

Jurisprudence: Knowledge of the Law

In November 2006, the *Health Professions Act* and the Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation came in force for the dental hygienists profession. The Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation 4(2) states:
An applicant for registration under subsection (1) must successfully pass a jurisprudence examination referred to in section 3(1)(c).

jurisprudence. *L jūris prūdentia* (jurisprudence)

- the science or philosophy of law.
- a body or system of laws
- a department of law: medical jurisprudence.
- Civil Law. decisions of courts, especially of reviewing tribunals

Dictionary.com Unabridged.

Retrieved June 20, 2022, from Dictionary.com website: <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/jurisprudence>

The primary function of the Alberta College of Dental Hygienists (the College or ACDH) is to promote high quality dental hygiene practice and ensure client safety. This means that the public can expect to receive dental hygiene services from competent professionals who are registered with the College.

Consumers, College registrants, other health professionals, employers, educational institutions, and regulatory bodies consult the College for information about various aspects of dental hygiene practice including legal considerations of dental hygiene practice in Alberta. The term jurisprudence encompasses those legal considerations.

As a registered dental hygienist, it is your professional responsibility to know, comply with, and seek further information about legislation, standards of practice, guidelines, and ACDH policies regarding dental hygiene practice in Alberta. Whether you are an employee, independent contract, or an employer, know your rights and responsibilities.

Ignorance of the law is not an acceptable excuse for unprofessional conduct.

The ACDH Jurisprudence Examination: An Opportunity to Learn

This article answers some frequently asked questions about the jurisprudence exam:

- Where can I find the information referenced in the examination?
- What is the purpose of the jurisprudence examination?
- What is the jurisprudence examination like?
- Why is it an open-book examination?
- When can I access the ACDH Jurisprudence Exam?
- I don't have a computer. How can I take the examination?
- Tips to approaching the documents and taking the examination

Where can I find the information referenced in the examination?

The [ACDH website](#) contains information about and links to documents referenced in the exam.

- Click here for information about the [College, Council and committees](#)
- Click here for [regulatory documents](#) such as legislation, bylaws, Standards of Practice and Guidelines, policies, and the Code of Ethics.
- Click here for information about [registration and renewal](#)
- Click here for information about the [Continuing Competence Program](#)
- Click here for information about [Advanced Restricted Activities](#).

What is the purpose of the jurisprudence examination?

The jurisprudence examination is designed to ensure that registrants have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the legislation, Code of Ethics, Standards of Practice and Guidelines, and other regulatory documents that govern the practice of dental hygiene in the province of Alberta. Dental hygienists must be familiar and comply with provincial legislation and the College's regulatory documents. Failure to do so may result in being subject to disciplinary action.

Successful completion of the examination is required as part of the application for registration on the General or Courtesy Registers, as well as for existing registrants who are applying to enroll in the University of Alberta Elements of Prescribing for Dental Hygienists course.

What is the jurisprudence examination like?

The examination is an online, open book examination comprised of 50 questions randomly selected from a bank of multiple choice and scenario questions. Depending on how familiar you are with the information the examination can take between one and two hours to complete, although occasionally some individuals have needed more time than this. **The examination can be completed in more than one sitting within a 48-hour period and the examination can be paused and accessed at your convenience.** A valuable, short tutorial is included on the exam site to help you become familiar with the exam process and use of resources.

Why is it an open-book examination?

The jurisprudence examination is an open-book format because an applicant is not expected to memorize the exact information from all the documents. An applicant should understand how the documents relate to each other and where to access the pertinent information. Become familiar enough with each document so you can access the appropriate document when the need arises.

When can I access the ACDH Jurisprudence Exam?

Once the College has received all the required documentation for your application, you will receive an email that will include your username and directions on how to login and change your password.

I don't have a computer. How can I take the examination?

The examination is accessed only by computer and internet connection. If you do not have other access to a computer, they are available in libraries and schools throughout the province.

Tips to approaching the documents and taking the examination

- Understand how the documents relate and which document takes precedent over the other:
 - the *Health Professions Act* is the umbrella legislation governing all regulated health professions in Alberta
 - the Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation specifically applies to the dental hygienists profession
 - the ACDH Bylaws indicate how the ACDH is governed
 - the Dental Hygiene Standards of Practice and Practice Guidelines indicate how you should practice
 - the Code of Ethics indicates your ethical responsibilities
- Scan the table of contents of each document for a general idea of content. Some people print the table of contents of each document to use as a road map to navigate the documents online. Other people might print off the complete documents for reference.
- Do not expect to successfully complete the examination by only using a document search function to look for key words. Doing so will not give you an understanding of how the documents relate to each other.
- Determine the pertinent sections of each of the documents and read them well. Make note of areas that of major significance.
- The examination takes concentrated effort. Allow yourself chunks of time to work on the examination without interruption.