

Florida HEALTH

2025

Workforce Survey of Dentists

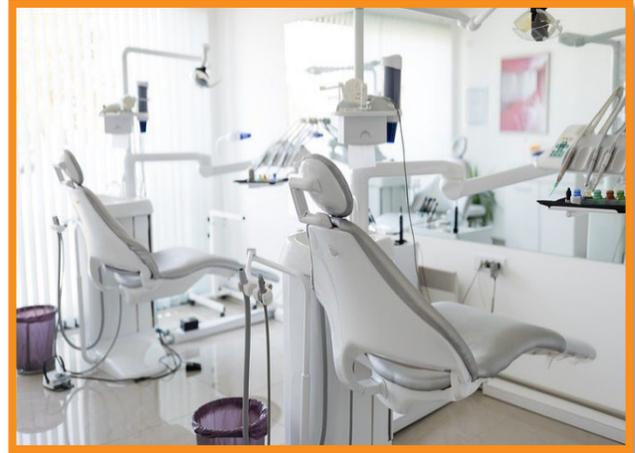


Acknowledgements

Author and Data Analyst:
Manikumar Reddy Kallem, MS

Reviewer:
Robert Traul, DDS

Contributor:
Catherine Bridges, DMD



The Florida Department of Health Public Health Dental Program would like to thank the Department's Division of Community Health Promotion and Division of Medical Quality Assurance, as well our partners at the Florida Dental Association and the Florida Dental Hygiene Association.

A special thank you to the dentists who took the time to participate in the survey, as well as their efforts to help build a better understanding of the dental workforce in Florida.

Florida Department of Health (2025). 2023–2024 Workforce Survey of Dentists.

The Public Health Dental Program: dental@flhealth.gov or 850-245-4333

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Introduction

Florida Statutes and Administrative Code require renewal of dental licenses biennially by the end of February of even-numbered years. This report analyzes the renewal period which ended February 28, 2024. The Florida Department of Health (Department) prepared and administered a workforce survey of dentists to coincide with the license renewal process (see Appendix A for accompanying survey). As part of their online renewal, dentists were asked to voluntarily complete the survey. All responses are self-reported.

This report presents data from the 2023–2024 Workforce Survey of Dentists. The survey was designed to obtain information concerning Florida’s dental workforce to inform health care policymakers and shape oral health care policy development. To better comprehend the dental workforce, it is recommended that the results of this report be considered alongside the 2023–2024 Workforce Survey of Dental Hygienists results.

The survey consisted of 26 questions regarding demographics, professional education, practice characteristics, productivity, services to vulnerable populations, and retention and attrition. The survey is designed to obtain an understanding of the changing landscape of the dentist workforce. The survey is not designed to address population growth, maintenance of the current level of service, and does not address portions of the population not currently served. Of 17,462 dentists who applied for licensure renewal, 94% (16,406) responded to the survey.

The Department’s Division of Medical Quality Assurance provided data for this report, including demographic information of respondents. The Department determines each applicant’s eligibility to practice in Florida. Licensure status is relative to the date the survey closed. This report does not reflect changes in dental practice status occurring between survey completion and the report reference date. Therefore, counts or estimates are approximate with respect to the report’s reference date. Descriptive statistical techniques were used to provide the characteristic profiles of respondents using R programming and are reported for the summary descriptions and relationships presented throughout the report.

For the purposes of data analysis and reporting, survey responses were restricted to dentists currently practicing in Florida. The overall response rate for the 2023–2024 Workforce Survey of Dentists was 94%.

Executive Summary

Dentists play a central role in diagnosing and treating oral health conditions, collaborating closely with dental hygienists and assistants to ensure comprehensive patient care. Their services include clinical examinations, treatment planning, restorative procedures, oral surgery, and the management of complex dental conditions. Dentists operate in diverse environments including private practices, group clinics, academic institutions, and public health programs. This report explores Florida’s dentist workforce supply, practice settings, and long-term professional trajectories to inform strategic initiatives for enhancing statewide oral health care access and outcomes.

Key Findings

Demographics

- Of 17,462 dentists who applied for licensure renewal, 94% (16,406) responded to the survey.
- Of the 16,406 dentists who responded:
 - The percentage of dentists currently practicing or had accepted employment to practice clinical dentistry in Florida was 77%.
 - 41.5% reported practicing more than 20 years.
 - The largest age group was between 30-39 years (28.6%).
 - After English, Spanish was the next most common language used by dentists (22.8%) followed by Arabic (2.1%).

Professional Education

- Most of the responding dentists (66.9%) indicated they received their dental education outside Florida.
- The University of Florida College of Dentistry had the highest percentage of graduated dentists (18.5%) of any Florida dental program.

Practice Characteristics

- Of dentists who responded, 22% were practicing in their current location longer than 20 years.
- Approximately 71% reported working in general private practice.
- The majority of dentists practiced in Miami-Dade (1,909) and the least number practiced in Lafayette (1), Dixie (1), Holmes (1) and Franklin (1).
- Nearly half of respondents (49.8%) operated in individual practices, 41.3% were part of group settings, and 9% were divided between academic institutions and other government clinical settings.
- Most dentists reported they employed at least one dental hygienist (79%) and one or more dental assistants (97.9%).

Productivity

- In a typical week, 27.3% of the dentists reported that they had 26–50 patient encounters.
- In the past year, 85% practiced between 11–12 months.
- Over the past 12 months, 52.3% of dentists indicated they typically worked between 31–40 hours per week.

Services to Vulnerable Populations

- In 2023–2024, 46.8% of dentists reported performing volunteer services, with 23.8% providing one to eight hours of volunteer service in the last 12 months.
- Medicaid providers comprised 19.5% of reporting dentists.

Retention and Attrition

- 11.5% of Florida's dentists reported they plan to retire from clinical dentistry in the next five years, and 1.3% of these dentists were under 50 years old.
- Of dentist respondents with an active license not practicing in Florida, 63.3% practiced in another state and 11.6% were currently retired.

