

## STAFFING

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To revise the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) qualification standard for the appointment of Dental Hygienist GS-0682.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on staffing. The pages in this handbook replace the existing Dental Hygienist qualification standard in VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix G37, in its entirety. The new standard is effective on the date of issuance of this handbook. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5005, Staffing, that is maintained on the [Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer website](#) and the [VA Publications Website](#). Significant changes include adding a provision for education completed outside of the United States.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer, Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059).
- 4. RELATED HANDBOOK/DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5005, Staffing.
- 5. RESCISSION:** VA Handbook 5005, Part II, Appendix G37, dated May 12, 2014.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/  
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Acting Assistant Secretary for  
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/s/  
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**DISTRIBUTION:** Electronic Only

**NOTE:** This transmittal page accompanied the former VA Handbook 5005, Staffing publication. It is provided for reference to revisions made to this qualification standard.

**FORMER VA HANDBOOK REFERENCE:** PART II APPENDIX G37  
**EFFECTIVE DATE:** July 23, 2021

**DENTAL HYGIENIST  
QUALIFICATION STANDARD  
GS-0682  
Veterans Health Administration**

1. **COVERAGE.** The following are requirements for appointment as a Dental Hygienist in the Veterans Health Administration (VHA). These requirements apply to all VHA Dental Hygienists employed in the General Schedule (GS)-0682 series. Dental Hygienists perform a wide variety of interventions which contribute to the overall oral health of Veterans. Their work requires a professional knowledge of the field of dental hygiene and the biomedical sciences related to dentistry.
2. **AUTHORITIES.**
  - a. [P.L. 111-163, Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010;](#)
  - b. [38 U.S.C. § 7401, Appointments in Veterans Health Administration;](#)
  - c. [38 U.S.C. § 7402, Qualifications of appointees;](#)
  - d. [38 U.S.C. § 7403, Period of appointments; promotions;](#)
  - e. [38 U.S.C. § 7405, Temporary full-time appointments, part-time appointments and without-compensation appointments;](#)
  - f. [38 U.S.C. § 7407, Administrative provisions for section 7405 and 7406 appointments.](#)
3. **DEFINITIONS.**
  - a. **Journey Level.** The full performance level for this occupation in VHA is the GS-0682-09 grade level.
  - b. **Creditable Experience.** To be creditable, the experience must have required the use of knowledge, skills, abilities and clinical competencies associated with current professional dental hygiene practice. This experience must be verified with the practitioner or the supervising officers. Experience satisfying this requirement may be paid or non-paid employment in private practice, United States (U.S.) military services, local/state/federal health care or educational facilities.
  - c. **Quality of Experience.** Experience satisfying this requirement must be active, paid or non-paid professional practice employment as a dental hygienist.

Qualifying experience must be at a level comparable to dental hygienist experience at the next lower grade level of the position being filled. For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher level duties must consist of significant scope, administrative independence, complexity and range of variety as described in this standard at the specified grade level and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time.

- d. **Part-Time Experience.** Part-time experience is creditable according to its relationship to a full-time workweek. For example, an individual employed 20 hours per week, or on a half time basis, would receive one full-time work week of credit for each two weeks of service.

**4. BASIC REQUIREMENTS.** To qualify for appointment as a dental hygienist, all applicants must possess the following:

- a. **Citizenship.** Be a Citizen of the United States. Non-citizens may be appointed when it is not possible to recruit qualified citizens in accordance with [38 U.S.C § 7407(a), Administrative Provisions for Section 7405 and 7406 Appointments.]

- b. **Education.** Applicants must possess an Associate degree or higher from an accredited dental hygiene program. The degree must have been obtained from an institution whose accreditation was in place for the year in which the course of study was completed. Approved programs are:

- (1) Dental hygiene programs accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA).

- (2) [Education completed outside of the United States must be considered at least equivalent to that gained in CODA accredited United States programs and would enable the candidate to sit for the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination, which is administered by the Joint Commission on National Dental Examinations.]

