

**THE STATUTES OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE**

**DENTISTS ACT  
(CHAPTER 76)**

**1970 Ed. Cap. 215  
Ordinance  
30 of 1948**

**Amended by  
8 of 1952  
8 of 1955  
72 of 1959  
14 of 1964  
30 of 1971  
44 of 1975  
13 of 1980  
5 of 1981  
S158/81  
S 20/84**

**REVISED EDITION 1985**

# Dentists Act

## ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS

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An Act to provide for the registration of dentists and for matters connected therewith.

[1st October 1949]

Short title.

1. This Act may be cited as the Dentists Act.

Interpre-  
tation.  
44/75.

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires —  
“dental therapist” means a person who has successfully completed a course in dental therapy conducted by the Ministry of Health in Singapore;

“registered dentist” means a person who is registered as a dentist under this Act. [1A]

Establish-  
ment and  
constitu-  
tion of  
Dental  
Board.  
30/71  
44/75  
13/80  
5/81.

3.—(1) For the purposes of this Act, there shall be established a Dental Board (referred to in this Act as the Board) which shall consist of the following members:

- (a) the Deputy Director of Medical Services (Dental);
- (b) the Dean of the Faculty of Dentistry, National University of Singapore;
- (c) four Dental Officers in the public service of Singapore to be appointed by the Minister;
- (d) a Dental Surgeon in the service of the Faculty of Dentistry, National University of Singapore, nominated by the Faculty to be appointed by the Minister;
- (e) two Dental Surgeons practising in Singapore to be appointed by the Minister; and
- (f) a dentist registered in the second division of the register and practising in Singapore to be appointed by the Minister.

(2) Any of the members referred to in subsection (1) (c), (d), (e) and (f) may be appointed for such period as is specified in his letter of appointment not exceeding a period of 3 years from the date of appointment, but at the end of that period he may be again appointed to be a member of the Board for such further period or periods not longer than 3 years as the Minister may specify at the time of appointment:

Provided that at any time during the period of office any such member may resign his office by notice in writing under his hand given to the Minister.

(3) The Deputy Director of Medical Services (Dental) shall be the President of the Board, and, if present, shall be the chairman at meetings of the Board. In his absence the members present at a meeting of the Board shall elect one of themselves to act as chairman at that meeting. 44/75  
13/80.

(4) The Board shall meet at such places and at such times as the President of the Board may appoint. The quorum of the Board shall be 4 but subject thereto the Board may act notwithstanding any vacancy in their number.

(5) The chairman at any meeting shall have an original vote and also, if upon any question the votes are equally divided, a casting vote. [2

4.—(1) For the purposes of this Act, there shall be a Dental Registrar (referred to in this Act as the Registrar), who shall perform such duties in connection with the register of dentists as may be prescribed. Dental  
Registrar.

(2) The Deputy Director of Medical Services (Dental) shall be the Registrar. 44/75  
13/80.  
[3

5. The Registrar shall cause a register (referred to in this Act as the register) to be kept containing the names, addresses and qualifications of all persons registered under this Act, and such other particulars as may be prescribed. The Registrar shall be responsible for the maintenance and custody of the register. Dentists  
register.  
[4

6.—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the following persons shall be entitled to be registered under this Act: Qualifica-  
tions neces-  
sary for  
registration.

- (a) any person who holds a degree, diploma or licence in dentistry granted by the King Edward VII College of Medicine, Singapore, the University of Malaya in Singapore, the University of Singapore or the National University of Singapore; 44/75  
13/80  
5/81.
- (b) any person who holds any other degree, diploma or licence in dentistry granted by any university, corporation, college or other body outside Singapore which is included in the Schedule;
- (c) any person who holds any other degree, diploma or licence granted by any university, corporation, college or other body outside Singapore which is not included in the Schedule whom the Minister

may, after consulting the Board, by order declare to be entitled to be registered under this Act, subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be prescribed in the order;

