



New Dental School Graduates Attend Licensing Day

The newest graduates of the 4 Texas dental schools had the opportunity to become licensed Texas dentists at the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners (TSBDE) 2026 Licensing Expo on June 30 in Austin.

The event allowed onsite application processing and approval by TSBDE staff. The Licensing Day event was sponsored by TDA Insurance Services and MedPro. Members from Capital Area Dental Society and TDA staff members were also onsite very early that day to welcome new licensees.



Watch the official Licensing Day 2026 recap video on the TDA PERKS YouTube channel and see some of the best moments from the day: <https://tinyurl.com/TSBDE-LicensingDay>.

Insurance Update: Fighting Back Against Downcoded Claims

Downcoding is one of the most common and costly insurance problems facing Texas dentists. It occurs when a payer substitutes a lower procedure code for the one you submitted, paying you less than the service you performed and documented. A properly documented multisurface restoration, for example, gets reimbursed at the single-surface rate. The payer is not questioning your clinical judgment; it is cutting its payment by reclassifying your work.

The ADA and TDA both oppose this practice. When a claim is downcoded, the explanation of benefits should clearly distinguish between the code you submitted and the code the plan used to calculate payment. Without that transparency, patients may wrongly question your billing practices rather than their insurer’s payment policies.

If a claim comes back downcoded, appeal it. Submit your clinical documentation along with any plan language supporting the code you originally billed. The ADA provides appeal letter templates, documentation checklists, and guidance for navigating multiple levels of review. ADA members can also contact the Third-Party Payer Concierge for one-on-one assistance at dentalbenefits@ada.org. For a fuller explanation of how downcoding works, read Dear ADA: Downcoding.

TDA is taking this fight to the Capitol. In the 2027 legislative session, TDA will seek legislation limiting state-regulated dental insurers from bundling claims or changing a dentist’s submitted procedure codes unless the carrier first conducts a professional review of the supporting clinical documentation and determines the original coding was incorrect. What you document should be what gets paid.



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