



Provider Bulletin

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THIS ISSUE

- pg 1 What Constitutes Diagnostic Radiographs for the Purpose of Establishing Arch Integrity
- pg 3 Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Requirement

What Constitutes Diagnostic Radiographs for the Purpose of Establishing Arch Integrity

Medi-Cal Dental would like to remind providers regarding the criteria for diagnostic radiographs and arch integrity films, in accordance with Medi-Cal Dental standards. For Medi-Cal Dental, arch integrity is established when there are sufficient proximate natural teeth in a restorable condition, which ensure adequate or satisfactory occlusion for masticatory function in the opposing arch. Anterior periapical radiographs and bitewings are sufficient to establish arch integrity of the arches. Additionally, a panoramic radiograph may also be utilized to establish arch integrity for up to 36 months, provided it meets diagnostic quality standards.

When arch integrity films are required for a procedure and exposure to radiation should be minimized due to a medical condition, only a periapical radiograph shall be required. Submitted written documentation shall include a statement of the medical condition such as the following:

- Pregnancy
- Recent application of therapeutic doses of ionizing radiation to the head and neck areas
- Hypoplastic or aplastic anemia

Continued on pg 2

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Learn the latest Medi-Cal Dental news and information by signing up for our Medi-Cal Dental Fee-For-Service Provider email distribution list [here](#).

TRAINING SEMINARS

To reserve a spot online or view a complete list of training seminars, go to the [Provider Training Seminar Schedule](#).

PROVIDER ENROLLMENT

To enroll in Medi-Cal Dental, or check the status of an existing enrollment application, click [here](#) or email PAVE@dhcs.ca.gov.



PO BOX 15609, Sacramento, CA 95852-0509 | (800) 423-0507

dental.dhcs.ca.gov



All radiographs or paper copies of radiographs must be of diagnostic quality. They must be properly mounted and labeled with the following information: the date the radiograph was taken, the provider's name, the provider's billing number, the patient's name, and the specific tooth, quadrant, or area (as applicable).

It is important to submit diagnostic radiographs correctly to avoid denials. Denials can happen if a radiograph submission:

- Is non-diagnostic
- Is missing or incomplete
- Fails to demonstrate medical necessity for restorative procedures
- Offers a poor prognosis for treatment
 - ✓ Tooth/teeth/arch show severe bone loss
 - ✓ Gross destruction rendering the tooth/teeth/arch unrestorable

Bitewing Radiographs shall be considered current as follows:

- Radiographs for treatment of primary teeth within the last eight months.
- Radiographs for treatment of permanent teeth (as well as over-retained primary teeth where the permanent tooth is congenitally missing or impacted) within the last 14 months.
- Radiographs to establish arch integrity within the last 36 months. Arch radiographs are not required for patients under the age of 21.

Bitewing radiographs can be used to help establish arch integrity. When used to help establish arch integrity, radiographs are considered current for a period of 36 months.

Radiographs submitted for treatment on a specific area or tooth must be current as noted above.

For helpful tips on avoiding denials, please visit the [Provider Billing Tips](#) page on the Medi-Cal Dental website. For information on Diagnostic Radiographs and Arch Integrity, please review the [Manual of Criteria](#) in the Provider Handbook.

For questions and support, you can contact the Medi-Cal Dental Telephone Service Center at (800) 423-0507, Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. through 5:00 p.m.



Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment Requirement

The Kindergarten Oral Health Assessment (KOHA) is a dental checkup requirement that helps schools identify children suffering from untreated dental disease and helps parents establish a dental home for their children. Under California law, children must have a dental checkup 12 months before entering public school for the first time or by May 31st of their first year (Kindergarten or 1st Grade).

Upon registration, the school will give the child's parents a letter explaining the requirement and a form to be completed during the dental visit by the dental provider. Once completed, it is the responsibility of the parent to submit the assessment form to their child's school.

KOHA can be met by performing a complete examination and treatment plan by a licensed dentist. KOHA can also be met with a more basic oral health evaluation, such as a screening, in which a dentist, hygienist, or an extended function registered dental assistant with supervision can perform.

Medi-Cal dental providers may refer to the California Dental Association's [KOHA dental professionals webpage](#) for detailed information about KOHA, including, but not limited to:

- What the law requires
- What to do when an existing or new patient calls needing the school-required "oral health assessment" for their child
- How to fill out the state-required assessment form

As a reminder, providers must verify a patient's Medi-Cal eligibility before rendering services. Please refer to the [Provider Handbook](#) Section 4 for member eligibility verification and identification requirement guidelines.