Dear Prospective Student,

Thank you for your interest in the Allan Hancock College Dental Assisting Program. We are pleased that you are exploring Dental Assisting as a profession.

Dental Assisting is a demanding discipline, and the course of study is challenging as well as rewarding. The program offers an opportunity for students to practice their skills by providing dental care to the underserved populations of Santa Maria and culminates with a 200-hour internship in which students get professional experience working in a real dental office.

Please review the contents of this application packet thoroughly prior to submitting your application and supporting documents. Make and keep a copy of all documents you turn into the office for your reference.

If you have questions regarding the program, please look at the Dental website https://www.hancockcollege.edu/pathways/health-sciences/dental-assist.php.

Sincerely,

Tawnya Karstrom
Program Specialist

To be considered for the Dental Assisting program, please submit the attached application along with all required documents on or before May 31, 2026, end of day. This application is specific to the current application period. Be sure to thoroughly review the entire packet and submit a complete application. A randomized lottery will select the first 26 applicants for the program. All other applicants will be placed on the program waitlist according to their lottery number.

PROGRAM

This program, approved by the California Board of Dental Examiners, runs from fall to spring and equips students with the technical skills required for employment in a dental office. Students gain hands-on experience in general chairside and specialty procedures, office management, and x-ray techniques.

STATE CERTIFICATION

Certification is granted by the Dental Board of California. The California Registered Dental Assistants (RDA) Exam, typically held each August, consists of a written test. Graduates who pass the exam become Registered Dental Assistants.

CERTIFICATE EXCLUSIVE TO ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE STUDENTS

Upon successful completion, students earn a program certificate in:

- Coronal Polishing
- Radiation Safety
- Pit & Fissure Sealants
- The Dental Practice Act
- Infection Control

The certificate is only awarded to students who finish the entire program and requirements through Allan Hancock College.

The second semester (Jan–May) of the program includes a 200-hour internship in a dental office.

Students may also pursue an **Associate in Science Degree** in Dental Assisting (consult with a counselor for eligibility—highly recommended). Completion of 32.5 program units is required for both the Associate in Science Degree and the Certificate. The degree path requires additional general education courses (see counseling for details).

Summer – 1 unit		
DA-310	Exploring Dental Careers	1.0
Fall – 17.0 units		
DA-314	Introduction to Bio-Dental	3.0
DA-317	Dental Assisting Theory	7.0
DA-318	Basic Dental Assisting Skills	3.0
DA-319	Dental Assisting Administrative Skills	3.0
DA-320	Dental Assisting Practicum in the Community	1.0
Winter – 0.5 unit		
DA-327	Dental Screening	0.5
Spring – 14.0 units		
DA-325	Clinical Dental Procedures	3.0
DA-326	Dental Radiography	4.0
DA-328	Pit and Fissure Sealants	1.0
DA-329	Dental Assisting Practicum	4.0
DA-330	Coronal Polish	1.0
DA-332	RDA Law and Ethics	0.5
DA-348	RDA: Success Seminar	0.5

COMPLETED APPLICATION PACKET AND ELIGIBILITY:

- All applicants must have an AHC student ID number and complete the program application attached.
  - When filling out the application please use your legal name. Your legal name must match your government-issued ID. This name will be used for background checks, licensure applications, and clinical placement records.
- You must be 18 years of age or older by the first day of the program and provide proof with this application.
  - Acceptable forms of proof of age: birth certificate, passport (page containing name and date of birth), driver's license or state id. - only one copy of one document is required.
- All applicants must show proof of completion of English C1000/101 (Freshman Composition) with a grade of "C" or better or proof of current enrollment for Spring.
  - A printout of your AHC unofficial transcripts must be provided with this application.
  - Official transcripts from previous colleges must have already been evaluated by AHC Admissions and Records Transcriber and in your AHC portal to print for proof of completion of English.

If you are going to apply to more than one program within the Health Sciences department, you are welcome to do so, however, if your lottery number places you in more than one program at the same time, the office will decide which program you will be placed in. You will only be permitted to register for one program at a time. To be considered for the other programs the following year, you must apply to that program during the next application period and attach the acceptance email.

UPON ACCEPTANCE INTO THE DENTAL PROGRAM

All applicants will be notified of their admission status via the email provided on their application by the end of the day on June 18, 2026. Please ensure your application is written or typed clearly to avoid any confusion. Check your spam/junk folder, as AHC emails may not always go directly to your inbox.

- All students in the program are expected to maintain a 2.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) or above each term prior to moving on to the next term. Core curriculum is intended to be completed in one academic year.
- Students must provide their own transportation to off-campus clinical sites.
- A selected uniform and adherence to the dress code is required.
- Health packets must be completed including a physical with a physician of your choice, submit a full immunization record, CPR certification (specific to the program), and a completed physical form. Additionally, you must pass a drug screening and background check and pick up the program-approved uniforms by the acceptance packet deadlines. The packet, which includes all requirements and due dates, will be sent via email if you are given a seat.
- The student must register and pay for all Medical Assisting classes held in each semester by the deadline dates and follow the college payment policy.