- c. **Licensure/Certification**

- (1) **Licensure.** Applicants must be currently licensed to practice as a dental hygienist with a full, current and unrestricted license in a State, Territory or Commonwealth of the United States, or the District of Columbia.

- (2) **Certification.** P.L. 97-35, Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act Of 1981, requires persons who administer radiologic procedures meet the credentialing standards in 42 C.F.R. Part 75, Standards for the Accreditation of Educational Programs for and the Credentialing of Radiologic Personnel. To meet this requirement, they must have successfully completed an educational program that meets or exceeds the standards described in that regulation and is accredited by an organization recognized by the Department of Education and be certified as radiographers in their field. Accredited dental hygiene

programs contain curriculum addressing radiologic procedures meets the requirement for certification as dental radiographers.

**(3) Exceptions for Non-Certified Dental Hygienist.**

(a) Non-certified applicants who otherwise meet the eligibility requirements for licensure, may be given a temporary appointment as a graduate dental hygienist under the authority of 38 U.S.C. § 7405(c)(2)(B), Temporary Full-Time Appointments, Part-Time Appointments and Without-Compensation Appointments for a Period Not to Exceed Two Years.

(b) Non-certified individuals shall only provide care under the supervision of a certified dental hygienist at or above the full performance level.

(c) Non-certified individuals may only be appointed at the entry level and may not be promoted/converted until certification is obtained.

(d) Temporary appointments of non-certified dental hygienist may not be extended beyond two years or converted to a new temporary appointment.

(e) **Failure to Obtain Certification.** In all cases, dental hygienists must actively pursue meeting requirements for certification starting from the date of their appointment. At the time of appointment, the dental hygienist supervisor will provide the dental hygienist with the written requirements for licensure/certification, including the time by which the licensure/certification must be obtained and the consequences for not becoming certified by the deadline. Management officials will remove dental hygienists from their positions who fail to obtain licensure/certification during this time period, which may result in termination of employment

(4) **Loss of Credential.** Management officials will remove dental hygienists from their positions who fail to maintain the required licensure/certification, which may also result in termination of employment.

d. **Grandfathering Provision.** All individuals employed in VHA in this occupational series or in another occupational series performing the duties as described in the qualification standard on the effective date of the qualification standard are considered to have met all qualification requirements for the grade held including positive education and licensure/trademark/registration/certification. For employees who do not meet all the basic requirements required in this standard, but who met the qualifications applicable to the position at the time they were appointed to it, the following provisions apply:

(1) Employees may be reassigned, promoted up to and including the full performance (journey) level or changed to lower grade within the occupation,

but may not be promoted beyond the journeyman level or placed in supervisory or managerial positions.

- (2) Employees in an occupation that requires a licensure/certification only at higher grade levels must meet the licensure/certification requirement before they can be promoted to those higher grade levels.
- (3) Employees who are appointed on a temporary basis prior to the effective date of the qualification standard may not have their temporary appointment extended or be reappointed, on a temporary or permanent basis until they fully meet the basic requirements of the standard.
- (4) Employees who are converted to title 38 hybrid status under this provision and subsequently leave the occupation lose protected status and must meet the full VA qualification standard requirements in effect at the time of reentry to the occupation.
- (5) Employees initially grandfathered into this occupation, who subsequently obtain additional education and/or licensure/certification that meet all the basic requirements of this qualification standard must maintain the required credentials as a condition of employment in the occupation.

- e. **Foreign Education.** To be creditable, education completed outside the U.S. must be deemed at least equivalent to that gained in a conventional U.S. program by a private organization specializing in the interpretation of foreign educational credentials.
- f. **Physical Requirements.** See VA Directive and Handbook 5019, Employee Occupational Health Service for requirements.
- g. **English Language Proficiency.** Dental hygienist candidates must be proficient in spoken and written English in accordance with 38 U.S.C. § 7403(f).

**5. GRADE DETERMINATIONS.** In addition to the basic requirements outlined in paragraph 3.b., the following criteria must be met when determining the grade of candidates.

a. Grade Determinations.

