

# Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF) Labor Market Analysis: San Diego County

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May 2018

## Summary

The following list summarizes findings from the labor market analysis below for *Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF)*:

- Expanded Functions Dental Assistants (or EFDAs) are an important part of dental practices. Their duties include patient care and administrative work. Depending on the state, EFDAs may have other titles, such as Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF) or Expanded Duty Dental Assistants (EDDA). In California, the title used is Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF).
- Depending on the circumstance, Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions can be referred to as “RDAEF” or “RDAEF2.” RDAEFs licensed on or before January 1, 2010 are referred to as RDAEF. Those licensed after January 1, 2010 are referred to as RDAEF2. This differentiation is related to the differences in scope of practice for each license.
- Between 2016 and 2017, there was an average of one online job posting per year for jobs with the keywords “*Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions*” or “RDAEF” in San Diego County. There is a lack of online job postings for this occupation due to the common practice of promoting from within the dental practice; once a dental assistant is certified as an RDAEF, the employer makes compensation or salary adjustments as a result.
- A Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions earns median hourly earnings of \$27.38, which is higher than a regular Dental Assistant (\$19.69) and the Self-Sufficiency Standard (\$13.09) for a single adult in San Diego County.
- According to Dental Board of California, 11 schools are certified to provide RDAEF courses in California: University of California - Los Angeles, Loma Linda University, Howard Healthcare Academy, J Productions Dental, University of the Pacific, Dental Career Institute, Expanded Functions Dental Assistant Association, The Foundation for Allied Dental Education Inc., Central California Dental Academy, Gold Coast Dental Academy and Dental Specialties Institute Inc.

- Between 2016 and 2017, the number of licensed and active RDAEFs increased by 53 licenses or four percent.
- Between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2017, the only employer that posted an online job posting in San Diego County for this occupation was Alpine Dentistry.

## Introduction

This report provides labor market information in San Diego County for the job title, *Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF)*. RDAEF is a related job title for the following Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) code:

**Dental Assistants (SOC 31-9091):** Assist dentist, set up equipment, prepare patient for treatment, and keep records. Sample reported job titles include:

- Surgical Dental Assistant
- Registered Dental Assistant (RDA)
- Orthodontic Assistant (Ortho Assistant)
- Dental Assistant (DA)
- Certified Dental Assistant (CDA)
- Orthodontic Technician
- Oral Surgery Assistant
- Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA)
- Expanded Duty Dental Assistant (EDDA)
- Certified Registered Dental Assistant

Expanded Functions Dental Assistants (or EFDAs) are an important part of dental practices. According to PayScale Inc., “expanded functions dental assistants prepare the treatment rooms or operating rooms before procedures. After reviewing patient records, they help the patients feel comfortable and often are responsible for taking and developing x-rays. During oral surgery and routine checkups, a RDAEF gives technical assistance to the dentist, such as applying anesthesia or pain medication. Patient interaction may include reviewing dental history, addressing concerns, suggesting treatments, and convincing patients of the importance of follow-up appointments. After an appointment, the RDAEF is responsible for restocking supplies, cleaning up and sanitizing the room, and preparing it for the next patient. It is important for expanded functions dental assistants to be familiar with and comply with OSHA, CDC, and HIPPA regulations.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Definition of Expanded Function Dental Assistant and Registered Dental Assistant Expanded Function. [payscale.com/research/US/Job=Expanded\\_Functions\\_Dental\\_Assistant\\_\(EFDA\)/Hourly\\_Rate](https://payscale.com/research/US/Job=Expanded_Functions_Dental_Assistant_(EFDA)/Hourly_Rate).

Depending on the state, EFDAs may have other titles, such as Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF) or Expanded Duty Dental Assistants (EDDA), or they may have one or more levels of certification for Expanded Functions Dental Assistants.<sup>2</sup> For this report, job titles *Expanded Functions Dental Assistant (EFDA)* and *Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (RDAEF)* will be considered one and the same and referred to as a RDAEF.

Depending on the circumstance, Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions can be referred to as “RDAEF” or “RDAEF2.” RDAEFs licensed on or before January 1, 2010 are referred to as “RDAEF.” Those assistants who are licensed after January 1, 2010 are referred to as “RDAEF2.” This differentiation is related to the differences in scope of practice for each license.”<sup>3</sup>

## Projected Occupational Demand

Typically, labor market demand for an occupation can be analyzed if the occupation has a code within the Standard Occupational Classification system. Because there is no SOC code associated with the RDAEF job title, no projected occupational demand was provided in this report. However, labor market data for the general occupational title, Dental Assistants (SOC 31-9091), can be found on the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) website, [coeccc.net](http://coeccc.net).

