specific to your industry.

To learn about applying for jobs in Canada, use the following guides which are available in print at the Central Library or online:

- **Writing Resumes and Cover Letters**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Writing Resumes and Cover Letters]
- **Getting Canadian Work Experience**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Getting Canadian Work Experience]
- **Networking for Employment**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Networking for Employment]
- **Learn More About Working in BC and Canada**  
Go to <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca>  
[Search Learn More About Working in BC and Canada]

## 5. Getting Help from Industry Sources

### *Industry Associations*

Associations for Dental Hygienists in BC and Canada can provide information and assistance. Registration and fees are required for membership.

- **College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia**  
<http://www.cdhbc.com/>
- **British Columbia Dental Hygienists Association**  
<http://www.bcdha.com/>
- **Canadian Dental Hygienists Association**  
<https://www.cdha.ca/>

***Questions? Please ask the Information Staff in the Central Library,  
Vancouver Public Library or telephone 604-331-3603.***

*Please note that the information in this guide is also available online through the  
Skilled Immigrant InfoCentre website at <http://skilledimmigrants.vpl.ca/>*