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Findings

Demographics

Figure 1. Age Group Distribution of Dentists Practicing in Florida, 2023–2024

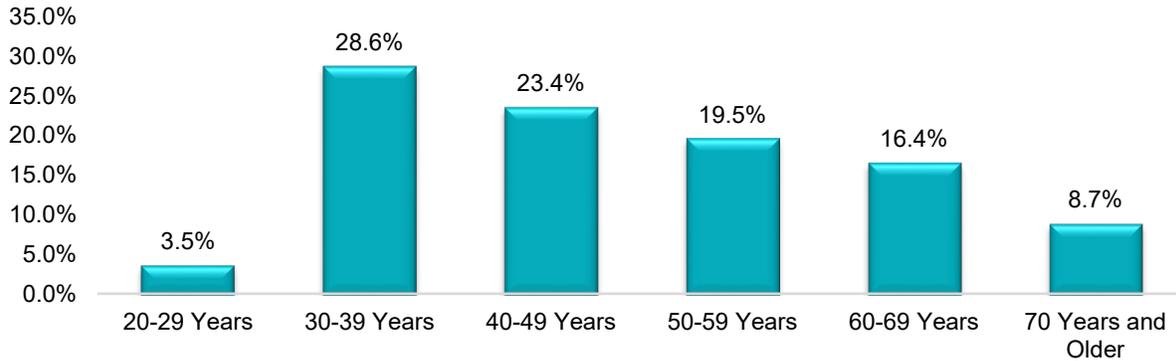
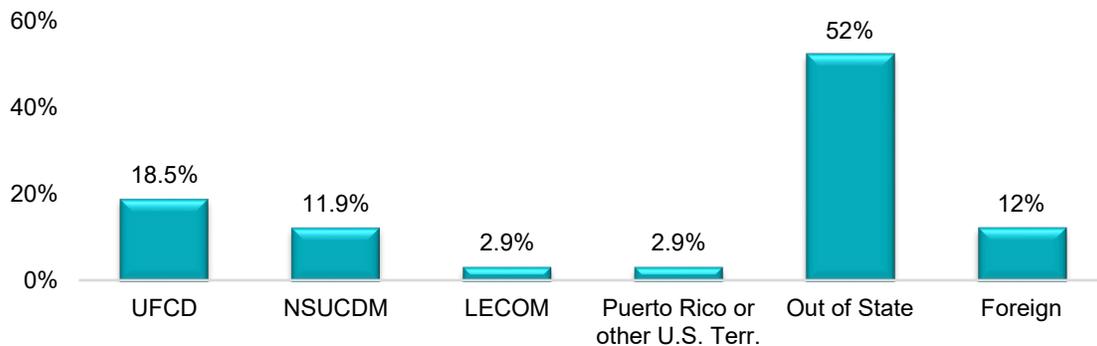


Figure 1 shows that the age group with the highest number of practicing dentists (28.6%) was those aged 30–39. In contrast, only 3.5% of dentists were between 20 and 29 years of age.

The percentage of dentists who spoke one or more languages (other than English) was highest among Hispanics (48.7%) followed by Asian dentists (37.2%). Spanish (22.8%) was the most spoken language after English (62.7%). The second most spoken language among respondents, was Arabic (2.1%) and the least spoken language was Japanese (0.1%).

Professional Education

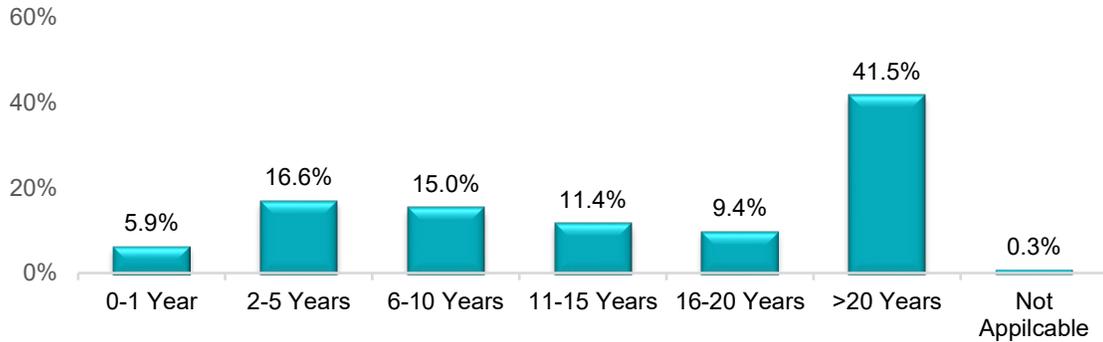
Figure 2. Program of Graduation Among Responding Dentists, 2023–2024



Most responding dentists (66.9%) reported receiving their dental training outside Florida. As shown in Figure 2, 2.9% of dentists received their education in Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories, 51.2% attended out-of-state programs, 12% trained in foreign dental schools, 18.5% graduated from the University of Florida College of Dentistry (UFCD), 11.9% at Nova Southeastern College of Dental Medicine (NSUCDM), and 2.9% at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (LECOM). Note that some respondents earned degrees from multiple institutions, resulting in total percentages exceeding 100%.

