

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

**SESSION LAW 2006-235
SENATE BILL 1487**

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE NORTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF DENTAL EXAMINERS TO ACCEPT, IN ADDITION TO EXAMINATIONS CONDUCTED BY THE BOARD, THE RESULTS OF OTHER BOARD-APPROVED REGIONAL OR NATIONAL INDEPENDENT THIRD-PARTY CLINICAL EXAMINATIONS OF APPLICANTS SEEKING A LICENSE TO PRACTICE AS A DENTAL HYGIENIST, AND AUTHORIZING THE BOARD TO CHARGE THE ACTUAL COST OF THE THIRD-PARTY TESTING SERVICE, AS RECOMMENDED BY THE JOINT LEGISLATIVE ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 90-223(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) The Board is authorized and empowered to:

- (1) Conduct examinations for licensure,
- (2) Issue licenses and provisional licenses,
- (3) Issue annual renewal certificates, ~~and~~
- (4) Renew expired ~~licenses~~, licenses, and
- (5) Contract with a regional or national testing agency to conduct clinical examinations. Prior to entering a contract with a regional or national testing agency, the Board shall evaluate the agency based on the following criteria:
 - a. The number of states that recognize the results of the testing agency's examination.
 - b. The cost to the applicant of the examination.
 - c. How long the testing agency has been conducting examinations.
 - d. Whether the examination includes procedures performed on human subjects as part of the assessment of clinical competencies.

SECTION 2. G.S. 90-224 reads as rewritten:

"§ 90-224. Examination.

(a) The applicant for licensure must be of good moral character, have graduated from an accredited high school or hold a high school equivalency certificate duly issued by a governmental agency or unit authorized to issue the same, and be a graduate of a program of dental hygiene in a school or college approved by the Board.

(b) The Board shall have the authority to establish in its rules and regulations:

- (1) The form of application;

- (2) The time and place of examination;
- (3) The type of examination;
- (4) The qualifications for passing the examination.

(b1) The Board also may grant a license to an applicant who is found to have passed an examination given by a Board-approved regional or national dental hygiene testing agency, provided that the Board deems the regional or national examination to be substantially equivalent to or an improvement upon the examination given by the Board, and the applicant meets the other qualifications set forth in this Article.

(c) The Department of Justice may provide a criminal record check to the Board for a person who has applied for a new or renewal license through the Board. The Board shall provide to the Department of Justice, along with the request, the fingerprints of the applicant, any additional information required by the Department of Justice, and a form signed by the applicant consenting to the check of the criminal record and to the use of the fingerprints and other identifying information required by the State or national repositories. The applicant's fingerprints shall be forwarded to the State Bureau of Investigation for a search of the State's criminal history record file, and the State Bureau of Investigation shall forward a set of the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for a national criminal history check. The Board shall keep all information pursuant to this subsection privileged, in accordance with applicable State law and federal guidelines, and the information shall be confidential and shall not be a public record under Chapter 132 of the General Statutes.

The Department of Justice may charge each applicant a fee for conducting the checks of criminal history records authorized by this subsection."

SECTION 3. G.S. 90-232 reads as rewritten:

"§ 90-232. Fees.

(a) In order to provide the means of carrying out and enforcing the provisions of this Article and the duties devolving upon the North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners, it is authorized to charge and collect fees established by its rules not exceeding the following:

- (1) Each applicant for examination\$350.00
- (2) Each renewal certificate, which fee shall be annually fixed by the Board and not later than November 30 of each year it shall give written notice of the amount of the renewal fee to each dental hygienist licensed to practice in this State by mailing such notice to the last address of record with the Board of each such dental hygienist250.00
- (3) Each restoration of license.....150.00
- (4) Each provisional license150.00
- (5) Each certificate of license to a resident dental hygienist desiring to change to another state or territory50.00
- (6) Annual fee to be paid upon license renewal to assist in funding programs for impaired dental hygienists.....80.00
- (7) Each license by credentials..... 1,500.

(b) In all instances where the Board uses the services of a regional or national testing agency for preparation, administration, or grading of examinations, the Board may require applicants to pay the actual cost of the testing agency in lieu of the fee authorized in subdivision (a)(1) of this section.

(c) In no event may the annual fee imposed on dental hygienists to fund the impaired dental hygienists program exceed the annual fee imposed on dentists to fund the impaired dentist program. All fees shall be payable in advance to the Board and shall be disposed of by the Board in the discharge of its duties under this Article."

SECTION 4. The North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners shall continue to conduct clinical examinations for applicants seeking a license to practice dental hygiene until at least September 30, 2007. No applicant for a dental hygiene license shall be required to take a Board-approved regional or national independent third-party clinical examination prior to September 30, 2007.

SECTION 5. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, the North Carolina State Board of Dental Examiners may accept any application for the dental hygiene clinical examination to be conducted on June 8, 2006, if the application was received on or before March 31, 2006.

SECTION 6. This act becomes effective July 1, 2006.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 20th day of July, 2006.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Michael F. Easley
Governor

Approved 2:06 p.m. this 13th day of August, 2006