## Online Job Postings

Between 2016 and 2017, there was an average of **one** online job posting per year for jobs with the keywords “*Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions*” or “RDAEF” in San Diego County (Exhibit 1). There is a lack of job postings due to the common practice of promoting from within the dental practice; once a dental assistant is certified as an RDAEF, the employer makes compensation or salary adjustments as a result. The adjustments may be gradual, depending on the level of the dental assistant and when he/she becomes certified. Each dental practice may vary, and pay decisions are ultimately up to the dentist.

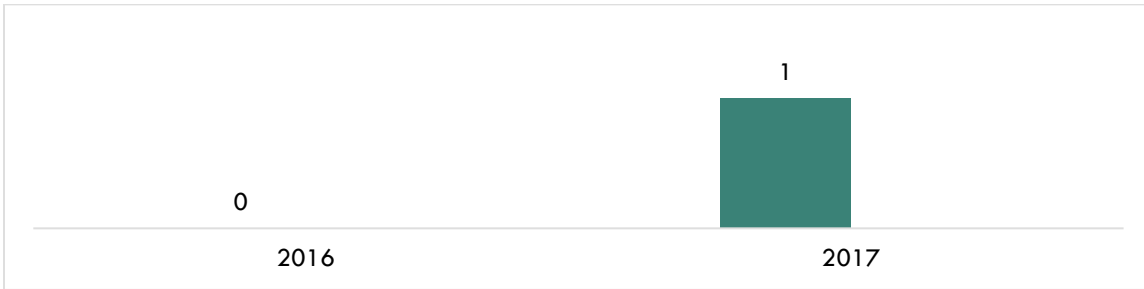
For example, a Dental Assitant was paid \$19.00 an hour before being certified as an RDAEF. He/she becomes certified as an RDAEF and the pay for that title is \$34.00 at the practice he/she works at. The dentist can choose to increase the wage by half of that pay difference which is \$7.50 ( $\$34.00 - \$19.00 = \$15.00 / 2 = \$7.50$ ) and complete the wage increase to \$34.00 once the recently certified RDAEF no longer requires supervision from the dentist.

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<sup>2</sup> Definition of Expanded Functions Dental Assistant and Registered Dental Assistant Expanded Function. [payscale.com/research/US/Job=Expanded\\_Functions\\_Dental\\_Assistant\\_\(EFDA\)/Hourly\\_Rate](https://payscale.com/research/US/Job=Expanded_Functions_Dental_Assistant_(EFDA)/Hourly_Rate).

<sup>3</sup> Difference between RDAEF and RDAEF2 titles. [efdaaservices.com/what-i-need-to-know](http://efdaaservices.com/what-i-need-to-know).

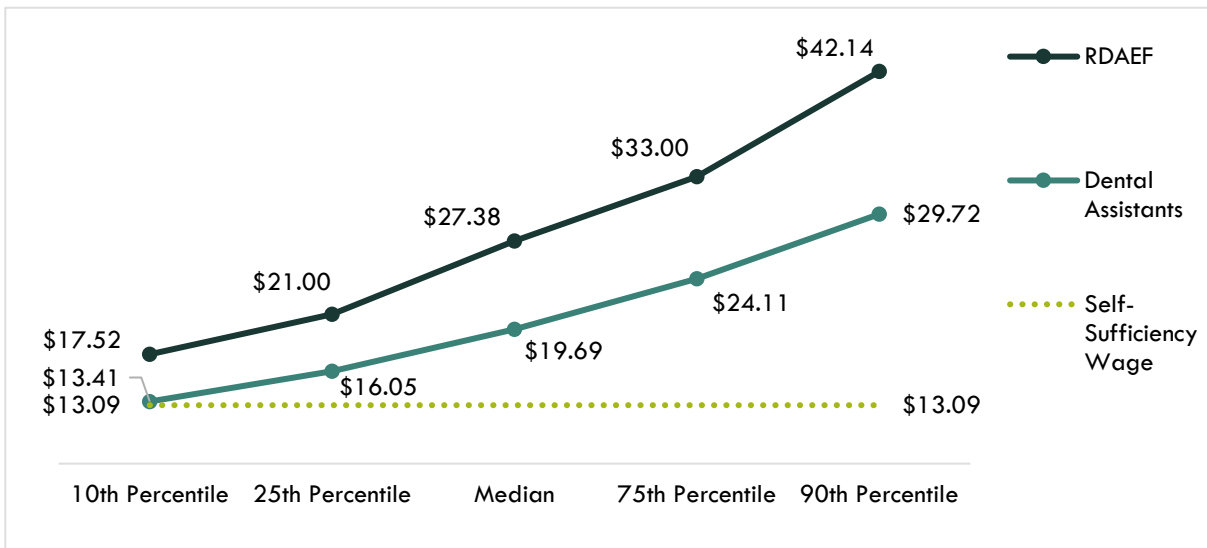
**Exhibit 1: Number of Online Job Postings with Keyword “Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions” or “RDAEF” in San Diego County (2016-2017)<sup>4</sup>**



