

What Did IDA Do For Dentists During COVID-19?



OPEN

A black and white graphic of a rectangular sign with a thick black border and the word 'OPEN' in large, bold, black capital letters centered on a white background. The sign is suspended by two thin lines from a point above it.

Advocated for and prepared dentists to reopen their offices.

Advocated to Reopen Dental Offices

When the Iowa Dental Board (IDB) submitted the Guidelines for the Safe Transition Back to Practice to the governor, they included a joint letter of support from IDA and Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association (IDHA) to demonstrate dental professional unity. On May 6, Governor Reynolds announced that dental offices could reopen on May 8, 10 days earlier than the previous proclamation allowed.

Led the COVID-19 Reopening Task Force

IDA organized and chaired the reopening task force that had representation from IDB, IDHA, UI College of Dentistry, Iowa Department of Public Health, and Delta Dental of Iowa to develop recommendations for reopening dental practices.

Fought to help keep dental offices financially viable.

Iowa Small Business Relief Grants

When dentists were not included in the first round of fund distributions from the Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) grants on April 7-10, IDA wrote a letter to the IEDA and held a call with IEDA staff to discuss this gross oversight. Beginning with the second round of funding on April 23, more than \$2.9 million was awarded to 126 dental offices in 47 Iowa counties.

Legislative Efforts

The Iowa Legislature suspended the 2020 session in March, but that did not stop IDA's legislative work. IDA ensured that Governor Reynolds held true to her promise to continue to fund the hawk-i program despite federal funding decreases. Through our lobbying efforts, we were able to maintain Medicaid reimbursement rates when others providers saw cuts. In addition, IDA supported and helped pass legislation to protect dental offices against COVID-19 related liability.



Iowa Dental Association
666 Grand Avenue, Suite 901
Des Moines, Iowa 50309
515.331.2298
info@iowadental.org

Continued to provide information and resources to keep dentists and office staff up-to-date.



Daily Newsletter to All Dentists and Staff

IDA produced 58 editions of the daily e-newsletter, *COVID-19 Update*, designed to be a single source of information for Iowa dentists. Each day this e-newsletter was sent to all Iowa dentists, hygienists, dental assistants, office managers, and others within our database. Since discontinuing the daily *COVID-19 Update*, IDA members receive the weekly e-newsletter, *IDA Today*.

Online Resources

An entire section of the IDA website is devoted to providing resources for dental offices to help navigate the fluid environment you now practice in. Information on PPE suppliers, FAQs on employment, resources to assist in opening offices, and more is available in one place and accessible to all.

Virtual Townhalls

Keeping members up-to-date on the issues affecting them, their practices, and their patients is a priority for IDA. Virtual Townhalls are one of the ways we keep members informed and more importantly provide a platform to answer questions and engage with leadership, legal experts, and staff.

Virtual District Meetings

Many district dental societies canceled their spring and fall meetings due to COVID-19. IDA worked with leaders from all 10 districts to provide the opportunity to host virtual meetings. Throughout the pandemic, these district meetings have been well attended and allowed dentists to connect with their peers and hear valuable information.

Ensured dentists and staff have the opportunity to gain education on topics related to COVID-19 and CEU opportunities for license renewal.

Online CEUs

When IDEAS20 was canceled IDA moved many of those educational sessions online, including mandatory education, such as the free infection control webinar available to all. This fall, in place of the canceled district meetings, IDA has created the Fall CE Webinar Series. This series includes eight sessions held on Friday afternoons from 1:30 - 2:30 PM. Participants may attend the live or recorded sessions.

Free Webinars on PPP Loans and Practice Recovery

IDA members were given exclusive access to these live and on-demand webinars that provided timely information to help guide them through these new programs.

About IDA:

Representing over 1,800 dentists, the IDA is the largest oral health association in Iowa. More than 80 percent of Iowa's practicing dentists are members of the IDA. The IDA's broad membership throughout the state and across all specialties reflects a unique commitment by dentists to work together to enhance their profession on behalf of their patients and all Iowans. Each member of the IDA is also a member of one of Iowa's 10 district dental societies and the American Dental Association.