(1) **Dental Hygienist, GS-05**

(a) **Experience.** None, beyond the basic requirements.

(b) **Assignment.** Employees at this level serve in entry level dental hygienist positions. They receive guidance from more experienced staff members for patient issues and require daily supervision at the site of work.

(2) **Dental Hygienist, GS-06**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level.
- (b) **Assignment.** Employees at this level serve as developmental level 1 dental hygienists. It is expected that they receive guidance from more experienced staff members for complex patient issues and require daily and direct contact at the site of work from the assigned supervisor.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (KSAs).** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
  - i. Knowledge of oral prophylactic, therapeutic, and preventive procedures for periodontal diseases, or inflammation, or on patients with other medical and/or dental problems.
  - ii. Knowledge of dental methods and techniques used in performing intra and extra oral procedures.
  - iii. Ability to use communication techniques to encourage and inform individuals and groups.

**(3) Dental Hygienist, GS-07**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level that demonstrates the clinical competencies described at that level.
- (b) **Assignment.** Employees at this level serve as developmental level 2 dental hygienists. It is expected that they perform more complex work while receiving less frequent supervision than at the GS-6 level.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to the experience above, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
  - i. Knowledge of oral pathology to include disease of the hard and soft tissues, disorders of tooth structure, developmental and congenital anomalies, salivary gland disorders, symptoms of infectious disorders, and appropriate protocols.
  - ii. Practical knowledge of medical diseases, conditions, and chronic degenerative diseases as they relate to dental health and treatment.
  - iii. Knowledge of radiographic exposure techniques to produce radiographs of high diagnostic quality.

**(4) Dental Hygienist, GS-08**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level that demonstrates the clinical competencies described at that level.
- (b) **Assignment.** Employees at this level serve as developmental level 3

dental hygienists with the ability to perform direct patient care under the general supervision of the dentist. It is expected that they receive guidance from higher-level or supervisory staff members for only the most complex patients. Assignments at this level include, but are not limited to: patient assessments (e.g. risk assessments, oral health assessments), prevention recommendations, prophylaxis, periodontal treatment for mild to moderate disease (e.g. scaling and root planing, full mouth debridement), Periodontal Screening and Recording (PSR) radiograph/image capture, fluoride treatment application, topical anesthesia administration and management of stable medically compromised patients (including risk factors).

- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-07 level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Knowledge of state-of-the-art preventive dentistry measures for patient instruction and training.
  - ii. Knowledge of anatomy and physiology in order to interpret the examination request accurately; to understand the functioning and interrelationship of the various anatomical structures appearing on the radiographic image and the various stages of the examination to judge the acceptability of the radiograph for diagnostic use; and to present for viewing.
  - iii. Knowledge of The Joint Commission (TJC), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), and related regulations and guidelines pertaining to dental matters.
  - iv. Skill in providing individual and group oral health care instructions to inpatients, outpatients, Nursing Home Care Unit patients, etc.

(5) **Dental Hygienist, GS-09**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level that demonstrates the clinical competencies described at that level.
- (b) **Assignments.** Employees at this level serve as staff dental hygienists at the full performance level. They provide direct patient care and receive guidance from higher-level or supervisory staff members for only the most complex patients and require only general supervision from a dentist. Assignments at this level include but are not limited to patient medical assessment (e.g. medical/dental history, social history, vital signs, full periodontal assessment and charting), disease and treatment management recommendations, denture care, scaling and root planing, radiographs/image interpretation, patient education (e.g. post-procedure,

tobacco cessation, caries and perio-disease prevention), behavior management, management of stable medically compromised patients (including risk factors), instrument sharpening, inter-service communication.

