



Dental Assisting Program

2026-2027

Dental Assisting Diploma (D45420)

Fall 2026 Admissions Packet

Isothermal Community College

INFORMATION IN THIS PACKET SUPERSEDES ALL PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED INFORMATION

We are glad you are interested in the Dental Assisting (DA) Program at Isothermal Community College.

The diploma program is a three-semester program. A cohort of up to twenty-four students are chosen. Dental assisting is a full-time program offered during the day. The program consists of three general education courses and ten dental courses. Upon completion, the students are Dental Assistant I's and can start working in a dental office. The weekly schedule varies from semester to semester. It is usually four full days with one day off each week but the day off could vary. The online portion is minimal due to the need for hands-on practice and exposure in the dental assisting profession.

Dental Assisting Program Mission, Goals, and Student Learning Outcomes

Dental Assisting Mission:

The Isothermal Dental Assisting Program mission is “improving lives through learning”, of students and the community, by preparing students to become certified dental assistants who are trained in the delivery of dental health care in compliance with ADA accreditation standards.

Dental Assisting Program Philosophy:

The Dental Assisting Program philosophy is to host an educational environment that encourages problem-solving, self-discipline, and self-confidence in obtaining the skillset required to assist with preventative and restorative treatment patient care. Students are inspired to recognize the need for continued growth by actively supporting the profession, participating in community events, and continuing their education “in the interest of the dental assisting profession and the community the profession serves.”

Dental Assisting Program Goals:

- 1.Patient Care**-(this goal ensures that Isothermal comprehensively prepares competent individuals in the discipline)To prepare students to uphold professional dental standards while delivering dental assisting services in a variety of dental settings through clinical, laboratory and didactic instruction.
- 2.Instruction**-To provide fundamental knowledge through a solid curriculum that prepares students to deliver skilled ethical dental care in a rapidly changing healthcare environment.
- 3.Service**-To support allegiance to the dental profession through DANB certification, community service, membership with professional organizations, and continuing education.

Program Student Learning Outcomes:

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1. The student will execute general chairside assisting skills.
2. The student will integrate infection control techniques.
3. The student will prepare high-grade, radiographic images used in diagnostics.
4. The student will perform appropriate life-saving measures for medical emergencies in a dental setting.

Admissions Deadline Date:

Return the entire packet to the Dental Assisting Director.

Deadline Date (Step 1-4 to be completed)	Thursday July 9 th , 2026, by 4:30pm
Letters of Acceptance	Tuesday July 14 th 2026
Mandatory New Student Orientation	Monday July 20 th 2026
1 st Day of Class	Wednesday August 19 th 2026

STEP 1: General admission requirements for the college must be completed before the deadline date.

Students should use this area as a check-off to apply to college.

- ☐ Complete the online application process (including residency determination) to Isothermal Community College. ([Isothermal Community College link for Admissions](#)) Use major code **A55280D** - General Occupational Technology-Dental.
- ☐ Submit **all** official high school or high school equivalency transcript(s) to the Admissions Office.
- ☐ Official college transcript(s) may be submitted to the Admissions Office for transfer credit evaluation for courses you wish to transfer in credit. Transfer credit may be awarded for courses that reflect a final grade of "C" or better.
- ☐ Should complete ENG 002 with a grade of P2, be exempted from taking ENG 002 using high school GPA or earn a placement test score that meets eligibility to enroll in ENG 111

STEP 2: The Dental Assisting admission requirements must be completed before the deadline date.

Students should use this area as a check-off to apply to the DA program.

- ☐ Minimum required cumulative average GPA is 2.0 for college and high school students.

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GPA and date: _____

☐ High School Student: YES/NO (circle one)

- Name of High School (If answered Yes): _____
- High School Cumulative Unweighted GPA: _____ Date: _____

STEP 3: In the DA program there will be exposure to bloodborne pathogens.

Students should have this signed and dated before turning it in to the advisor.

- Students will be exposed to bloodborne pathogens and other infectious diseases in this program. Infection control is mandatory before working with patients and all precautions must be taken to minimize exposure. Failure to follow proper infection protocols and procedures could lead to dismissal from the program.

Must sign here for proof of understanding.

Signature and date:

STEP 4: Review and sign the Essential Functions Document.

Students are required to read and sign/date the document before the deadline date posted.

- Review and submit the signed Dental Assisting Essential Functions Document and return it with the packet by the deadline date.
The document is included in this packet and may also be found on the website.
[Essential Functions for DA.](#)

STEP 5: General Education Courses for DA program.

