

The Commission on Dental Accreditation serves the public and dental professions by developing and implementing accreditation standards that promote and monitor the continuous quality and improvement of dental education programs.

The Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) held its Winter 2026 meeting virtually on February 5 and 6. CODA met to review accreditation actions, consider policy reports, and address key issues shaping dental education and accreditation. This summary highlights the key reports and major actions.

Finance Updates and 2027 Fees

CODA reviewed the Standing Committee on Finance report and noted that CODA and the ADA signed a four-year Intercompany Memorandum of Understanding and Services Agreement in October 2025 (backdated to begin on January 1, 2025). The agreement expires December 31, 2028.

CODA reviewed and discussed the operational budget and proposed annual fees in 2027. CODA acknowledged the need to monitor annual fees to account for inflation and increases in expenses including strategic plan initiatives, technology, communication, and resources needed to administer the accreditation program and maintain a balanced budget.

- A four percent (4%) increase was approved in annual fees for all disciplines in 2027:
 - \$10,680 for predoctoral dental education programs;
 - \$25,060 for international predoctoral education programs;
 - \$2,690 for dental assisting, dental hygiene, dental therapy, and advanced dental education programs; and
 - \$1,910 for dental laboratory technology programs.
- A four percent (4%) application fee increase was approved for 2027:
 - \$77,110 for predoctoral dental education programs;
 - \$87,640 for international predoctoral education programs; and
 - \$19,290 for allied and advanced education programs.
- The \$50 annual administrative fee per program was maintained for 2027, along with all other fees at the same rates as 2026.

Additionally, CODA approved the 2027 budget proposal for submission to the ADA Board of Trustees.

Update of CODA Meeting Dates and Meeting Format

CODA reviewed the upcoming meeting dates and discussed potential enhancements to CODA's meeting structure. The next meeting will be held on August 6 and 7, 2026. CODA noted that the 2027 meeting dates are to be determined because CODA is evaluating adding a third meeting in its annual cycle. The discussion was prompted by feedback from multiple stakeholder groups who expressed a strong interest in a more timely and responsive accreditation process. CODA emphasized that any adjustment will be carefully considered to uphold the accreditation process while also meeting the evolving needs of the community. Further information will be shared at the Summer 2026 meeting.

Predoctoral

Predoctoral: Update on Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA reviewed the Predoctoral Dental Education Review Committee's report and received an update on the Ad Hoc Committee considering revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Education

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Programs. The proposed revisions were circulated for a second round of public comment in fall 2025 and were discussed during the October 2025 Hearing on Standards, generating a wide range of feedback. CODA asked the Ad Hoc Committee to update the Self-Study Guide to match the proposed standards. This committee met several times in late 2025 and will continue its work in spring 2026 to prepare revisions for future review by the Predoc Review Committee and CODA.

Dental Therapy: Update on Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA also was informed that the Predoctoral Dental Education Review Committee received an update on the Ad Hoc Committee's work to review the Accreditation Standards for Dental Therapy Education Programs. This review included examining the Validity and Reliability Study completed in spring 2025. As directed by CODA at its Summer 2025 meeting, the Ad Hoc Committee began its review of the Standards with an initial meeting in late 2025 to outline its approach and next steps. This committee will continue its work in spring 2026 and will provide a future report to the Review Committee and CODA.

Advanced

Dental Anesthesiology: Circulation of Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA is considering revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Dental Anesthesiology following a request from the American Dental Board of Anesthesiology (ADBA). The proposal would update Standard 3-2 to specify that program directors must be certified by the ADBA, the only dental anesthesiology certifying board recognized by the National Commission on Recognition of Dental Specialties and Certifying Boards. The Dental Anesthesiology Review Committee agreed that the change is appropriate and would not negatively affect programs. CODA recommended circulating the proposed revision for a six-month public comment period, with a hearing at the ADEA Annual Meeting and final review in Summer 2026. A copy of the proposed revisions can be found on [CODA's website under Hearings/ Comments due](#).