(c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-8 level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:

- i. Knowledge of hygiene procedures to explain the process and indication, complications and expected treatment outcomes for each.
- ii. Knowledge of proper usage of dental radiography equipment, radiation safety, assessment of proper image capture and interpretation of films.
- iii. Knowledge to select appropriate available fluoride products and indications/limitations for safe and proper application.
- iv. Skill in detecting plaque and calculus, dental abnormalities/pathologies, assessing inflammation and providing safe instrumentation for each procedure.
- v. Skill in educating patients and caregivers on periodontal disease, wellness, health maintenance, oral hygiene practices, parafunctional habits, and effects of illness, addictions, medications and tobacco on the oral cavity.
- vi. Ability to assess the patient's medical, dental, anxiety/phobias, medications and comorbidities to administer safe patient care.
- vii. Ability to assess the impact of patient's medical and dental condition on maintaining oral health, recognize age-related changes in individual patients, adapt patient environment, and maximize patient's physical comfort.

(6) **Dental Hygienist, GS-10 (Advanced Clinical)**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that is directly related to the position being filled fully meets the KSAs at that level.
- (b) **Assignments.** For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity, and range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. At this level, dental hygienists are advanced-level practitioners in assigned areas. Employee assignments may include but are not limited to advanced patient assessments/clinical evaluations (blood glucose levels,



medication reconciliation, oral cancer screening, dietary analysis for caries risk, pulse oximeter, comprehensive periodontal charting), prophylaxis in complex restorative cases (e.g. multiple dental implants, orthognathic, post-surgical trauma, etc.), advanced scaling and root planing (ability to use advanced modalities) with or without soft-tissue curettage, advanced radiographic studies (cone beam computed tomography (CT), cephalometric), local anesthesia administration, advanced adjunctive treatment (xerostomia treatment recommendations, sulcular lavage, placement of intrasulcular medicaments, applying and removing periodontal surgical dressings, orthodontic care, sealant placement, occlusion adjustment, placement of desensitizing agents, professional whitening procedures), individual and group oral hygiene instructions for special-needs populations, elevated educational instruction, development of training materials/presentations), management of medically and/or behaviorally compromised patients, and collaboration with other disciplines.

- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-09 level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
- i. Knowledge of medical assessment techniques including interviewing and evaluating clinical findings (e.g. normal and critical lab values) to adapt treatment based on medical and psychological issues.
  - ii. Advanced knowledge of oral and dental anatomy including root anatomy, common pathologies and anomalies, and indications for advanced radiographic imaging and proper technique to detect potential abnormalities.
  - iii. Knowledge of medical treatment adjuncts and indications and the ability to safely administer medicaments (e.g. intrasulcular medicaments, local anesthesia, sulcular lavage, applying and removing periodontal surgical dressing).
  - iv. Knowledge of advanced adjunctive diagnostic and therapeutic equipment, indication for use and ability to utilize safely (e.g. sonic, magnetostrictive ultrasonic, and piezo ultrasonic scalers).
  - v. Skill in providing safe and thorough prophylaxis, root planing and soft-tissue curettage for complex periodontal and/or restorative cases and skill in providing safe care for patients with complex medical/psychiatric issues.
  - vi. Ability to apply adult education techniques/methods, organize curriculum, judge cognitive ability, and provide healthcare education regarding relationships between medical and dental pathologies to

groups, interdisciplinary staff, and other outside contacts.

**(7) Lead Dental Hygienist, GS-10**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level that demonstrates the clinical competencies described at that level.
- (b) **Assignments.** For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity, and range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. Lead dental hygienists generally are found in Complexity Level 1 (High Complexity) or Complexity Level 2 (Medium Complexity) facilities, or in facilities of lesser complexity levels where large dental services are found. The lead dental hygienist monitors work flow and makes work assignments, provides input on performance, resolves daily workplace issues, and maintains efficient flow of patient care; may approve brief periods of leave, provide training to dental auxiliary staff (dental assistants and/or dental hygienists), students and/or trainees; may recommend special advancements and promotions, disciplinary actions, etc. Assignments at this level include but are not limited to providing instruction to dental auxiliary staff (dental assistants and/or dental hygienists) in achieving diagnostic quality radiographs, providing instruction in maintenance of all dental service equipment, providing primary support to the chief for the daily delivery of department programs, reporting, staffing and scheduling, coordinates patient care plans to reduce redundancies and delay in patient treatment. They may perform ancillary assignments, including program management duties, on an occasional basis.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-09 level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
  - i. Advanced knowledge of dental hygiene and/or dental assisting across multiple types of dental practice and demonstrated ability to provide guidance to dental auxiliary staff (dental assistants and/or dental hygienists).
  - ii. Knowledge of procedures and policies to provide oversight and training for dental auxiliary staff (dental assistants and/or dental hygienists).
  - iii. Ability to monitor and report on the status and progress of work and make adjustments to accomplish the workload in accordance with established procedures.
  - iv. Ability to assist in dental program development, outcome management, and strategic planning.