Students are encouraged to complete the courses below before acceptance.

- Due to the classroom instruction time required for Dental Assisting classes, students are encouraged to take the required General Education (non-dental assisting) courses before entry into the Dental Assisting program:
 - ENG 111 Writing & Inquiry
 - PSY 150 General Psychology
 - ACA 122 College Transfer Success
 - BIO 110 Principles of Biology

**BIO 111, 168, 163 can be substituted for BIO 110 in the Program of Study and points.*

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STEP 6: Letters of Acceptance

Letters of acceptance will be mailed to applicants by the Dental Assisting Director after applicants have been selected. Applicants are required to notify the Director of intent to enroll in the program by phone, mail, email, or in person within a week of receiving the acceptance letter.

Applicants are advised to begin working early on the health form. Students who are accepted to the program should schedule an appointment with a health care provider within 1 week of receiving acceptance letters and begin the collection of immunization records. Students are advised to begin the process of acquiring the necessary health record requirements (e.g. PPD, Hepatitis B series, varicella titer, or series). Evidence of these immunizations is not required until the first day of classes.

STEP 7: Requirements after acceptance into the Dental Assisting Diploma (D45240) program.

Students should use this area as a check-off for the Dental Assisting program.

- The Dental Assisting Director requires all accepted Dental Assisting students to attend a mandatory Dental Assisting Program New Student Orientation.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- ❖ Criminal background checks will be required by clinical sites for students admitted to the Dental Assisting program. Failure to achieve acceptable standards will result in the denial of clinical privileges and the inability to continue in the Dental Assisting program.
- ❖ The flu and COVID-19 vaccines are required by various clinically sites. Refusal to get these vaccines could affect your clinical site placement in the spring and summer semesters.

While the above background and vaccine information are not required by Isothermal Community College for either general college admission or entrance into the Dental Assisting Program, students should be aware that this information will be required by the personnel department at the students' future clinical location. Failure to provide this information to a clinical site in a timely fashion could result in a cancellation of clinical site arrangements.

Personal health insurance is the responsibility of the student. Neither the college nor the clinical agencies provide health coverage for students. Any illness or injury incurred during class, lab, or clinical during the program will be the financial responsibility of the individual student. Supplemental accident insurance through the college is available to DA students in the event of an accident while performing functions in the college or clinical settings.

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For more information, contact:

Stacey Jenkins, Dental Programs Director

sjenkins@isothermal.edu

828-395-4440

Melissa Tenpenny, College Navigator (Pre-health sciences advisor)

mtenpenny@isothermal.edu

828-395-1606

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Dental Assisting Essential Functions

To be admitted in the Dental Assisting Program and progress throughout the program, students must possess a functional level of ability to perform the duties required of a dental assistant. Admission or progression may be denied if a student is unable to demonstrate the essential functions delineated by the Dental Assisting Program with or without reasonable accommodations.

The essential functions outlined below are deemed necessary by the Isothermal Community College Dental Assisting Program for the provision of safe and effective nursing care. The essential functions, while not intended to be representative of clinical agency standards include, but are not limited to, the ability to perform the following:

Standard	Examples of Necessary Behaviors (not all-inclusive)
Interpersonal abilities are sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, physical, medical, and intellectual backgrounds.	Establish rapport with patients, families, and colleagues.
Communication abilities are sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and written form in English.	Explain treatment procedures and oral health instruction as well as document treatment procedures and patient responses.
Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	Identify causes and effect relationships in a clinical situation. Assimilate knowledge from the lecture, laboratory, and clinical arenas. Utilize basic mathematic skills.
Physical abilities sufficient to move around rooms in the dental environment, maneuver in small spaces and reach needed equipment.	Move around clinical operatories, dark rooms, sterilization room, and other treatment areas. Position self chairside in close proximity to the patient. Administer CPR and BLS procedures. Reach radiographic equipment, which is approximately 5-6' off the floor. Transfer patients from wheelchairs to dental chairs and back.
Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective assistance to the dentist, patient, and co-workers.	Move, calibrate and use the equipment and dental materials and supplies including sharp instruments during operative procedures. Use

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Standard	Examples of Necessary Behaviors (not all-inclusive)
	ancillary aids chairside--mannequins, small equipment, etc.
Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.	Detect sounds of instruments and equipment being properly utilized; (the sound of a slow-speed handpiece) and monitor vital signs. Respond to the patient in need.
Visual ability sufficient for physical assessment, the performance of dental procedures, and maintenance of environmental safety.	Observe patient responses such as skin color and facial expressions. Monitor vital signs. Evaluate radiographs for technical quality including density, contrast, and distortion. Read records. Note color changes in dental materials, which indicate reactions occurring.
Tactile ability sufficient and performance of dental chairside procedures including safe expanded functions.	Perform selective coronal polishing; placement of radiographs and gingival retraction cord; mixing and placing alginate impression material, sealants, and removing excess cement.