Endodontics: Review of Proposed Revision to Standards

CODA received a request to revise Standards 2-3 and 4-8 for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Endodontics, proposing that all faculty be certified endodontists and that programs require a minimum number of surgical cases. After reviewing the request at its Winter 2026 meeting, the Endodontics Review Committee concluded that the proposed changes do not reflect the variations across programs which could be difficult for the programs to implement. CODA determined that no revisions are warranted at this time.

Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology: Circulation of Proposed Revisions to Standards

At its Summer 2025 meeting, CODA approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Committee to consider potential revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology, focusing on digital pathology and Standard 3-5 (active clinical facility supervision). The Ad Hoc Committee met in October 2025 to review the Standards. The committee supported adding "digital/virtual pathology" to Standard 4-2.3 and clarifying Standard 3-5 by specifying that clinical supervision should be provided by an oral and maxillofacial pathologist.

At its Winter 2026 meeting, the Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology Review Committee reviewed and concurred with the Ad Hoc Committee's recommended revisions. CODA adopted this recommendation

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and voted to circulate the proposed revisions to the communities of interest for review and comment for one (1) year with Hearings conducted in conjunction with the March 2026 American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Annual Meeting and the October 2026 American Dental Association (ADA) Annual Session, with comments to be reviewed by the Review Committee and Commission in Winter 2027. A copy of the proposed revisions can be found on [CODA's website under Hearings/ Comments due](#).

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery: Adoption of Proposed Revisions to Standards

In 2024, CODA began reviewing Accreditation Standards related to programs' administrative oversight after several Review Committees noted that existing Standards did not clearly define whether program directors must be physically present at approved educational sites, an issue made more complex by the rise of remote work and the expansion of off campus training locations. As programs increasingly operate at major educational sites where residents spend most or all of their time, CODA recognized the need for consistent, onsite administrative leadership to ensure quality and uniformity across locations. This prompted a multiyear evaluation of discipline-specific Standards and ultimately led to the revisions adopted by CODA at its Winter 2026 meeting for Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMS) programs. The revised Standards—the Accreditation Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery as well as the Accreditation Standards for Clinical Fellowship Training Programs in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery—were supported by public comment and will take effect July 1, 2026, strengthening oversight and ensuring uniform educational quality across all training locations. These revisions can be found on [the Standards page on CODA's website](#).

Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery: Adoption of Trigeminal Nerve Surgery and Disorders Standards

CODA has approved the development of new Accreditation Standards for clinical fellowship training programs in oral and maxillofacial surgery focused on trigeminal nerve surgery and disorders. The process began in 2024 after CODA received a formal request to establish accreditation for this emerging fellowship area. An Ad Hoc Committee reviewed the request and confirmed that trigeminal nerve surgery would constitute a new fellowship within OMS. CODA directed the OMS Review Committee to draft Standards, which were refined in 2025 and circulated for public comment. Feedback supported the proposal. At its Winter 2026 meeting, CODA adopted the new Standards, with implementation set for January 1, 2027. These Standards can be found on [CODA's website](#). Additionally, CODA will solicit for site visitors interested in trigeminal nerve surgery and disorders to review any future applications and participate in future site visits.

Orofacial Pain: Circulation of Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA reviewed the report from the Review Committee on Orofacial Pain Education. The Committee continued its evaluation of proposed revisions to Standard 211 (Clinical Sciences) for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Orofacial Pain, reviewing feedback gathered across multiple hearings and written submissions from 2024–2025. While some supported the revisions, others expressed concern that the language was overly prescriptive and could encourage overtreatment rather than patient-centered care. After determining that additional clarification was needed, CODA circulated the revised language for a six-month comment period, including a hearing in October 2025. At its Winter 2026 meeting, the Committee reviewed further comments and focused on refining Standard 2-11e, ultimately recommending updated language. The Committee recommended that these updated revisions be

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circulated again for an additional six-month review period, with a Hearing conducted in conjunction with the March 2026 American Dental Education Association (ADEA) Annual Session, with comments reviewed by the Committee and Commission at the Summer 2026 meetings. CODA concurred with both recommendations. A copy of the proposed revisions can be found on [CODA's website under Hearings/ Comments due](#).

