

Testimony before House Health & Human Services Committee
HB 2453 – Dentist & Hygienist Compact
Mike O’Neal on behalf of the Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO)
In-person testimony in SUPPORT

Jan. 25, 2024

Chairwoman Landwehr and members of the Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to appear in support of HB 2453, the Dentist & Hygienist Compact. I represent ADSO, the Association of Dental Support organizations. ADSO is a non-profit organization that supports its member dental support organizations to provide business and operational support services to dentists and dental clinics so that they can focus on patient care and expand access to quality dental care. DSO’s register with the Kansas Dental Board as dental office administrative services providers. Think of them as providing a broad array of non-clinical dental office support, including access to state-of-the-art equipment, continuing educational offerings, peer-to-peer networking, HR, compliance assistance, billing and insurance, etc. Dentists enjoy the services of DSOs because it allows them to spend more of their time practicing their profession.

ADSO has a particular focus on access to dental care and removing statutory and regulatory barriers to dental care access. Unfortunately, access to dental care is lacking in too many states – particularly in economically disadvantaged and rural areas. This is particularly true in Kansas, which is in the bottom quartile nationally: 39th, according to RTI (Research Triangle Institute) data. We currently have 94 counties out of 105 that are underserved as defined by the Health Resources and Services Administration measure of 5,000 patients to 1 dentist ratio. Nine of those counties are in the eastern half of the state and six border Topeka.

Speaking of Topeka, the city has experienced a double digit (19%) decline in the number of dental offices over a recent 10-year period (2011-2021, according to RTI data).

ADSO has been one of the organizations, in addition to state & national dental and hygienist organizations, that has been involved with the Council of State Government's efforts to address the issue of access to care. The DDH Compact is a project funded by the Department of Defense (DoD) as it also assists military families on the move. We have with us today by Matt Shafer with CSG who has graciously made himself available to us to explain and support their Dentist and Hygienist Compact, which ADSO had introduced as HB 2453.

I have attached a 2-pager put together by CSG's National Center for interstate Compacts that provides a handy summary. The Compact would provide an additional resource to help address the critical need for improved access to dental care in Kansas.

Your Chair was kind enough to have an informational hearing last session on this bill. In visiting with Kevin Robertson with the Kansas Dental Association and Travis Lowe, representing the Kansas Dental Hygienists Association, it was determined that these organizations are very interested in the Compact but wanted additional time for their respective organizations to review and learn more about the Compact's provisions. Accordingly, we agreed to put off a formal hearing and action on the Compact until this session. We are now ready to get this compact considered and passed.

The Compact is similar in form and function to the eight occupational licensing compacts that Kansas is already a member of. Here's the list of compacts that Kansas has passed:

- Audiology/Speech Language Pathology
- Counseling
- EMS
- Nursing
- PsyPact
- Physical Therapy
- Teaching
- Medicine

I'm happy to stand for questions, but your best source for answers today on the mechanics of the proposed compact legislation will be Matt with CSG. Thanks, again.

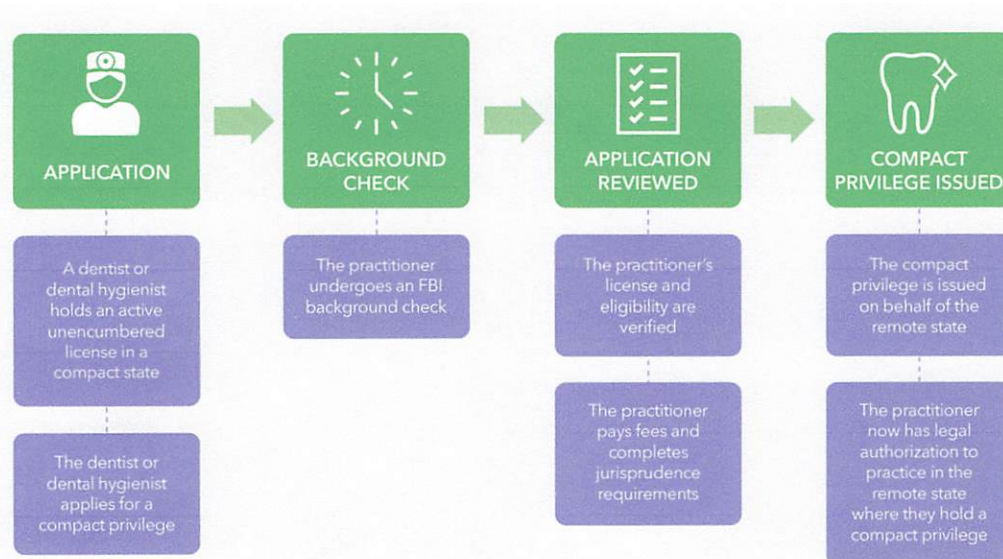


DDH Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact

This project is funded by the Department of Defense

What is the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact?

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact is an interstate occupational licensure compact. Interstate compacts are constitutionally authorized, legally binding, legislatively enacted contracts among states. This compact enables licensed dentists and dental hygienists to practice in all states participating in the compact, as opposed to them obtaining an individual license in every state they want to practice.



What other professions have an interstate compact?

Interstate Medical Licensure Compact (IMLC)

Nurse Licensure Compact (NLC) and Advanced Practice Nurse Compact (APRN Compact)

Emergency Medical Service Officials Licensure Compact (EMS Compact)

Physical Therapists Licensure Compact (PT Compact)

Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact (PSYPACT)

Audiology and Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC)

Occupational Therapy Interstate Licensure Compact (OT Compact)

Counseling Interstate Licensure Compact



National Center for Interstate Compacts
THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS

Who can use the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact?

A dentist or dental hygienist is eligible to participate in the compact if they have:

- An active, unencumbered license in any state participating in the compact.
- Passed the National Board Examination or other exam accepted by the compact commission.
- Completed a clinical assessment.
- Graduated from an education program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation.
- No disqualifying criminal history.

BENEFITS OF THE DENTIST AND DENTAL HYGIENIST COMPACT FOR LICENSEES:



Facilitates multistate practice.



Enhances license portability when changing state of residence.



Expands employment opportunities into new markets.



Improves continuity of care when patients or providers relocate.



Supports relocating military spouses.



Reduces burden of maintaining multiple licenses.

BENEFITS OF THE DENTIST AND DENTAL HYGIENIST COMPACT FOR REGULATORS:



Reduces administrative burden.



Facilitates practitioner mobility during public health emergencies.



Ensures retention of jurisdiction over practitioners working in their state.



Expands state licensure board cooperation on investigations and disputes.



Enhances public safety through shared data system.

BENEFITS OF THE DENTIST AND DENTAL HYGIENIST COMPACT FOR STATES:



Promotes workforce development and strengthens labor markets.



Expands consumer access to highly qualified practitioners.



Preserves state sovereignty.



Increases collaboration among states.

What's Next?

The Council of State Governments (CSG) has facilitated the development of the Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact model legislation. This legislation has been finalized for introduction during 2023 legislative sessions. Each state must enact the model legislation to join the compact. Supporters of the compact can contact the state chapter or national office of their professional membership association and state legislature to advocate for the interstate compact.

To get involved or learn about advocating for the interstate compact, please visit ddhcompact.org.