

FDA Radiography Training Program FAQ's

What is the new FDA Radiography Training Program?

It is a nine-module, online training program combining interactive study with in-office practical radiography testing.

How does the new program work?

The assistant's dentist will serve as the Supervising Dentist for the training. The Supervising Dentist must first create an online account and complete a short tutorial on how to administer the radiography training to receive their Supervising Dentist ID code. Once received, the dentist or practice manager can purchase course vouchers for the assistant(s) who will be taking the radiography training.

Dental assistants will then create their own account during the sign-up process, input the Supervising Dentist ID code provided them by their dentist or via an email from the online learning management system. This code "links" the assistant to the Supervising Dentist, allowing the dentist or practice manager to track the assistant's progress through a management dashboard.

In larger practices that employ a practice manager, he/she can create an account and manage the dentists and assistants through the certification process. **NOTE: Dentists and assistants must still first create accounts before they can be managed.** Practice managers can assign assistants to a dentist in the practice, move the assistant to a different dentist, and remove the assistant from the program. If the assistant has already taken the exam and achieved a score of 80% or better, the assistant/student **cannot** be removed and the voucher cannot be added back to the account.

Finally, dentists will supervise the assistant performing one acceptable full-mouth series of images (including four bitewings) with a maximum of five retakes. Dentists will then print a certificate of completion from their management dashboard once an assistant successfully passes the training.

The assistant will then apply to the Florida Board of Dentistry for his/her Radiography Certification. It is only after receiving the state certification that the assistant is allowed to take radiographs under general supervision. The assistant must have worked for the dentist for three continuous months to receive his/her on-the-job radiography training.

How much does it cost to purchase the FDA Radiography Training Program?

FDA members may purchase the program for \$285 per assistant, which is affordably priced compared to in-classroom courses. The nonmember price is \$385. The online system will automatically identify FDA members and assign the member price.

Can an assistant buy her own course voucher?

No. Only dentists can purchase course vouchers. It's up to the Supervising Dentist whether the assistant reimburses the practice for the cost of the training.

How long will my assistant have to complete the program?

We encourage dental assistants to complete the training program within six months of enrollment.

Who is responsible for the assistant's training?

The Supervising Dentist is legally responsible for the training of the dental assistant.

How closely does the dentist have to supervise when the assistant is taking the radiographs?

The Supervising Dentist must be in the same room watching the assistant the entire time radiographs are being taken and must evaluate the assistant's technique. The assistant is not legally allowed to take radiographs under general supervision until the assistant receives a certificate from the Florida Board of Dentistry.

Can someone other than the dentist train the assistant?

The dentist may have a registered dental assistant or registered dental hygienist assist with parts of the training, however, the dentist MUST supervise the assistant taking the radiographs and final exam.

Is there an age requirement for taking the training?

Yes. Florida regulations prohibit a minor from operating radiation equipment. Therefore, anyone under the age of 18 cannot be trained using the FDA Radiography Training Program.

Does the radiography training program cover digital X-rays?

Yes, digital X-rays are included in the training, as well as panoramic and cephalometric.

What if my office only has digital X-ray equipment?

In order to complete the program and be considered trained according to state law, ALL assistants must demonstrate the ability to take the requested radiographs. ALL assistants must complete one full-mouth series with bitewings. If you do not have the equipment to take them, you must make arrangements with a local general dentist to use their equipment for this purpose.

My assistant left the practice before completing the training. Can I transfer the course voucher to another assistant?

Yes. The Supervising Dentist has the ability to remove an assistant from the training program provided that the assistant has not yet completed the online exam. Once removed, that assistant's voucher is automatically added back to your unused voucher library and can be used to train a new assistant.

Can course vouchers be refunded?

Yes. The Supervising Dentist has the ability to request a refund of purchased but unused course vouchers. Supervising Dentists must contact Lywanda Tucker at the Florida Dental Association by calling 850-350-7143 to request the refund. Or email her at ltucker@floridadental.org with the refund request.

What happens if my assistant fails the exam? Can my assistant just retake the test?

Yes. An assistant has unlimited tries to pass the exam. However, if the assistant continues to fail the exam, the doctor has the option to remove the assistant from the program, recoup the voucher, and assign it to a different assistant.

What happens if my assistant loses her Certificate of Completion?

As the Supervising Dentist, you have the ability to print off a new certificate from your account for you to sign and give to the assistant.

In addition, the dental assistant has the ability to print off an unsigned copy of the certificate that states his/her completion date of the training.