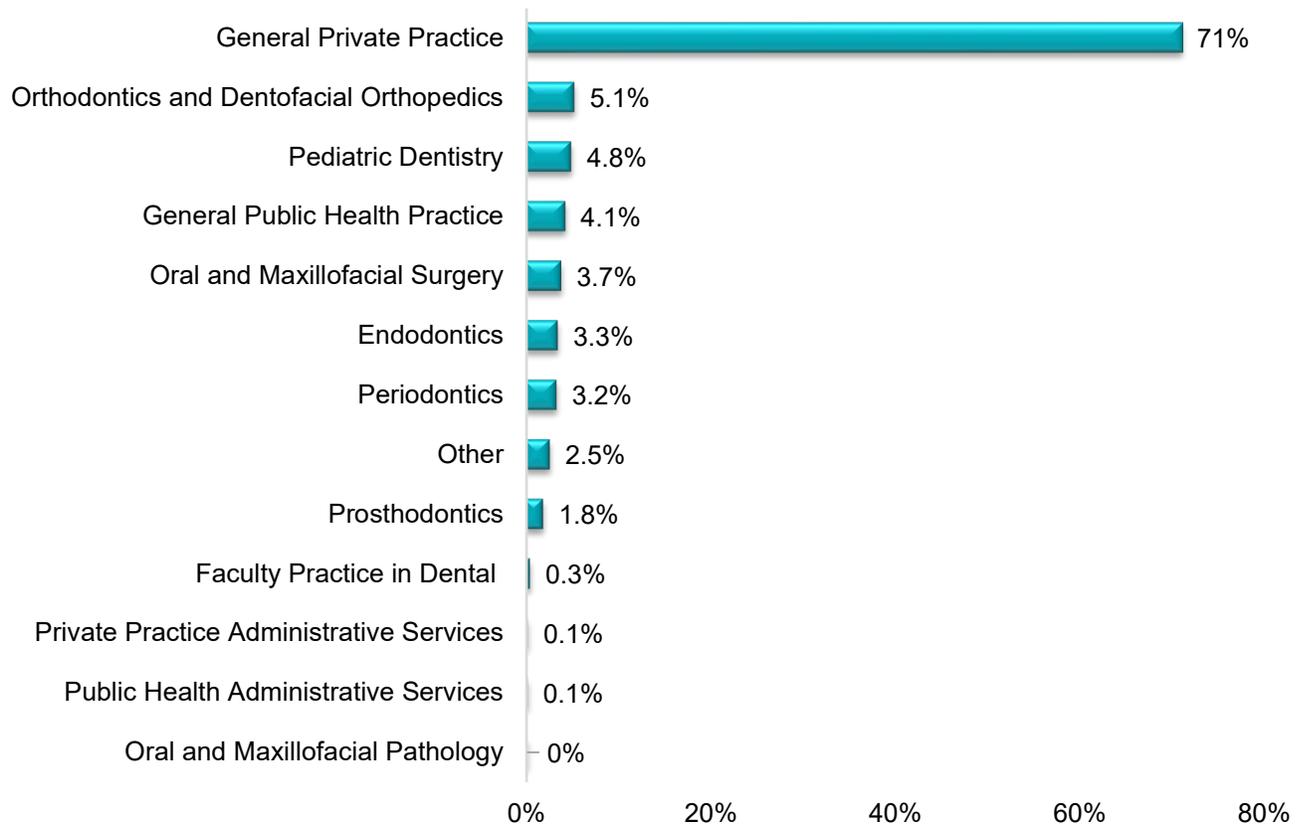
Practice Characteristics

Figure 3. Years of Active Practice Among Responding Dentists, 2023–2024



The survey revealed that 41.5% of responding dentists have been practicing for over 20 years (Figure 3). Meanwhile, 58.2% reported having less than 20 years of experience, with 5.9% indicating they have practiced for fewer than two years.

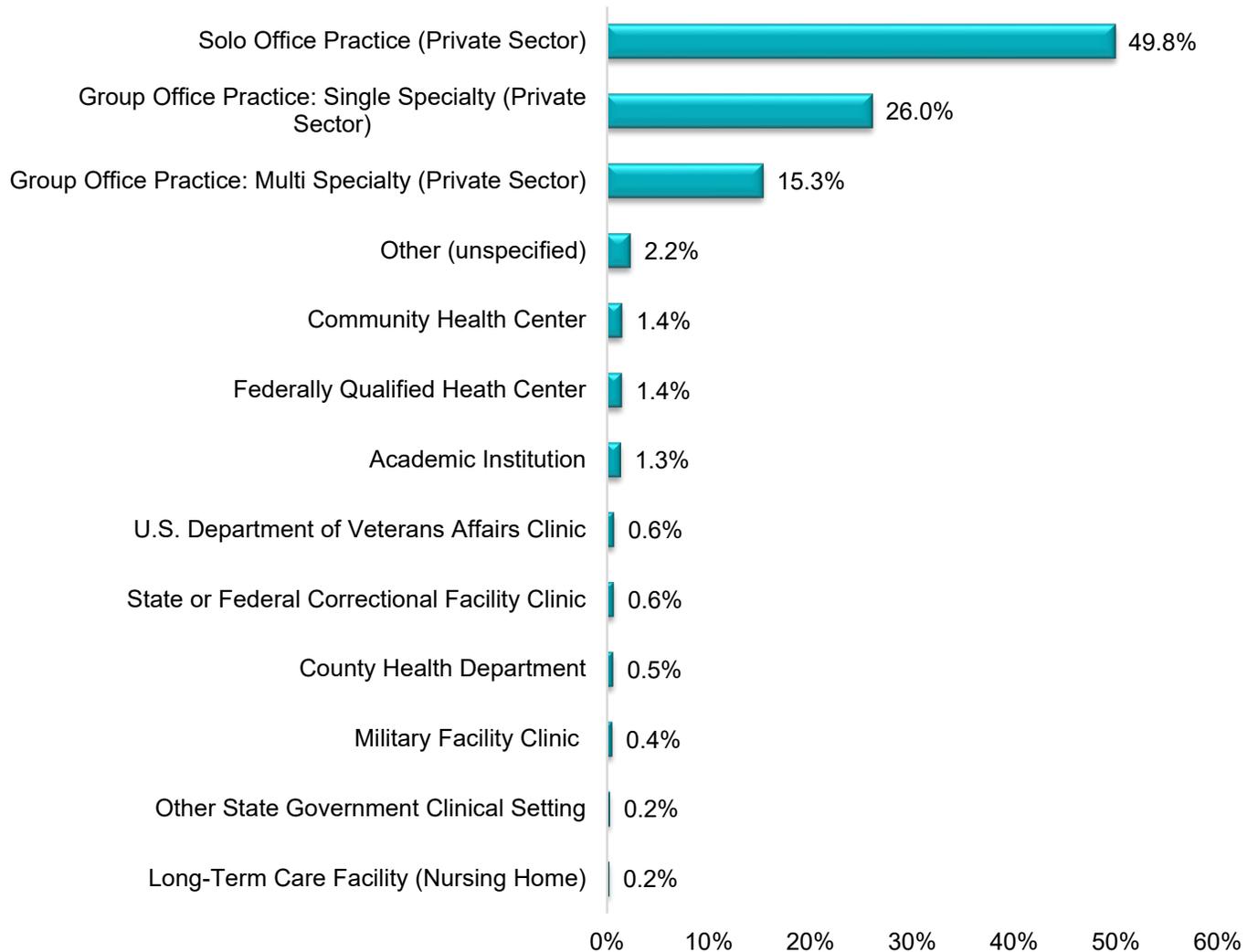
Figure 4. Percentage of Dentists Practicing in Florida by Practice Type, 2023–2024