- (d) any person who is resident in Singapore temporarily for the purposes of teaching, research or postgraduate study in an institution accepted for that purpose by the Board and who possesses qualifications in dentistry which in the opinion of the Board are adequate:

Provided that the person is exclusively employed in teaching, research or postgraduate study and that his registration shall be cancelled forthwith if he engages in any form of private practice;

- (e) a dental therapist who has not less than 5 years' practical experience in dentistry recognised by the Board and who has passed such further examinations as may be prescribed; or
- (f) any person not falling within paragraph (a), (b), (c), (d) or (e) who, immediately before 19th March 1976, is a registered dentist whose registration has not been cancelled.

5/81.

(2) Before advising the Minister under subsection (1) (c), the Board may satisfy itself, by such evidence as it may require, that the person holds a degree, diploma or licence in dentistry that is not lower in standard than that required of a person who holds a degree in dental surgery of the National University of Singapore and, if the Board is not so satisfied, it may require the person to undergo and to pass an examination conducted or arranged by the Board.

(3) The Minister may, by notification in the *Gazette*, after consulting the Board, vary or amend the Schedule.

[5

Application  
for regis-  
tration.

7.—(1) Any person entitled to be registered under this Act may apply to the Registrar for registration.

(2) Application for registration shall be made in such manner or form and shall be accompanied by such documents, photographs and particulars as may be prescribed.

Proof of identity satisfactory to the Registrar shall also be furnished.

(3) Where a person has complied with subsection (2) and has paid the prescribed fee, he shall, subject to the provisions of this Act, be registered by the Board in the register.

(4) If any person applying for registration has been convicted of any heinous offence or, after due inquiry by the Board, is considered by the Board to have been guilty of infamous or disgraceful conduct in any professional respect, the Board may refuse to admit that person to the register. Upon such inquiry the person against whom such offence or conduct is alleged shall be entitled to appear before the Board and be heard personally or by counsel. [6

8.—(1) Where a person has been registered in the register, the Board shall issue to him a certificate of registration, and the Board may require that there shall be affixed to the certificate a photograph of that person or such other evidence of identity as the Board may direct. Certificate of registration.

(2) Such certificate of registration shall be deemed to be the annual practising certificate issued under section 12 in respect of the year in which the certificate is issued and the provisions of this Act relating to annual practising certificates shall apply to that certificate of registration. [7

9.—(1) No person shall practise dentistry in Singapore unless he is registered under this Act or unless he is exempted from registration under section 30: Prohibition of practice of dentistry by unregistered persons.

Provided that nothing in this section shall operate to prevent extraction of teeth for the relief of pain or the application of remedies for such purposes, by registered medical practitioners, and by other persons in the public service working directly under the orders and supervision of a registered dental practitioner in the public service.

(2) Any person who acts in contravention of this section shall be guilty of an offence.

(3) For the purposes of subsection (1), —

(a) where a person uses any dental instrument or material which is used in the practice of dentistry, he shall be deemed, unless the contrary is proved, to practise dentistry; and

44/75.

(b) where a person has in his possession any one or more of the following instruments or equipment, that is to say, a dental chair, a dental spittoon, a dental engine, a dental syringe or a dental forceps, he shall be deemed, unless the contrary is proved, to practise dentistry. [8

Privileges  
of registered  
person.  
44/75.

**10.**—(1) Subject to section 6 (1) (d), a person registered under the provisions of this Act shall be entitled to practise dentistry in Singapore.

(2) Notwithstanding subsection (1), the Board may make regulations prohibiting a person registered by virtue of section 6 (1) (e) from performing such procedures as may be prescribed. [9

Definition of  
practise of  
dentistry.  
13/80.

**11.** A person shall be deemed to practise dentistry within the meaning of this Act who, for the sake of gain or otherwise, holds himself out, whether directly or by implication, as practising or being prepared to practise dentistry, or treats or attempts to treat or professes to treat lesions or pain of the human teeth or jaws, or performs or attempts to perform any operation thereon or gives any treatment, advice or attendance on or to any person in connection with the fitting or insertion for the purpose of fitting or fixing of artificial teeth or of a crown or bridge or an appliance for the restoration or regulation of the teeth or jaws. [10

Certificates  
to practise.  
44/75  
13/80.