## Earnings

A Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions earns median hourly earnings of \$27.38, which is higher than a regular Dental Assistant (\$19.69) and the Self-Sufficiency Standard (\$13.09) for a single adult in San Diego County (Exhibit 2).<sup>5</sup>

**Exhibit 2: Hourly Earnings for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions and Dental Assistants in San Diego County<sup>6</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> Occupational Deep Dive. Burning Glass Technologies. San Diego, CA. Full years 2016-2017.

<sup>5</sup> The self-sufficient wage in San Diego for one adult is \$13.09 ([insightccd.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california](https://insightccd.org/tools-metrics/self-sufficiency-standard-tool-for-california)).

<sup>6</sup> Registered Dental Assistant Expanded Functions in San Diego, California Salary ([payscale.com/research/US/Job=Dental\\_Assistant%2C\\_Registered\\_Expanded\\_Function\\_\(RDAEF\)/Hourly\\_Rate/e90e746c/San-Diego-CA](https://payscale.com/research/US/Job=Dental_Assistant%2C_Registered_Expanded_Function_(RDAEF)/Hourly_Rate/e90e746c/San-Diego-CA)). EMSI. San Diego (6073). 2018.02 Class of Worker. QCEW + Non-QCEW + Self-Employed. 2017-2022.

## Educational Supply

Educational supply for an occupation can be estimated by analyzing the number of related program completers/graduates/awards in San Diego County. According to the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office Management Information System (MIS) Data Mart, there are no TOP codes associated with the job title, *Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions*; however, there are two Taxonomy of Programs (TOP) codes associated with the general occupation, Dental Assistants: 124000 Dental Occupations and 124010 Dental Assistant. Educational supply data for the general occupational title, Dental Assistants (SOC 31-9091), can be found on the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) website, [coeccc.net](http://coeccc.net).

To understand labor market supply for RDAEFs, this report analyzes data from the Dental Board of California. To obtain the RDAEF certification, completion of an RDAEF course through a certified school **and** passing of a state written and practical/clinical examination in selected procedures determined by the Dental Board are required. Dental Board of California tracks RDAEF applications by applications issued, applications received and applications approved (Exhibit 3). Current fees to apply for the RDAEF written and practical/clinical exam with the Dental Board is \$620.00.<sup>7</sup>

### Exhibit 3a: Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Certificate Process for 2017<sup>8</sup>

Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Applications Issued by Month (2017)												Totals
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
9	6	4	1	3	14	12	9	2	54	4	5	<b>123</b>

Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Applications Received by Month (2017)												Totals
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
0	0	0	9	34	18	1	17	5	3	0	0	<b>87</b>

Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Applications Approved by Month (2017)												Totals
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
9	6	4	1	3	14	16	11	2	31	2	3	<b>102</b>

<sup>7</sup> RDAEF application cost. [dbc.ca.gov/formspubs/app\\_aef.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/formspubs/app_aef.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> 2.8.18 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20180208mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20180208mm.pdf).