There is a mandatory student orientation (DA 310 course) and a required CPR course specific to dental assisting, course dates will be provided in your emailed acceptance health packet. You will need to register for both the DA 310 orientation course and the CPR course provided to you. The DA 310 orientation is a two-day, all-day event, and the CPR course is an 8-hour course that will only be for students who have been offered a seat in the dental program. Both will take place in July, before the program starts. You will be given the information to purchase the program kit during this time.

DRESS CODE

Your appearance reflects the dental clinic and college standards; it indicates to patients and co-workers your pride and interest in your profession. These standards are maintained by personal neatness and cleanliness, by wearing only the authorized uniform and by avoiding the use of elaborate jewelry and cosmetics. More information regarding uniforms and appearance will be in the emailed health packet as well as discussed during orientation.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

As of 2024, dental assistants in California earn a median hourly wage of approximately $23.89. LABORMARKETINFO.EDD.CA.GOV This translates to an annual salary of around $52,731. SALARY.COM Registered Dental Assistants (RDAs) in California tend to earn higher wages, with a median hourly rate of $29.15, compared to non-certified dental assistants who earn about $23.18 per hour. DANB.ORG Salaries can vary based on factors such as experience, education, and location within the state. While the median wage for dental assistants in California is around $23.89 per hour, obtaining certification and gaining experience can significantly enhance earning potential.

FINANCIAL AID

Please contact the Financial Aid office for all questions and/or eligibility or go to https://www.hancockcollege.edu/finaid/index.php for up-to-date information.

NOTE:

Allan Hancock College does not guarantee that you will become a Registered Dental Assistant (RDA), even if you successfully complete the course and pass the State Board.

- Check with the dental board for more information on criminal backgrounds to for licensure - https://www.dbc.ca.gov/

The application and required documentation must be hand-delivered to the W Building, Office W-11, or placed in the M100/200 building mailbox directly across from the M132 office door. Alternatively, you can mail the documents to the college, addressed to the attention of Tawnya Karstrom, post marked on or before the application due date.

IMPORTANT:

- The Dental Assisting program will follow all CDPH, CDC, California Dental Association and Santa Barbara County health guidelines and regulations.
- Failure to comply with regulatory health standards could potentially limit your placement in a clinical site and affect your ability to complete the program.
- It is the responsibility of the facilities (Externship sites) to hold students to the same standards as an employee who has patient contact. The facilities have the final say as to whether a student may participate in patient care. It is not the decision of Allan Hancock College.
- Infractions, probations or pending court cases with a disposition date within 7 years showing up on backgrounds may result in non-admittance to or dismissal from the program. Felony convictions will result in non-admittance to the program.
- It may take several weeks to complete the background check/drug screening, please pay close attention to due dates. You may be dropped from the program if the background check/drug screening is not started by the date in your acceptance packet.

**BACKGROUND CHECKS: The Joint Commission of Hospital Accreditation and policies of our externship sites have required that any person having patient contact be screened for criminal convictions, and the results must be available to the facility or clinic.

DENTAL ASSISTING PROGRAM ESTIMATED STUDENT FEES

Health Packet Expenses	
PHYSICAL EXAM – Private physician	Variable Cost
IMMUNIZATIONS – Hepatitis B Series, DPT, MMR, Varicella, TB	Variable Cost
AHC STUDENT ID CARD WITH PICTURE	FREE
IDENTIFICATION NAME PIN (FIRST PIN FREE)	FREE
BACKGROUND CHECK – Corporate Screening	$49.92
DRUG SCREENING – Med Plus Central Coast ONLY	$55.00
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS WITH WORKBOOK - ENTIRE PROGRAM	$380.00
Total is estimated excluding variable costs	$484.92
Summer Semester	
TUITION—EXPLORING CAREER OPPORTUNITIES—DA 310 (1 unit @ $46 in state)	$46.00
CPR FOR HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS EMS 306 ($23 ½ unit) ($13.46 material fee) ($25.25 textbook)	$61.71 (AHC)
UNIFORM—SHOES (5 top and bottom scrubs paid for by the College—$200 savings)	$50.00 (est)
HEALTH FEE ($22), STUDENT CENTER FEES ($1 PER UNIT/$10 MAX), STUDENT REP FEE ($2 OPTIONAL)	$25.50
PARKING ($2.00 PER DAY OR $10.00 FOR SEMESTER)	$10.00
Total is estimated excluding variable costs	$193.21
Fall Semester	
TUITION (17.0 units @ $46/unit)	$782.00
CLINICAL SUPPLIES (PURCHASED THROUGH UCLA)	$260.00
PARKING ($2.00 PER DAY OR $20.00 FOR SEMESTER)	$20.00
HEALTH FEE ($26), STUDENT CENTER FEES ($1 PER UNIT/$10 MAX), STUDENT REP FEE ($2 OPTIONAL)	$38.00
MISCELLANEOUS SUPPLIES (disks, notebooks, pens, etc.)	Various Cost
Total is estimated	$1100.00
Winter Semester	
TUITION (0.5 units @ $46/unit)	$23.00
Total is estimated	$23.00
Spring Semester	
TUITION (13.5 units @ $46/unit)	$621.00
PARKING ($2.00 PER DAY OR $20.00 FOR SEMESTER)	$20.00
HEALTH FEE ($26), STUDENT CENTER FEES ($1 PER UNIT/$10 MAX), STUDENT REP FEE ($2 OPTIONAL)	$38.00
CLINICAL SUPPLIES (PURCHASED THROUGH UCLA)	$320.00
Total is estimated	$999.00
State Licensure Fees— After program expense	
STATE BOARD EXAM APPLICATION FEES & FINGERPRINTING	$250.00
Total is estimated	$250.00

TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS TO ACHIEVE DENTAL ASSISTING CERTIFICATE
$2,800.13 (excluding variable costs)
Prices are subject to change

TOTAL ESTIMATED COSTS TO ACHIEVE REGISTERED DENTAL ASSISTANT LICENSE
$3,050.13 (excluding variable costs)
Prices are subject to change

ALLAN HANCOCK COLLEGE
Start here. Go anywhere.

Personal Information
All applicants must use their legal name exactly as it appears on their government-issued identification.

First Name: MI: Last Name:
Address:
City: State: Zip Code:
Preferred Phone Number:
Social Security/Tax ID Number: Birth Date:
Hancock Student ID # :   Preferred Email Address:
(Mandatory)
Applying to any other Health Sciences programs, if yes, list:
Education Status: Currently Enrolled in HS _____   HS Diploma _____   GED/HS Equivalency _____   Some College _____   Degree _____
Did you apply in 2025 to the dental program? -

Confidential Applicant Survey

Federal and state mandates require that we compile summary data on the gender and ethnicity of applicants. To assist us in complying with this requirement we are requesting that you complete the below.

Please identify the ethnicity you most identify with or the one that best represents your background. This is for demographic purposes and will help us better understand our student population.

- ☐ African American / Black
- ☐ American Indian / Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Other Asian
- ☐ South Asian / Indian, Pakistani etc.
- ☐ Filipino
- ☐ Hispanic / Latino
- ☐ Native Hawaiian
- ☐ Other Pacific Islander
- ☐ Caucasian / White
- ☐ Mixed race

Gender _____   Preferred language at home _____

Allan Hancock Joint Community College District strictly prohibits discrimination based on race, color, ancestry, religion, gender, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, medical condition, marital status, or sexual orientation. Additionally, information about an applicant's name is kept confidential and is not shared with any other agency.

The application and required documentation must be hand-delivered to the W Building, Office W-11, or placed in the M100/200 building mailbox directly across from the M132 office door. Alternatively, you can mail the documents to the college, addressed to the attention of Tawnya Karstrom, must be postmarked by the last day of application period.

Please print, read and acknowledge understanding by checking each box, then sign and date

☐ I have read this application packet carefully and agree to comply with the standards and rules detailed within.

☐ I agree that I must submit proof, with this application, that I am 18 years of age or older to participate in the Dental Assisting Program.

☐ I understand that I am required to provide proof of completion and equivalency of English C1000/101 with a grade of "C" or better with my Allan Hancock unofficial transcripts.

☐ I understand that once I am accepted, the health packet requirements are required by the clinical facilities and not by Allan Hancock College. Infractions, probations or pending court cases showing up on the background check and/or a positive drug screen test will result in non-admittance to or dismissal from the program.

☐ I understand that I will be notified by **email** on June 18th, 2026, my status in the program. It is my responsibility to ensure my email is written clearly and to check my spam/junk folder.

☐ I understand that if I am assigned a waitlist number, I may be notified up until a few weeks before the program begins or as time allows, but my position will not carry over to the next application period.

☐ I confirm that the name entered above is my legal name as it appears on my government-issued ID.

☐ I understand that requirements for the program can change and will require flexibility.

I certify that I have read and understand the statements made in this application packet. To the best of my knowledge, the information provided is true and complete. I acknowledge that any false or misleading information may result in denial of admittance.

_____

Signature   Date

Application does not guarantee that applicants have satisfied minimum criteria

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If you would like to apply to more than one program within the Health Sciences department, you are welcome to do so, however, if your lottery number places you in more than one program at the same time, the office will decide which program you will be placed in. You will only be permitted to register for one program at a time. To be considered for the other programs the following year, you must apply to that program during the next application period and attach the acceptance email.

For office use only:

Application complete: ___Yes ___No (App/Proof of Age/AHC Xscript)

English C1000/101 Complete: _____ Sem/Yr _____ Grade _____No

Other program applications turned in? Program:_____

Previous AHC DA / MA / MB? _____

NOTES:

Please remember to make a copy of your entire application packet prior to turning it in. Copies will not be made in the Health Sciences Office. Copy machines can be found in the library, student services or campus graphics.