COMMISSION ON DENTAL ACCREDITATION
APPLICATION SUBMISSION PROCESS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Please note that the receipt of an application indicates that the institution has entered into the accreditation process; **however, it does not mean that the program is accredited by the Commission.**

To apply as a new program, there are two application pathways. One application pathway exists for *developing* programs and the other application pathway exists for *fully operational* programs. Please review the Commission's Evaluation and Operational Policies and Procedures manual for details on the two application pathways, and contact the Commission office with questions.

The decision to grant or deny a developing program the status of "initial accreditation" can be made only by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, based on a report written as a result of a pre-enrollment initial accreditation site visit. Further, the decision to grant or deny a fully operational program the accreditation status of "approval with reporting requirements" or "approval without reporting requirements," can be made only by the Commission on Dental Accreditation, based on a report written as a result of a comprehensive accreditation site visit.

Q: How can I obtain an application?
A: Please visit the Staff Directory at the following link and e-mail the discipline specific manager to request an application and fee payment sheet.
https://coda.ada.org/en/accreditation/coda-membership/coda-staff

Q: When do I submit payment for the application?
A: The application payment is submitted **just prior to upload of the application**. At the time the program is ready to upload the application, the program must submit a Signed Verification Page and payment. Payment must not be submitted in advance of the application. Both the payment and application must be received to initiate the review process.

Q: I've submitted my application through the CODA Electronic Accreditation Portal. What happens next and when will I hear from CODA?
A: After an application is successfully submitted through the Commission's electronic portal, the following steps will occur.
1. Upon successful upload of an application to the Commission's electronic portal, you will see a message in the portal that your application has been submitted. **Once you have arrived at this upload confirmation, please be patient. All programs will be treated equitably and applications will be processed in the order in which they are received.**
2. CODA staff will conduct a preliminary review to ensure the application conforms to the Commission's required format, electronic submission guidelines, and Privacy and Data Security requirements and that it includes a response for each required area. If critical areas (for example, unqualified program director, institutional accreditor, missing elements, etc.) are incomplete or potentially deficient, the program may be advised that the application must be supplemented prior to continued review. Typically, this step

takes 30 days.

3. Staff will also verify that the non-refundable application fee has been received by CODA's **accounting office** (instructions noted on application fee payment sheet provided by staff). This fee must be received in order to proceed with processing the application. The application fees are posted on the CODA web site at this link: https://coda.ada.org/en/accreditation/fees

4. Following preliminary staff review for completeness, the program will receive an acknowledgment letter describing next steps. You may receive this letter approximately 30 days from the time of submission. It is Commission policy that the program representatives have the opportunity to screen site visitors who may have a conflict of interest. The discipline-specific site visitor screening list, the Commission's *Policy on Conflict of Interest* and the *Policy on Site Visitors* will be attached to the acknowledgement letter from Commission staff. The program will have two (2) weeks from the date of the letter to return the screening lists via e-mail. Failure to return the screening list will delay application review.

5. Once all screening lists have been returned, CODA staff will identify a reviewer(s) who has not been screened off by the program per Commission policy, and who is also free from any real or perceived conflict(s) of interest. The initial reviewer(s) is a Commission site visitor (peer reviewer) in the respective discipline. The Commission makes every effort to have the initial reviewer serve as one of the site visitors on the site visit, should a site visit be conducted. This process of identifying a reviewer typically takes 30 days, and is subject to factors such as the availability of individuals to conduct an application review.

6. Upon identification of a reviewer(s), they are provided access to the application through the electronic portal. Generally, the reviewer(s) receives 60 days to complete their review of the application to determine whether the program, as proposed, satisfies the Criteria for Consideration of an Application for Accreditation and appears to have the potential to meet the respective Accreditation Standards. The application for accreditation of a dental or dental-related program is considered complete when the program has demonstrated the potential to meet the Accreditation Standards and when the Criteria for Consideration of an Application for Accreditation, as applicable, have been adequately addressed and documented in the application. **The application review timeframe could be longer depending on a number of circumstances, including but not limited to the quality of the application, sufficient development based on the Criteria for Consideration of an Application for Accreditation and the potential to meet the respective Accreditation Standards, and need for additional information.**

7. If it is determined that the Criteria for Consideration of An Application for Accreditation have been sufficiently addressed and documented, and that the program, as proposed, appears to have the potential to meet the Accreditation Standards, a site visit is scheduled four (4) to seven (7) months following completion of the application review. Substantive changes to the proposed program that occur between the date of submission of the application and scheduled site visit, if one is warranted, must be reported to the Commission immediately, will require further review, and may result in a delay of the site visit.

8. The preliminary draft of the site visit report will be provided to the program following the site visit. The visiting committee's report, and institution's response, will be transmitted

to the discipline-specific Review Committee and Commission for consideration. The Commission will take action on the accreditation status at its next regular meeting (Summer or Winter) and the final site visit report will be transmitted to the program within 30 days of the Commission's meeting.

Provided that the application is in order, the first opportunity for the Commission to consider the program is generally 12 to 18 months following the Commission's formal acknowledgment of receipt of the application, initiation of the review process, and following an initial site visit.

Q: Can you tell me if my application is complete/looks like it will be accredited?
A: While CODA staff cannot advise programs on the information to be submitted in the application or whether the application is sufficient, we do recommend that the program director ensure that the application is as detailed as possible to demonstrate the potential to comply with Accreditation Standards. In addition, a reviewer of the application should be able to determine that the Criteria for Consideration of An Application for Accreditation as noted in the application have been adequately documented.

Q. What happens if my application is missing information or it appears my program is not sufficiently developed? Must I submit a new application?
A: If the reviewer(s) determines that the program is not ready for a site visit, the institution will be requested to submit additional documentation to supplement the areas of the application that are deficient. This supplemental documentation will again be reviewed by the Commission site visitor(s) for compliance with the Commission's Criteria for Consideration of An Application for Accreditation and the demonstration of potential to meet the Accreditation Standards.

Q: How much time will we have to submit additional information if the reviewer(s) request it?
A: The review of an application will be terminated if an institution fails to respond to the Commission's requests for information for a period of six (6) months. In this case, the institution will be notified that the application process has been terminated. If the institution wishes to begin the process again, a new application and application fee must be submitted.

Q: What if the Standards have changed, or will change, since the time my application was submitted?
A: Accreditation standards may be revised and implemented based on the Commission's ongoing review of its Standards in response to changes in the educational and professional communities, or through assessment of validity and reliability of the Standards. When Accreditation Standards are revised during the period in which the program has entered into the accreditation application process, the program will be responsible for demonstrating compliance with the new standards. Should a site visit be scheduled, the program would be evaluated under the Accreditation Standards in place *at the time of the visit*. The program may be required to submit an addendum that addresses revised Standards.

Q: Can we withdraw our application?
A: Yes. Because accreditation is voluntary, a program may withdraw its application for accreditation at any time prior to the Commission taking action regarding an accreditation status.   Such requests must be submitted in writing by the institution's chief executive officer. If a site visit has occurred, the request must be submitted prior to the Commission meeting at which time the application's site visit report will be considered.

Q: Can you include other staff/faculty/administrators on communications from CODA and/or access to the electronic portal?
A: CODA will only correspond with the program director, Chief Academic Officer and Chief Executive Officer with regard to confidential accreditation matters. For security reasons, the program director, only, will be provided access to the electronic portal.

To keep informed regarding CODA news and updates, please bookmark the Commission's website: https://coda.ada.org/en