**12.**—(1) Any registered dentist who desires his name to be retained on the register after 31st December of any year shall, not later than 31st October of that year, make an application in the prescribed form and shall pay the prescribed fee for retention of his name on the register during the ensuing year.

(2) Upon such application and payment, the Board, if satisfied that the premises at and the conditions under which the applicant practises dentistry are suitable for such practice, shall cause the Registrar to issue a certificate (to be styled annual practising certificate) authorising the applicant to practise dentistry during the year in respect of which it is issued.

(3) The annual practising certificate shall be in force unless previously cancelled in the manner hereinafter

prescribed in this Act until 31st December of the year in respect of which it is issued.

(4) The name of any registered dentist who fails to obtain an annual practising certificate prior to the commencement of any year shall be removed from the register.

(5) Any registered dentist who has failed to apply for an annual practising certificate in the manner and within the period laid down in subsection (1) may, on making an application in such form and on payment of such additional fee as may be prescribed, be granted an annual practising certificate for the ensuing year if the application is made during the months of November and December of any year, or for the remainder of the year, if the application is made on or after 1st January of any year and in the latter case his name may be re-entered in the register. 13/80.

(6) Whenever it appears to the satisfaction of the Board that a registered dentist is practising dentistry in such premises or under such conditions as are considered by the Board to be unsuitable for such practice, the Board may direct that the name of that person shall be removed from the register and that the annual practising certificate be cancelled, and the certificate shall thereupon cease to be in force.

(7) If any person whose annual practising certificate has been cancelled under subsection (6) makes application in such manner and pays such fee as may be prescribed, the Board may, after due consideration of the circumstances of the case, direct that the name of that person shall be re-entered in the register and that an annual practising certificate be issued.

(8) Any person who practises dentistry in Singapore except as authorised in section 25 (4) and who —

- (a) has not a certificate in force authorising him to practise;
- (b) is in partnership with a person not having such a certificate; or
- (c) has in his employ any registered dentist not having such a certificate,

shall be guilty of an offence.

[12\*

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\*Section 11 in the 1970 Edition was repealed by Act 44/75.

Issue of  
provisional  
certificates  
to dental  
therapists.  
44/75.

**13.—(1)** Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in this Act, the Registrar may issue to a dental therapist a provisional certificate entitling him to practise dentistry under the supervision of a registered dentist whose name appears in the first division of the register and subject to such conditions and restrictions as may be prescribed.

(2) Every such provisional certificate shall remain in force for such period as may be stated therein and may at any time be cancelled by the Registrar.

(3) A dental therapist who is aggrieved by the refusal of the Registrar to issue a provisional certificate or by the cancellation of a provisional certificate may, within 30 days after notice of the refusal or cancellation has been communicated to him, appeal to the Minister whose decision shall be final, and no action or proceeding shall be maintainable in any court of law in respect of the refusal or cancellation.

[12A

Publication  
of register  
and presump-  
tions.

**14.—(1)** The Registrar shall publish annually in the *Gazette*, as soon as may be after 1st January of each year, a list of all persons registered under this Act to whom an annual practising certificate has been issued for that year, with their qualifications and the place or places where they practise dentistry.

(2) The publication of such list shall be prima facie evidence that the persons named therein are registered and authorised to practise under this Act.

(3) The absence of the name of any person from the list shall be prima facie evidence that that person is not authorised to practise under this Act.

[13

Certificate  
of Registrar.  
44/75.

**15.** A certificate purporting to be under the hand of the Registrar to the effect that at any time or during any period specified in the certificate any person was or was not registered as a dentist under this Act, or as to any entry in the register, or the removal from the register of any entry, shall, in the absence of proof to the contrary, and without further proof of the signature appended to the certificate, be sufficient evidence of the matters specified therein. [13A

Correction of  
dentists  
register.