Most dentists (71%) work in general private practice (Figure 4). The orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics specialties were the second largest (5.1%) reported practice type

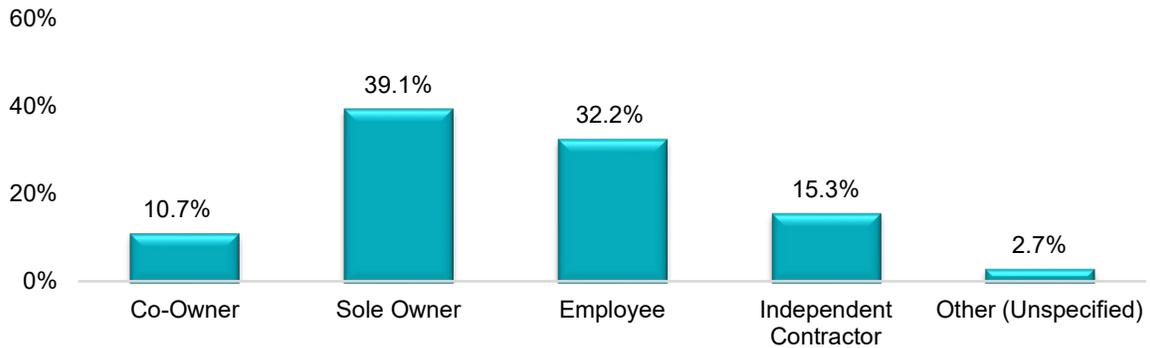
followed by pediatric dentistry (4.8%). There were 4.1% of Florida dentists who worked in public health, which includes the five safety net categories: academic institutions, community health centers, county health departments, federally qualified health centers, and other state government clinical settings. The “Other” category includes non-clinical positions.

Figure 5. Primary Practice Setting Among Dentists in Florida, 2023–2024



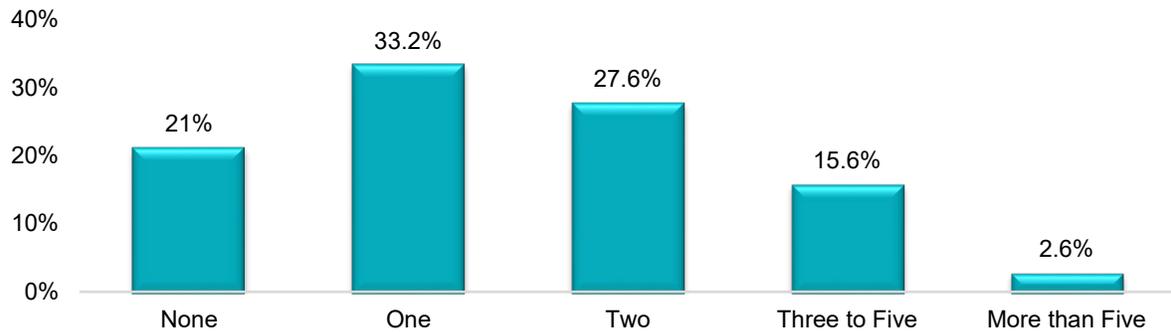
Almost half (49.8%) of respondents reported their primary practice setting was solo private practice (Figure 5). There were 41.3% who reported working in group private practices, including single-specialty and multi-specialty offices. Safety net practices (academic institutions, community health centers, county health departments, federally qualified health centers, and other state government clinical settings) accounted for 5.4% of primary practice settings, providing care for individuals who might otherwise lack access to health care. Other governmental practices, including state or federal correctional facility clinics, military facility clinics, Veterans Affairs clinics, and Indian Health Services, collectively represented 1.7%. Remaining settings, such as long-term care facilities and unspecified settings, made up 2.4%.

Figure 7. Practice Arrangement Among Dentists in Florida, 2023–2024



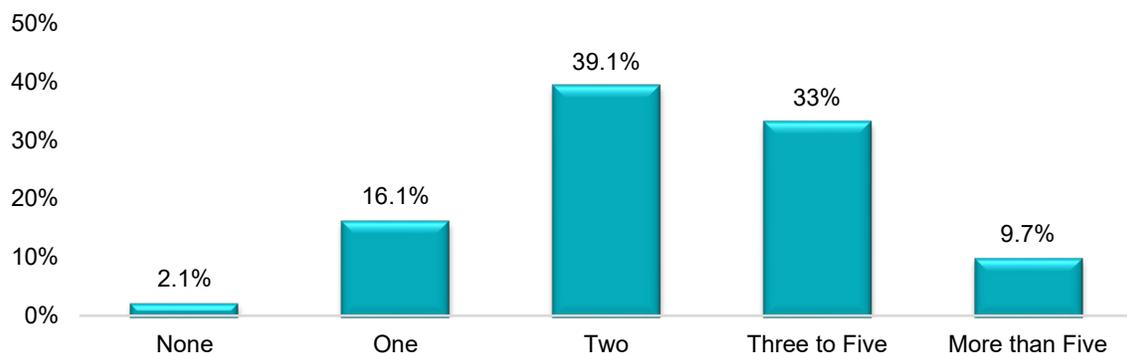
Among respondents, 39.1% reported being the sole owners of their practice, while 32.2% said they were employed in one practice (Figure 7).