**Exhibit 3b: Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Certificate Process for 2016<sup>9</sup>**

Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Applications Issued by Month (2016)												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
12	7	4	1	7	4	6	4	6	2	38	4	<b>95</b>

Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Applications Received by Month (2016)												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
0	0	0	15	25	4	0	0	38	1	0	1	<b>84</b>

Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Applications Approved by Month (2016)												
Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Totals
12	8	5	1	7	4	5	4	5	2	38	4	<b>95</b>

According to Dental Board of California, 11 schools are certified to provide RDAEF courses in California: University of California - Los Angeles, Loma Linda University, Howard Healthcare Academy, J Productions Dental, University of the Pacific, Dental Career Institute, Expanded Functions Dental Assistant Association, The Foundation for Allied Dental Education Inc., Central California Dental Academy, Gold Coast Dental Academy and Dental Specialties Institute Inc.<sup>10</sup> Exhibit 4 shows the cost of attending a school certified by the Dental Board of California for the RDAEF program. Student kits are required for completing the course, which typically includes course handouts, reference materials, particular instruments and lab and clinic supplies that will be dispensed throughout the program and cited in the table below.

<sup>9</sup> 2.23.17 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20170223mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20170223mm.pdf).

<sup>10</sup> RDAEF Approved courses. [dbc.ca.gov/applicants/rda/courses\\_rdaef\\_approved.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/applicants/rda/courses_rdaef_approved.pdf).

**Exhibit 4: Cost to Attend and Kit Inclusion for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions Program by College**

College	City	Cost	Kit Included
Howard Healthcare Academy	San Diego	Not Posted	N/A
Expanded Functions Dental Assistant Association <sup>11</sup>	Tustin	\$14,500.00	Yes
Gold Coast Dental Academy	Tustin	Not Posted	N/A
Dental Career Institute <sup>12</sup>	Cerritos	\$10,499.99	No
Loma Linda University <sup>13</sup>	Loma Linda	\$18,000.00	Yes
University of California - Los Angeles <sup>14</sup>	Los Angeles	\$19,300.00	Yes
Central California Dental Academy	Bakersfield	Not Posted	N/A
Dental Specialties Institute Inc. <sup>15</sup>	Cupertino	\$10,500.00	Yes
University of the Pacific <sup>16</sup>	San Francisco	\$22,390.00	Yes
J Productions Dental <sup>17</sup>	Golden River	\$24,000.00	Yes
The Foundation for Allied Dental Education Inc.	El Dorado Hills	Not Posted	N/A

Exhibit 5 shows the pass/fail rate for schools that are certified to conduct the written test for RDAEF within 140 miles from the City of San Diego. The written test conducted by a school does not substitute for the Dental Board of California written test, but is a requirement of the coursework for the RDAEF program.

**Exhibit 5a: Pass/Fail Rate for Written Test by School Between December 2016 to December 2017 for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions <sup>18</sup>**

College	Pass	Fail	Total	Passing Rate
Howard Healthcare Academy	3	10	13	23%
Expanded Functions Dental Assistant Association	25	13	38	66%
Loma Linda University	0	0	0	N/A
University of California Los Angeles	16	16	32	50%

<sup>11</sup> Expanded Functions Dental Assistant Association cost. [efdaaservices.com/rdaef2-for-rda/](http://efdaaservices.com/rdaef2-for-rda/).

<sup>12</sup> Dental Career Institute cost. [dentalcareerinstitute.com/courses](http://dentalcareerinstitute.com/courses).

<sup>13</sup> Loma Linda University cost. [dentistry.llu.edu/continuing-education/dental-auxiliary-courses/2017-rdaef-expanded-duties-program](http://dentistry.llu.edu/continuing-education/dental-auxiliary-courses/2017-rdaef-expanded-duties-program).

<sup>14</sup> University of California Los Angeles cost. [dentistry.ucla.edu/learning/rdaef-ii-module-i](http://dentistry.ucla.edu/learning/rdaef-ii-module-i).

<sup>15</sup> Dental Specialties Institute, Inc. cost. [dental-specialties.com/programs](http://dental-specialties.com/programs).

<sup>16</sup> University of the Pacific cost. [dental.pacific.edu/continuing-education/rdaef-program/rdaef-tuition-and-fees](http://dental.pacific.edu/continuing-education/rdaef-program/rdaef-tuition-and-fees).

<sup>17</sup> J Productions Dental cost. [rdakits.com/rdaef2/RDAEFcoursebrochure\\_html/index.htm](http://rdakits.com/rdaef2/RDAEFcoursebrochure_html/index.htm).

<sup>18</sup> 2.8.18 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20180208mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20180208mm.pdf).