**16.—(1)** The Registrar shall from time to time insert in the register any alteration which may come to his knowledge in the name or address of any person registered.

(2) The Board may remove from the register the name of any person who —

- (a) is deceased;
- (b) has no address in Singapore at which he can be found;
- (c) is no longer practising dentistry in Singapore; or
- (d) fails to serve the Government, or such other body or organisation as may be directed by the Government, for such period as may be specified in any undertaking given by him to the Government. [14

17.—(1) The Board may cancel a certificate of registration and direct the removal from the register of the name of any person registered if it comes to the knowledge of the Board that that person —

Cancellation  
of certi-  
cate of  
registration.  
30/71  
44/75.

- (a) has been registered pursuant to an order made by the Minister under section 6 (1) (c) and who has contravened or failed to comply with any conditions or restrictions imposed by such order;
- (b) has obtained registration by a fraudulent or incorrect statement;
- (c) has been convicted of a heinous offence or of any offence under this Act;
- (d) has been guilty of infamous or disgraceful conduct in a professional sense; or
- (e) has for any disciplinary reason been struck off the dentists register of any country or off the roll of any dental college or licensing body recognised by the Board.

(2) The Registrar shall —

- (a) forthwith give to the person concerned notice in writing of the cancellation of the certificate and of the removal of his name from the register; and
- (b) publish in the *Gazette* the name of the person removed from the register under this section, either —
  - (i) on the expiry of the period of one month laid down in section 18 (1), if that

person does not enter an appeal against the decision of the Board; or

- (ii) immediately after the decision of the High Court upholding the decision of the Board, if that person enters an appeal against the decision of the Board,

as the case may be. [15

Appeal  
against  
removal  
from register  
or refusal  
to register.

**18.—**(1) Any person aggrieved by the removal of his name from the register or by any refusal or failure of the Board to register or re-enter his name in the register may (except where the removal, refusal or failure is in consequence of that person's failure to obtain an annual practising certificate or of the cancellation of the certificate) within one month of the notice given under section 17 (2) or within 6 months of the date on which he applied to be so registered, as the case may be, appeal against the removal, or the refusal or the failure, as the case may be, to the High Court and on any such appeal the High Court may give such directions in the matter as it thinks proper, including any directions as to the costs of the appeal.

(2) No appeal shall lie from any order of the High Court made under this section.

(3) Any person aggrieved by the refusal of the Board to issue to such person an annual practising certificate or by the cancellation of his annual practising certificate may appeal to the Minister whose decision shall be final, and no action or proceeding shall be maintainable in any court of law in respect of the refusal or cancellation. [16

Certificate  
of registra-  
tion to be  
exhibited.  
44/75.

**19.—**(1) Every registered dentist shall cause his certificate of registration issued under section 8 and his annual practising certificate to be exhibited in a conspicuous part of the premises in which he practises dentistry. In the case of a registered dentist who became eligible for registration under section 6 (1) (f) a photograph of himself shall be affixed to his certificate.

(2) Any registered dentist who fails to comply with this section shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding \$200 and in the case of a continuing offence to a further fine of \$5 for every day during which the offence continues after conviction. [17

20.—(1) It shall be lawful for —

(a) the Deputy Director of Medical Services (Dental);  
or

(b) such other public health authority as the Minister  
may approve for the purposes of this section,

to appoint inspectors for the purposes of this Act, and to  
give such inspectors authority, in writing —

(i) to enter and inspect any premises which are used or  
proposed to be used or in respect of which there  
is reasonable cause to believe that they are being  
used for the practice of dentistry; and

(ii) to inquire into and to report to the person or the  
authority by whom they were appointed on the  
conditions under which dentistry is being or is  
proposed to be practised.

(2) Inspectors shall show the written authority given  
under subsection (1), if so requested by any person, in the  
course of entering or inspecting any premises.