Figure 8. Distribution of Dental Hygienists per Dentist in Florida, 2023–2024



In the survey, 33.2% of dentists reported working with one dental hygienist, while 27.6% had two, and 15.6% had between three to five dental hygienists per dentist (Figure 8).

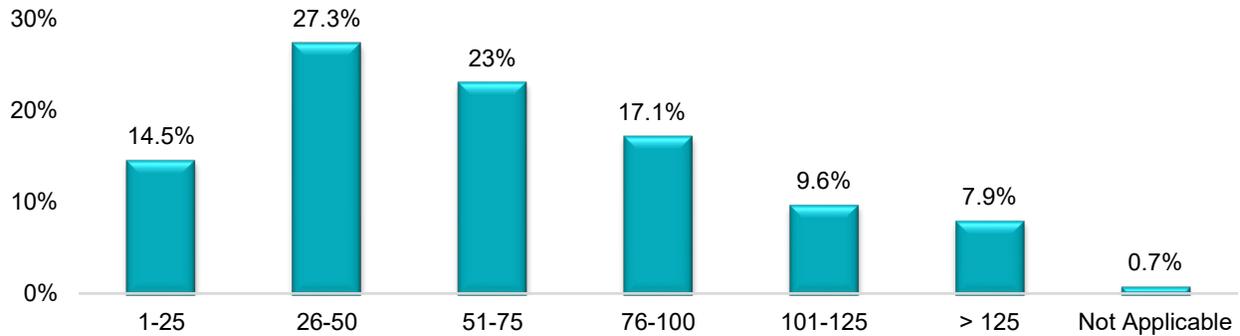
Figure 9. Distribution of Dental Assistants per Dentist in Florida, 2023–2024



According to the data, 16.1% of dentists reported having one dental assistant, while 39.1% had two, and 33% worked with three to five dental assistants per dentist (Figure 9).

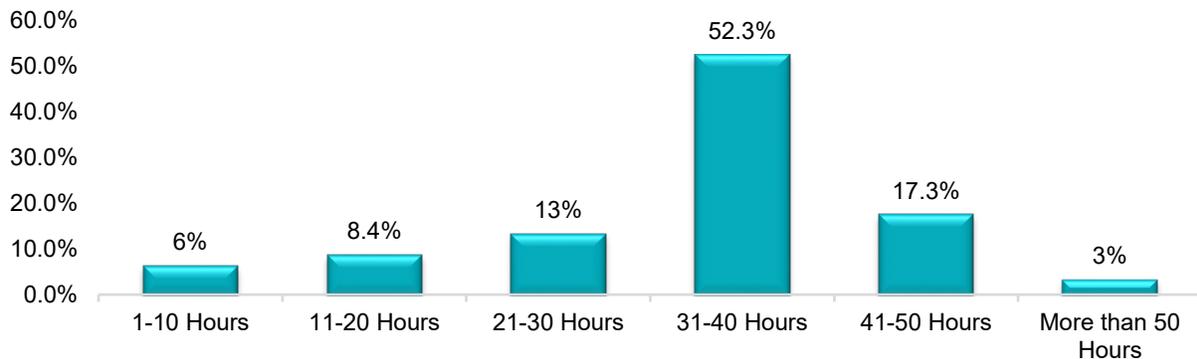
Productivity

Figure 10. Distribution of Patient Encounters per Week Among Dentists in Florida, 2023–2024



Patient volume is an important measure of dental practice productivity. There were 27.3% of respondents who reported 26–50 patient encounters in a typical week (Figure 10), and 23% of respondents reported 51–75 patient encounters per week.

Figure 11. Hours per Week Over the Past 12 Months Among Dentists in Florida, 2023–2024

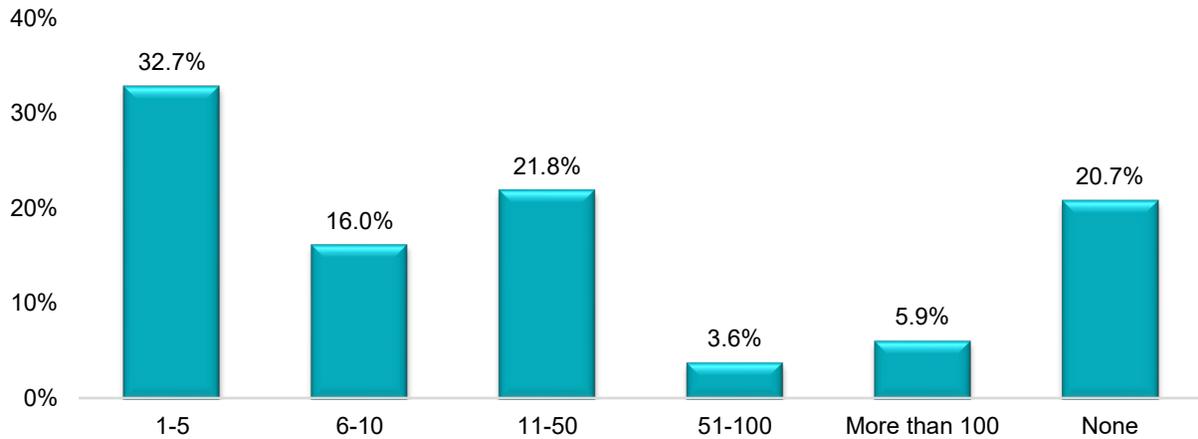


In Figure 11, 52.3% of respondents indicated they typically worked between 31–40 hours per week over the past 12 months, while 20.6% worked more than 40 hours per week and 14.4% worked part time (20 hours or less).