- v. Ability to act as liaison between dental staff to resolve informal employee complaints and concerns.

**(8) Supervisory Dental Hygienist, GS-10**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level that demonstrates the clinical competencies described at that level.
- (b) **Assignments.** For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity, and range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. Supervisory dental hygienists generally are found in Complexity Level 2 (Medium Complexity) or Complexity Level 3 (Low Complexity) facilities. The supervisory dental hygienist is responsible for the supervision, administrative management, and direction of dental auxiliary staff. They have full supervisory responsibility over a section or equivalent work unit; but may also be delegated full administrative and professional responsibility for planning and directing the dental auxiliary staff activities for the service or equivalent unit at an independent outpatient clinic. . Supervisory dental hygienists' typical duties include preparing work assignments, monitoring clinical performances of dental auxiliary staff, conducting performance appraisals, and other clinical and administrative responsibilities to ensure that the mission of the service and the medical center has been satisfied. They ensure compliance with accrediting agency and regulatory requirements, establishes and monitors the quality of the pre-analytical processes as part of the overall dental service quality management program, and assures corrective action is initiated as needed. They conduct orientation and competency assessments of assigned staff. They develop policies and procedures, manages document control, develop performance standards, position descriptions and functional statements, and are responsible for professional and administrative management of an assigned area to include budget execution. Supervisory dental hygienists maintain interdepartmental relations with other services to accomplish medical center goals.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-9 level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs and demonstrate the potential to acquire the assignment-specific KSAs designated by an asterisk (\*):
  - i. Advanced knowledge of dental hygiene and/or dental assisting across multiple types of dental practice to provide guidance and training to dental auxiliary staff;

- ii. Skill in coordinating clinical workflow and work assignments;
- iii. Ability to develop policy, manage equipment requests and provide workload analysis in Dental Clinic operations;
- iv. Demonstrated leadership and managerial skills, including skill in interpersonal relations and conflict resolution to deal with employees, team leaders, and managers;
- v. Ability to analyze clinically appropriate data and make recommendations to optimize quality, efficiency, performance, and productivity within service; and
- \*vi. Ability to perform the full range of supervisory duties which would include responsibility for assignment of work to be performed; competency assessments; performance evaluations; selection of staff; and recommendation of awards, advancements, and when appropriate, disciplinary actions.

**(9) Dental Hygienist (Senior Clinical), GS-11**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience equivalent to the next lower grade level that is directly related to the position being filled fully meets the KSAs at that level.
- (b) **Assignments.** For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity, and range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. At this level, dental hygienists are senior-level clinical practitioners in assigned areas. Assignments may include but are not limited to conducting comprehensive medical assessment, adaptive treatment of the medically/mentally/physically compromised, using more advanced adjunctive, diagnostic tools and techniques in patients with severe and recalcitrant periodontal disease, designing customized adaptive aids, participating in patient wellness programs, advanced medical and behavioral management, curriculum and examination fabrication, and giving lectures and presentations.
- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-10 Advanced Clinical Hygienist level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs:
  - i. Knowledge of comprehensive medical assessment (including contraindications to dental treatment) and appropriate adaptation techniques to provide safe and effective periodontal care in severely compromised patients.