**Exhibit 5b: Pass/Fail Rate for Written Test by School Between January 2016 to January 2017 for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions <sup>19</sup>**

College	Pass	Fail	Total	Passing Rate
Expanded Functions Dental Assistant Association	17	14	31	54%
Loma Linda University	0	0	0	N/A
University of California Los Angeles	7	15	22	32%

Exhibit 6 provides examination statistics for RDAEF candidates who took the examination from December 2016 to December 2017 through the Dental Board of California. If a candidate fails the written examination, they will receive a failed score report and an application to retake the examination. A license will not automatically be issued if an individual passes both examinations. The Board must first complete its criminal history investigation of each applicant before officially issuing licenses to individuals who pass both examinations.<sup>20</sup>

**Exhibit 6: Examination Statistics Between December 2016 and December 2017 for the Dental Board of California for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions<sup>21</sup>**

Exam Type	Total Candidates Tested	# of Examinee Passed	# of Examinee Failed	% Passed	% Failed
Written	156	87	69	56%	44%
Clinical	207	172	35	83%	17%
Practical	220	174	46	79%	21%

The following table provides current license status statistics as of January 5, 2018 for *Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions*. Between 2016 and 2017, the number of licensed and active RDAEFs increased by 53 licenses or four percent (Exhibit 7). A license/permit that has been expired for over five years is then automatically cancelled and cannot be renewed. The holder of the cancelled license/permit would have to apply for a new permit/license.

<sup>19</sup> 2.23.17 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20170217mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20170217mm.pdf)

<sup>20</sup> Examination Results. [dbc.ca.gov/formspubs/pub\\_rdaef\\_dsa\\_oa\\_psi\\_2014.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/formspubs/pub_rdaef_dsa_oa_psi_2014.pdf).

<sup>21</sup> 2.8.18 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20180208mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20180208mm.pdf).



**Exhibit 7: License Status Statistics for 2016 and 2017 for a Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions**

RDAEF License Status	Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (2016) <sup>22</sup>	Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions (2017) <sup>23</sup>
Current & Active	1,359	1,412
Current & Inactive	76	77
Delinquent	214	219
Total Population	1,649	1,708
Total Cancelled Since Implementation	251	288

### Demand vs. Supply

Due to a lack of data regarding demand for the occupation RDAEF, no evaluation of demand vs. supply can be completed. However, a demand and supply analysis for the general occupation, Dental Assistants (SOC 31-9091), can be found on COE website, [coeccc.net](http://coeccc.net).

### Top Employers and Work Locations

Between January 1, 2016, and December 31, 2017, the only employer that posted an online job posting in San Diego County for this occupation was [Alpine Dentistry](#) (Exhibit 8).<sup>24</sup>

**Exhibit 8: Top Employer in San Diego County for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions**

Top Employer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alpine Dentistry</li> </ul>

### Skills, Education and Certifications

Because there is no SOC code associated with the RDAEF job title, no national educational attainment data was provided in this report.<sup>25</sup> However, educational data for the general occupational title, Dental Assistants (SOC 31-9091), can be found on the Centers of Excellence for Labor Market Research (COE) website, [coeccc.net](http://coeccc.net).

<sup>22</sup> 12.1.16 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20161201mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20161201mm.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> 1.5.18 Dental Board Meeting Agenda. [dbc.ca.gov/about\\_us/materials/20180105mm.pdf](http://dbc.ca.gov/about_us/materials/20180105mm.pdf)

<sup>24</sup> Occupational Deep Dive. Burning Glass Technologies. San Diego, CA. Full years 2016-2017.

<sup>25</sup> EMSI. San Diego (6073). 2018.02 Class of Worker. QCEW + Non-QCEW + Self-Employed. 2017-2022.

Exhibit 9 lists the top specialized and soft skills that appeared in online job postings for the full year 2017.

**Exhibit 9: Top Skills for Registered Dental Assistant in Expanded Functions in San Diego County<sup>26</sup>**

Specialized Skills	Soft Skills	Software Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• CEREC</li><li>• Dentistry</li><li>• Dentrix</li><li>• X-Rays</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication Skills</li><li>• Organizational Skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Dentrix</li></ul>

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<sup>26</sup> Occupational Deep Dive. Burning Glass Technologies. Occupational Deep Dive. San Diego, CA. Full year 2017.