Services to Vulnerable Populations

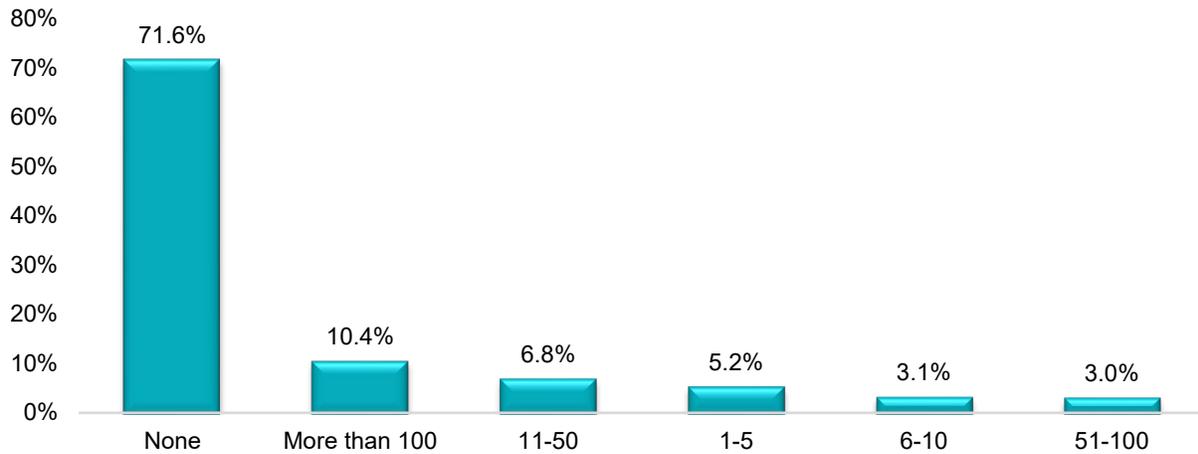
Volunteering dental services plays a vital role in enhancing access to care for low-income Floridians. According to the survey, 53.1% of dentists in Florida reported not volunteering any time for dental care in the past year. However, 23.8% volunteered between 1–8 hours, and 9.2% dedicated 9–16 hours. The remaining 13.9% of dentists was distributed between those volunteering 17–24 hours, 25–30 hours, 31–60 hours, 61–120 hours, and over 120 hours.

Figure 12. Distribution of Number of Special Health Care Needs Patients Seen in the Last 12 Months Among Dentists in Florida, 2023–2024



In the past year, 79.3% of Florida dentists treated at least one patient with special health care needs, with 32.7% seeing between 1–5 patients (Figure 12).

Figure 13. Distribution of Number of Medicaid Patients Seen in the Last 12 Months Among Dentists in Florida, 2023–2024



Only 19.5% of Florida’s dentists reported they were enrolled as a Medicaid provider. A total of 28.4% of respondents reported seeing at least one Medicaid patient during this period, while the majority (71.6%) reported seeing none (Figure 13). Respondents were asked to share the reasons why they were not enrolled in Medicaid. The most frequently reported reason was inadequate reimbursement (24.1%), while the least reported reason was a low Medicaid population in the county in which they practice (3.2%). When asked why they were not accepting new Medicaid patients, respondents again pointed to inadequate reimbursement as the leading factor (27%). The least cited reasons in this category were fingerprinting requirements and low Medicaid population in the county, each mentioned by only 2.1% of respondents.

Table 1. Current Patients and Acceptance of New Patients by Population Among Florida Dentists, 2023-2024

Population	Patients Currently Seeing	New Patients Accepted
Children aged 1–18 years	17.2%	16.8%
Children aged 1–18 years with special health care needs	9.6%	13.2%
Medicaid	4.1%	4%
Pregnant women	15.6%	15.4%
Adults aged 19–59 years	20.6%	20.4%
Adults aged 18 years or older with special health care needs	13.1%	13.2%
Older adults aged 60 years or older	19.8%	19.6%

Respondents indicated the patient populations they were currently seeing and whether they were accepting new patients in each of those categories (Table 1). Dentists reported the most common population they served was adults ages 19–59 years (20.6%) and the least common was Medicaid patients (4.1%).

Licensed Dentists Practicing in Florida – Retention and Attrition

Overall, 11.5% of respondents reported plans to retire from clinical dentistry in Florida within the next five years. Among those intending to retire, 1.3% were younger than age 50, 6% were between ages 50 and 59, 30% were between ages 60 and 69, and the majority, 53.5%, were aged 70 and older. Of the respondents, 6% were female and 15.9% were male. This data provides a demographic profile of Florida dentists who plan to retire within the specified time frame.

Licensed Dentists Not Practicing in Florida

Most survey respondents (77.3%) with an active Florida license reported practicing in Florida. Among those not currently practicing in Florida (22.7%), the two most common reasons given were that they are currently practicing in another state (62.3%), or they are currently retired (11.6%). Of dentist respondents with an active license not practicing in Florida, 80.8% stated they plan to relocate to Florida sometime in the future.

Conclusions

Workforce survey assessments can provide policymakers and community partners with information regarding the clinical practice, geographic location, and scope of practice for Florida dentists. The Department continues to work with professional health organizations to develop an innovative, patient-centered, oral health care delivery system.

Appendix A: 2023-2024 Dentist Workforce Survey

Assessing Florida's current and future dental workforce is critical in shaping Florida's health care policies.

Your responses, which constitute a public record, will be summarized in a Florida Dentist Workforce Report. Previous reports are available online at the Florida Department of Health's Public Health Dental Program website: www.flhealth.gov/dental/reports. We appreciate your time and effort in completing the survey questions.