*If a student has a documented disability and needs accommodations, it is the student's responsibility to contact the College's Accessibility Counselor.

If a dental assisting student or applicant believes that he or she cannot meet one or more of the standards without accommodations or modifications, the college must determine on an individual basis, the need for requested accommodations. Contact the Counselor & Student Advocacy Coordinator, 828-395-1481.

Essential Functions Student Agreement

I have reviewed the Essential Functions for the Dental Assisting Program and I certify to the best of my knowledge that I have the ability to perform these functions. I understand that a further evaluation of my ability may be required and conducted by the dental assisting faculty if deemed necessary to evaluate my ability before admission to the program and for retentions and progression through the program. I will provide a description of any special accommodations that I have requested.

Signature:

Date:

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Fall 2026 Admissions:

Student Name:

Student ID#:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Home/Cell Phone:

Alternate Phone:

School Email Address:

@student.isothermal.edu

Personal Email Address:

How are students selected for dental assisting program?

Applicants will be ranked using a point system. Applicants with the highest number of points will have preference for admission. Please see the point system tally worksheet attached to this document. See pages 9-11.

Opportunity to earn additional points:

To ensure multiple measures of access, applicants have the option of taking the Testing of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) exam to attempt to counterbalance a low GPA.

- Note that the TEAS exam is **OPTIONAL**. This means it is **NOT** required to be accepted into the program.
- Students will gain points based upon the score they achieve to use towards the point system total.
- Students may choose to take the TEAS exam. If students choose to take the TEAS exam they can contact the testing center at ICC at Office: 828-395-1436
- There will be **NO** make-up dates for this exam.
- Students must complete the registration process within 24 hours prior to the test date & payment will be due at the time of the exam.

******The following score tally is to be completed by dental programs director******

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Student Name: _____ SS#: _____ ICC ID# _____

General Education/Program-Related Calculated GPA

(points = grade achieved on any attempt of a “C” or higher. A=3, B=2, and C=1)

*BIO 111, 168, 163 can be substituted for BIO 110 in the Program of Study and points.

Courses Taken			College/University where course was taken	Semester/ Year Course Taken	Letter Grade	Points Earned
*BIO 110	OR	*BIO 111,163, or 168				
ACA 122						
ENG 111						
PSY 150						
Cumulative Unweighted GPA (if no College GPA has been established) or College GPA			2.0 – 2.49 = 2 points 2.5 – 2.99 = 4 points 3.0 – 3.49 = 6 points 3.5 – 4.00 = 8 points			
This means that we will use the high school GPA if the student has never attended college, thus, no college GPA has been established						
			Total Points			

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Previous Education/Training from Accredited or Approved Institution

Education/Training	Awarding Institution	Date Obtained	Point Scale	Points Earned
Highest Education Degree Earned			College Diploma – 2 Associate’s Degree – 3 Bachelor’s Degree – 4 Master’s Degree or higher – 5	
Certifications			Med. Aide, EMT, Phlebotomy, Massage therapy, vet tech, and NA II = 2 points/each	
Total Points				

TEAS Exam is OPTIONAL! To ensure multiple measures of access, applicants have the option of taking the TEAS exam to attempt to counterbalance a low GPA. The test must be taken by the date specified by the College Navigator who does the pre-health sciences advising, Melissa Tenpenny, mtenpenny@isothermal.edu.

Criteria	Actual Score	Points Earned
TEAS SCORE:		
• 93 – 100 = 7 points		
• 84 – 92 = 6 points		
• 78 – 83 = 5 points		
• 71 – 77 = 4 points		
• 63 – 70 = 3 points		
• 55 – 62 = 2 points		

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• 45 – 54 = 1 points		
Total Points		

CUMULATIVE TOTAL POINTS _____

***DENTAL ASSISTING TIEBREAKERS**

1st consideration: Order in which application was received

2nd consideration: Average of all cumulative GPAs