(3) The reports made by inspectors under subsection (1)  
shall be in the form prescribed by the Board and it shall be  
the duty of the Deputy Director of Medical Services  
(Dental) or other public health authority appointed under  
subsection (1) (b) to submit such reports to the Board not  
less than once a year.

(4)\* Any person who wilfully obstructs a duly authorised  
inspector in the entry and inspection of premises shall be  
guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction to a fine  
not exceeding \$100.

[18

21.—(1) No person shall be entitled to recover any fee or  
charge in any court for the performance of any dental  
operation or for dental attendance or advice unless, at the  
time of performing such operation or rendering such attend-  
ance or advice, he was registered under this Act and had an  
annual practising certificate in force authorising him to  
practise.

(2) This section shall not apply to any medical practi-  
tioner registered under the Medical Registration Act. [19

Inspection  
of premises  
used for  
the practice  
of dentistry.  
44/75  
13/80.

44/75  
13/80.

Recovery  
of fees.

Cap. 174.

\*Subsections (4) and (5) were deleted by Act 44/75 and this subsection, formerly  
subsection (6), is here renumbered.

Fraudulent registration to be an offence.

**22.** Any person who fraudulently procures or attempts to procure himself or any other person to be registered under this Act shall be guilty of an offence. [20]

Falsely pretending to be or taking or using the name or title of a dentist to be an offence.

**23.** Any person not registered as a dentist under this Act who wilfully or falsely pretends to be or takes or uses the name or title of a dentist, dental surgeon, qualified dentist, doctor of dental surgery, professor of dentistry, surgeon dentist, or any name, title, addition or description implying, whether in itself or in the circumstances in which it is used, that that person is a dentist or that he is qualified to heal or treat dental disorders or derangements, whether by dentistry or any other means of any kind or description whatsoever, shall be guilty of an offence. [21]

False description of his vocation to be an offence. 44/75.

**24.—(1)** A dentist who has been registered under this Act by virtue of section 6 (1) (e) and (f) shall not make use, in describing his vocation, of any term other than that of “registered dentist”.

(2) Any such registered dentist who wilfully or falsely pretends to be or takes or uses the name or title of a dental surgeon, qualified dentist, doctor of dental surgery, professor of dentistry, surgeon dentist, or any name, title, addition or description implying, whether in itself or in the circumstances in which it is used, that he possesses or holds any qualification to practise other than that he is registered as a dentist shall be guilty of an offence. [22]

Covering.

**25.—(1)** Any registered dentist who allows an unregistered person to practise dentistry on the premises used by or under the control of that registered dentist in the performance of his professional duties shall be guilty of an offence.

(2) Any registered dentist who by his presence, countenance, advice, assistance or co-operation has knowingly enabled an unregistered person, whether described as an assistant or otherwise, to practise dentistry shall be guilty of an offence.

44/75.

(3) Any registered dentist who practises dentistry in any premises in which an unregistered person practises dentistry shall, unless he proves that he did not know that the unregistered person was practising dentistry in those premises, be guilty of an offence.

(4) Nothing in this Act shall operate to prevent the practice, employment and supervision of persons in the public service who may be employed under the supervision of a registered dentist in the public service to carry out the procedure which comes within the definition of the practice of dentistry as defined in this Act. [23]

**26.**—(1) A prosecution for an offence under this Act may be instituted by the President of the Board, or by any officer appointed by him in that behalf, or by the public health authority referred to in section 20 (1) (b). Prosecutions.

(2) In the case of an offence under section 9, any police officer may arrest without warrant any person who, not being a registered dentist, is practising dentistry in any street or public place. [24]

**27.** Any person guilty of an offence under this Act for which no specific penalty is provided shall be liable on conviction — General penalty. 44/75.