Part 1: Demographics

1. Do you hold an active dental license in any location other than Florida? (Select all that apply).
 - No
 - Yes – another state (*include a drop down list of all states*)
 - Yes – Puerto Rico or another U.S. territory
 - Yes – out of country

2. Please indicate all of the dental schools or programs from which you received a DDS, DMD, or equivalent degree. (Select all that apply).
 - Lake Erie College of Medicine: Bradenton Dental School
 - Nova Southeastern University College of Dental Medicine
 - University of Florida College of Dentistry
 - U.S. dental school in another state
 - Puerto Rico or other U.S. territory dental school
 - Foreign dental school or program

3. How many years have you practiced clinical dentistry? (Select one).
 - a. 0–1 years
 - b. 2–5 years
 - c. 6–10 years
 - d. 11–15 years
 - e. 16–20 years
 - f. More than 20 years
 - g. Not applicable

4. At present, do you practice clinical dentistry in Florida, or have you accepted employment for practicing dentistry in Florida? (Select one).
- Yes (Continue to question 5). **Note: These respondents will complete the rest of survey.**
 - No (Continue to 4a and 4b). **Note: These respondents will be directed out of survey after they answer 4a and 4b.**

4a. The primary reason you are not using your Florida license to practice clinical dentistry in Florida is: (Select one).

- I currently practice clinical dentistry in another state.
- I currently practice clinical dentistry outside the U.S.
- I teach dentistry in Florida and do not engage in clinical practice.
- I teach dentistry outside Florida and do not engage in clinical practice.
- I work in Florida in an administrative capacity related to dentistry but do not practice clinical dentistry.
- I work outside Florida in an administrative capacity related to dentistry but do not practice clinical dentistry.
- I am employed or self-employed in Florida in a job unrelated to dentistry.
- I am employed or self-employed outside Florida in a job unrelated to dentistry.
- I am currently unemployed and seeking employment related to the clinical practice, teaching, or administration of dentistry.
- I am currently unemployed and seeking employment unrelated to dentistry.
- I am currently retired.
- Other (unspecified).

4b. If you do not currently practice dentistry in Florida, do you plan to practice dentistry in Florida in the near future? (Select one).

- Yes, I plan to practice clinical dentistry in Florida within the next 12 months.
- Yes, I plan to practice clinical dentistry in Florida in 1-2 years.
- Yes, I plan to practice clinical dentistry in Florida in 3-4 years.
- Yes, I plan to practice clinical dentistry in Florida, but I am not sure when.
- No, I do not plan to practice dentistry in Florida.

If you do NOT practice dentistry in Florida or have NOT accepted employment for practicing in the state, you are now finished with the survey. Thank you for your participation.

5. Which languages do you speak? (Select all that apply.)

- English
- Arabic
- Chinese (Mandarin or Cantonese)
- Creole
- French
- German
- Hebrew
- Italian
- Japanese
- Korean
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Russian
- Spanish
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese
- Other African language
- Other Asian language
- Other European language
- Other Middle Eastern language
- Other language (unspecified)

Part 2: Clinical Practice Characteristics

6. How many months did you practice clinical dentistry in Florida in the last 12 months? (Select one).

- a. 0–2 months
- b. 3–4 months
- c. 5–6 months
- d. 7–8 months
- e. 9–10 months
- f. 11–12 months

7. How many years have you been in your current primary practice position? (Select one).

- a. 0–1 years
- b. 2–5 years
- c. 6–10 years
- d. 11–15 years
- e. 16–20 years
- f. More than 20 years

8. In a typical work week, approximately how many hours and in which Florida county(ies) do you practice clinical dentistry? You may select up to three counties. If you are employed to practice but have not yet started, select "Not applicable."

- 8a. County 1: (select county from drop down menu with all 67 Florida counties)
8aa. Hours for County 1: (Select one)
 - a. 1–10 hours
 - b. 11–20 hours
 - c. 21–30 hours
 - d. 31–40 hours
 - e. 41–50 hours
 - f. More than 50 hours

- 8b. County 2: (select county from drop down menu with all 67 Florida counties)
8bb. Hours for County 2: (Select one)
 - a. 1–10 hours
 - b. 11–20 hours
 - c. 21–30 hours
 - d. 31–40 hours
 - e. 41–50 hours
 - f. More than 50 hours

- 8c. County 3: (select county from drop down menu with all 67 Florida counties)
8cc. Hours for County 3: (Select one)
 - a. 1–10 hours
 - b. 11–20 hours
 - c. 21–30 hours
 - d. 31–40 hours
 - e. 41–50 hours
 - f. More than 50 hours

Or

- Not applicable – I have not started employment yet.

9. If you routinely practice clinical dentistry fewer than 40 hours per week, please select the reason(s) from the list below. (Select all that apply).

- Limited work hours are my personal preference
- Limited work hours allow time for volunteer (uncompensated) work
- Limited hours allow time for other compensated work
- Health-related issues limit my work hours
- I am phasing into retirement
- I adjust my hours to fit the patient workload
- My position is part-time
- Other (unspecified)

10. How many hours of clinical volunteer dental service did you provide in the past 12 months? (Select one).

- a. None
- b. 1–8 hours
- c. 9–16 hours
- d. 17–24 hours
- e. 25–30 hours
- f. 31–60 hours
- g. 61–120 hours
- h. More than 120 hours

11. Where did you provide clinical volunteer dental services in the past 24 months? (Select all that apply).

- I did not provide any clinical volunteer dental services
- In a private office(s), on my own
- In a private office(s), as part of an organized event (e.g. Give Kids a Smile Day)
- At a safety net clinic (e.g. county health department, community health center, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), Mission of Mercy)
- As part of a health fair
- As part of a school-based or school-linked event
- International charitable organization (mission trips outside of U.S.)
- Other (unspecified)

12. Indicate your primary type of practice. (Select one).

- a. General Private Practice (basic preventive, restorative, surgical)
- b. General Public Health Practice (basic preventive, restorative, surgical)
- c. Specialty Practice: Endodontics
- d. Specialty Practice: Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- e. Specialty Practice: Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology
- f. Specialty Practice: Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- g. Specialty Practice: Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics
- h. Specialty Practice: Pediatric Dentistry
- i. Specialty Practice: Periodontics
- j. Specialty Practice: Prosthodontics
- k. Private Practice Administrative Services
- l. Public Health Administrative Services
- m. Other

13. Please indicate if you have received a certificate from a CODA-accredited specialty program or are board certified in an ADA-recognized specialty from the options below. (Select all that apply).