- ii. Knowledge of more advanced adjunctive, diagnostic tools and techniques (e.g. microscopy, toluidine blue dye, intraoral camera) for monitoring clinical disease processes and patient selection for their indicated use.
- iii. Knowledge of tobacco cessation treatments and counseling techniques to select and manage patients in a comprehensive program and make recommendations for prescribing tobacco cessation medications.
- iv. Knowledge of medical and behavioral management risk factors for medically/mentally/physically compromised patients including indication of administration of adjunctive therapies (e.g. nitrous oxide, self-induced hypnosis techniques).
- v. Skill in designing custom adaptive aids based on assessment of patients' abilities and disabilities and training patients and caregivers for proper usage.
- vi. Ability to write curriculum, examinations, training protocol, present lectures and presentations at the level of dental hygiene school faculty.
- vii. Ability to effectively interview, screen and adapt treatment based on findings of medically/mentally/physically compromised patients.

(10) **Supervisory Dental Hygienist, GS-11**

- (a) **Experience.** At least one year of experience at the next lower grade level that demonstrates the clinical competencies described at that level.
- (b) **Assignments.** For all assignments above the full performance level, the higher-level duties must consist of significant scope, complexity, and range of variety, and be performed by the incumbent at least 25% of the time. Supervisory dental hygienists generally are found in Complexity Level 1 (High Complexity) facilities, or in facilities of lesser complexity levels where large dental services are found. Supervisory dental hygienists are responsible for the supervision, administrative management, and direction of dental auxiliary staff in a section or equivalent work unit. They may be delegated full administrative and professional responsibility for planning and directing the dental auxiliary staff activities for the service or equivalent unit at an independent outpatient clinic. Supervisory dental hygienists' typical duties include preparing work assignments, monitoring clinical performances of dental auxiliary staff, conducting performance appraisals, and other clinical and administrative responsibilities to ensure that the mission of the service and the medical center is satisfied. They ensure compliance with accrediting

agency and regulatory requirements; establish and monitor the quality of the pre-analytical processes as part of the overall dental service quality management program, and ensure corrective action are initiated as needed. They conduct orientation and competency assessment of assigned staff. Supervisory dental hygienists develop policies and procedures, manage document control, develop performance standards, position descriptions and functional statements, and are responsible for professional and administrative management of an assigned area to include budget execution. The supervisor will maintain interdepartmental relations with other services to accomplish medical center goals.

- (c) **Demonstrated Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** In addition to meeting the KSAs for the GS-10 level, the candidate must demonstrate the following KSAs and demonstrate the potential to acquire the assignment-specific KSAs designated by an asterisk (\*).
- i. Ability to work independently to set priorities, delegate tasks, meet multiple deadlines, analyze organizational problems, and develop and implement effective solutions to optimize quality, efficiency, performance, and productivity within the service;
  - ii. Ability to develop policy, manage equipment requests, and provide workload analysis in Dental Clinic operations;
  - iii. Demonstrated leadership and managerial skills including skill in interpersonal relations and conflict resolution to deal with employees, team members, managers and other departments; and
  - \*iv. Ability to perform the full range of supervisory duties which would include responsibility for assignment of work to be performed; competency assessments; performance evaluations; selection of staff; and recommendation of awards, advancements, and when appropriate, disciplinary actions.

## 6. DEVIATIONS.

- a. An approving official may, under unusual circumstances, approve reasonable deviations to the grade determination requirements for an employee whose composite record of accomplishments, performance and qualifications, as well as current assignment, warrants such action based on demonstrated competence to meet the requirements of the proposed grade and/or assignment.
- b. The Under Secretary for Health in VHA Central Office must approve the placement of individuals in grade levels or assignments not described in this standard must be prior to placement in the position.

- c. Under no circumstances will the educational or credential requirement be waived for those occupations with a positive education requirement or when specific credentials are identified as necessary to meet minimum requirements, unless an exception is annotated in the qualification standard.

**RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** Human Resources and Administration/Operations, Security and Preparedness (HRA/OSP) (006), Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer (OCHCO) (05), Recruitment and Placement Policy Service (059)