- (a) in respect of a first offence, to a fine not exceeding \$2,000; and
- (b) in respect of a second or any subsequent offence, to a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding 6 months or to both. [25]

**28.**—(1) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the Board may make regulations to carry out the objects and purposes of this Act. Power of Board to make regulations.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), such regulations may prescribe —

- (a) the procedure to be adopted at meetings of the Board;
- (b) the duties of the Registrar;
- (c) the form of the register and the mode in which it shall be kept;
- (d) the fees to be paid in respect of proceedings, examinations under section 6 and in respect of certificates issued under this Act;
- (e) the manner in which applications for registration shall be made;

- (f) the procedure to be adopted at inquiries before the Board;
- (g) the forms of any certificates or other documents required for carrying out the purposes of this Act;
- (h) the appointment and payment of legal advisers;
- (i) payment of fees and expenses to members of the Board.

(3) Regulations made by the Board under this Act shall be subject to the approval of the Minister and when so approved shall be published in the *Gazette* and shall take effect as from the date of such publication. [26

Exemptions  
from sections  
7, 8, 12  
and 19.

**29.**—(1) All dentists of the Singapore Armed Forces shall be exempted from the provisions of this Act provided that their practice of dentistry is restricted to members of those Forces and to such persons as are entitled under military regulations to be treated by such dentists.

(2) Any dentist of the Singapore Armed Forces shall be registered under this Act if he engages in the practice of dentistry on any person who is not a member of those Forces or a person entitled to dental treatment under military regulations.

44/75  
5/81.

(3) Dentists in the public service and in the National University of Singapore shall be exempted from sections 12 and 19. [27

Exemptions  
from this  
Act.  
Cap. 174.

**30.**—(1) Nothing in this Act shall operate to prevent the practice of medicine or surgery by a medical practitioner registered under the Medical Registration Act.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall operate to prevent the training of medical and dental students in the practice of dentistry under the supervision of a registered dentist in a hospital or dental school approved for the purposes of this section by the Minister. [28

## THE SCHEDULE

Section 6

## QUALIFICATIONS

S158/81  
S 20/84.

<i>First column</i> Country	<i>Second column</i> University	<i>Third column</i> Degree
AUSTRALIA		
New South Wales	University of Sydney	B.D.S.
Queensland	University of Queensland	B.D.Sc.
South Australia	University of Adelaide	B.D.S.
Victoria	University of Melbourne	B.D.Sc.
Western Australia	University of Western Australia	B.D.Sc.
CANADA		
British Columbia	University of British Columbia	D.M.D.
Ontario	University of Toronto	D.D.S.
Quebec	McGill University	D.D.S.
NEW ZEALAND		
	*University of New Zealand	B.D.S.
	University of Otago	B.D.S.
REPUBLIC OF IRELAND		
	National University of Ireland	B.D.S.
	University of Dublin	B.Dent.Sc.
UNITED KINGDOM		
England	University of Birmingham	B.D.S.
	University of Bristol	B.D.S.
	*University of Durham	B.D.S.
	University of Leeds	B.Ch.D.
	University of Liverpool	B.D.S.
	University of London	B.D.S.

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\* This University has ceased to grant any degree, diploma or licence in dentistry.

THE SCHEDULE — *continued*

<i>First column</i> Country	<i>Second column</i> University	<i>Third column</i> Degree
	University of Manchester	B.D.S.
	University of Newcastle Upon Tyne	B.D.S.
	University of Sheffield	B.D.S.
Northern Ireland	Queen's University of Belfast	B.D.S.
Scotland	University of Dundee	B.D.S.
	University of Edinburgh	B.D.S.
	University of Glasgow	B.D.S.
	*University of St. Andrews	B.D.S.
Wales	University of Wales	B.D.S.
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		
California	Loma Linda University	D.D.S.
	University of California, Los Angeles	D.D.S.
	University of Southern California	D.D.S.
Illinois	Northwestern University	D.D.S.
Indiana	Indiana University	D.D.S.
Iowa	University of Iowa	D.D.S.
Michigan	University of Michigan	D.D.S.
Ohio	Ohio State University	D.D.S.
Washington	University of Washington	D.D.S.

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\* This University has ceased to grant any degree, diploma or licence in dentistry.