- Dental Public Health
- Endodontics
- Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology
- Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Orthodontics and Dentofacial Orthopedics
- Pediatric Dentistry
- Periodontics
- Prosthodontics
- None

14. Indicate your primary practice setting. (Select one).

- a. Solo Office Practice (Private Sector)
- b. Group Office Practice: Single Specialty (Private Sector)
- c. Group Office Practice: Multi Specialty (Private Sector)
- d. County Health Department
- e. Community Health Center
- f. Federally Qualified Health Center
- g. State or Federal Correctional Facility Clinic
- h. Other State Government Clinical Setting
- i. Military Facility Clinic
- j. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Clinic
- k. Academic Institution
- l. Indian Health Service
- m. Long-Term Care Facility (Nursing Home)
- n. Other (unspecified)

15. What best describes your practice arrangement? (Select one).

- a. Sole owner
- b. Co-owner
- c. Employee
- d. Independent contractor
- e. Other (unspecified)

16. Do you practice clinical dentistry in the county where you reside? (Select one).

- a. Yes – all of the time (100%)
- b. Yes – some of the time (1-99%)
- c. No – none of the time (0%)

17. On average, how many patient encounters do you have in a typical work week? (Select one).

- a. 1–25 encounters
- b. 26–50 encounters
- c. 51–75 encounters
- d. 76–100 encounters
- e. 101–125 encounters
- f. More than 125 encounters
- g. Not applicable – I have not started employment.

18. Approximately how many special needs (physical or mental disability) and Medicaid patients did you see in the past 12 months? (*Complete separately for each patient population below*).

18a. Special health care needs patients– physically or mentally disabled (Select one).

- a. None
- b. 1–5
- c. 6–10
- d. 11–20
- e. 21–50
- f. 51–100
- g. 101–125
- h. More than 125

18b. Medicaid patients (Select one).

- a. None
- b. 1–5
- c. 6–10
- d. 11–20
- e. 21–50
- f. 51–100
- g. 101–125
- h. More than 125

19. Are you currently seeing any of these following patient populations in your primary practice setting? (Select all that apply).

- Children (age 1–18 years)
- Medicaid
- Pregnant women
- Adults (age 19–59 years)
- Older adults (age 60 years or older)
- Children (age 1–18 years) with special health care needs
- Adults (age 18 years or older) with special health care needs

20. Are you currently accepting **new** patients?
- No – I am not currently accepting any new patients (continue to question 21).
 - Yes – I am accepting new patients (continue to question 20a).

20a. Are you accepting new patients from any of the following patient populations?
(Select all that apply)?

- Children (age 1–18 years)
- Medicaid
- Pregnant women
- Adults (age 19–59 years)
- Older adults (age 60 years or older)
- Children (age 1–18 years) with special health care needs
- Adults (age 18 years or older) with special health care needs

21. Are you currently enrolled as a Medicaid provider?
- Yes (continue to question 23)
 - No (continue to question 22)

22. Which of the following reasons best explains why you are not enrolled in Medicaid? (Select all that apply.)

- Inadequate reimbursement
- Slow reimbursement
- Frequent changes in Florida Medicaid rules, regulations, and policies
- Fingerprinting requirements
- Billing requirements
- Too much paperwork
- Practice is at full capacity
- Medicaid population characteristics
- Low Medicaid population in your county or counties in which you practice
- Concerned about fraud issues
- Concerned about liability issues
- Specialty or adult primary practice services are not reimbursed by Medicaid
- Other (unspecified)

23. Are you currently accepting new Medicaid patients?
- Yes (continue to question 25)
 - No (continue to question 24)

24. Which of the following reasons best explains why you are not accepting new Medicaid patients? (Select all that apply.)

- Inadequate reimbursement
- Slow reimbursement
- Frequent changes in Florida Medicaid rules, regulations, and policies
- Fingerprinting requirements
- Billing requirements
- Too much paperwork
- Practice is at full capacity
- Medicaid population characteristics
- Low Medicaid population in your county or counties in which you practice
- Concerned about fraud issues
- Concerned about liability issues
- Specialty or adult primary practice services are not reimbursed by Medicaid
- Other (unspecified)

25. In your dental practice, how many dental hygienists and dental assistants per dentist are typically on duty at any given time during your work day?

25a. Dental hygienist(s):

- a. None (0)
- b. 1
- c. 2
- d. 3–5
- e. More than 5

25b. Dental assistant(s):

- a. None (0)
- b. 1
- c. 2
- d. 3–5
- e. More than 5

26. Regarding your practice of clinical dentistry in Florida within the next five years, which of the following apply? (Select one.)

- a. I plan to retire from clinical dentistry.
- b. I plan to end my clinical practice in Florida due to non-clinical employment in dentistry.
- c. I plan to end my clinical practice in Florida due to non-dental employment.
- d. I plan to end my clinical practice in Florida due to another reason.
- e. I plan to practice clinical dentistry in another state or country.
- f. I plan to reduce my clinical practice hours but continue practicing in Florida.
- g. I have no plans to end or reduce my Florida clinical practice within the next five years.

Attestation Statement:

I confirm that the information provided is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and the submission does not contain any knowingly false information or statements.

- a. Yes
- b. No

Thank you for completing the Dentist Workforce Survey.