

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
HEALTH REGULATION AND LICENSING ADMINISTRATION**

BOARD OF DENTISTRY
AUTHORITY FOR GUIDANCE

MAY 2024
DATE OF POLICY

24-001
POLICY NO.001

**POLICY STATEMENT
AGAINST OFFERING OR SERVING
WINE OR ALCOHOL IN DENTAL OFFICES**

This policy statement is issued to set forth the District of Columbia Board of Dentistry's position that offering or serving wine or alcohol in dental offices is inconsistent with best practices and the standards of conduct in the profession of dentistry.

All District of Columbia licensed dentists as part of your education, training, and experience should be aware of the following:

- Alcohol consumption can increase bleeding, blood pressure, heart rate, and blood glucose levels, which can compromise the stability of the patient's overall health before receiving treatment.
- Alcohol metabolizes through the liver and can interfere with anesthesia and sedation.
- The effects of alcohol can affect a patient's ability to give informed consent to dental treatment and procedures.
- Excessive alcohol is associated with a higher risk of cancer including head and neck cancers.
- Providing alcohol to patients who subsequently drive can potentially expose the dental office to liability.
- Alcohol can affect both prescribed and over the counter medications.
- The overall health and behavioral risk of alcohol consumption outweigh any benefits.

The Board intends to draft and implement regulations to formally prohibit the offering or serving of wine or alcohol in District of Columbia dental offices.