Pediatric: Adoption of Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA has approved revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Pediatric Dentistry to strengthen expectations related to patient safety. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry requested the update in 2025, recommending clearer language modeled after OMS Standard 4-18. The Pediatric Review Committee reviewed the proposal and determined that Standard 4-20, which addresses management of a contemporary dental practice, was the most appropriate place to incorporate enhanced patient safety language. After refining the language and updating the intent statement and examples of evidence, the Committee circulated the revisions for public comment. CODA voted at its Winter 2026 meeting to adopt the updated Standard 4-20, with implementation on July 1, 2027. These revisions can be found on [the Standards page on CODA's website](#).

Periodontics: Adoption of Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA has approved revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Advanced Dental Education Programs in Periodontics to clarify expectations for administrative oversight at major educational sites. The update stems from CODA's broader consideration of increased remote work and the need for consistent onsite leadership. After evaluating the Periodontics Standards in 2025, the Review Committee recommended to CODA that program directors must provide administrative oversight at any site where residents spend most or all their time. The proposed addition to Standard 2-1 was circulated for public comment, and feedback supported the change. CODA adopted the revision at its Winter 2026 meeting, with implementation on July 1, 2026. These revisions can be found on [the Standards page on CODA's website](#).

Allied

Dental Hygiene: Review of Standard 3-2

The Dental Hygiene Review Committee (DH RC) recommended forming an Ad Hoc Committee to review Standard 3-2 (Program Administrator) to clarify the intent of the Standard, particularly regarding expectations for the Program Administrator's time allocation. The Committee also recommended that this Ad Hoc group be composed of DH RC members, with its findings presented at the Summer 2026 Commission meeting.

Dental Laboratory Technology: Update on Proposed Revisions to Standards

CODA previously directed that the proposed revisions to the Accreditation Standards for Dental Laboratory Technology (DLT) Education Programs be circulated for one year, with Hearings held in conjunction with the October 2025 ADA Annual Meeting and the March 2026 ADEA Annual Session. All comments are scheduled for review in Summer 2026. At its Winter 2026 meeting, CODA concurred with the DLT Review Committee's recommendation that the Ad Hoc Committee on Dental Laboratory

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Technology Standards, given its central role in developing the proposed revisions, review the comments and provide input ahead of the Summer 2026 meetings.

New Business

AGD Request for CODA Board Representation

CODA reviewed and discussed a request from the Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) seeking to add an AGD representative to the CODA Board of Commissioners. CODA directed that a response be communicated to the AGD requesting additional information from the AGD about how its request aligns with the mission and scope of CODA. An update on this matter will be considered by CODA at its Summer 2026 meeting.

Request to Consider U.S. Dental School International Sites

CODA reviewed letters received in January from six dental deans requesting a revision to CODA policy which would permit US dental programs to offer accredited international program sites. Through the discussion, CODA observed the importance of understanding the intent, scope, and implications of any proposed policy changes to international program sites. CODA took two actions: 1) a response will be communicated to these deans, requesting clarity about the goals of their requests, and at its Summer 2026 meeting, CODA will consider additional information received; and 2) the Standing Committee on Quality Assurance and Strategic Planning will review the deans' letters and report back to CODA at its Summer 2026 meeting.

Request to Consider Standardized Leave Policy

CODA reviewed a request from an advanced dental education program resident to modify CODA Accreditation Standards to require a standardized leave policy. During discussion, Commissioners reflected on the importance of understanding how a standardized leave policy intersects with educational requirements, operations, and applicable laws. CODA took two actions: 1) a response will be communicated to the resident summarizing CODA's discussion of this topic at its Winter 2026 meeting; and 2) each Review Committee will consider this topic as it relates to their respective accreditation standards and report back to CODA at its Summer 2026 meeting.