

## Coronavirus updates and guidance for dental procedures

Delta Dental of Alaska understands the disruption and uncertainty our providers are facing due to coronavirus (COVID-19) and would like to share resources to keep you informed.

On March 19, the State of Alaska mandated that all dental professionals suspend and postpone all elective and non-essential oral health procedures for a period of 30 days. They have been urged to prioritize treatment for patients experiencing dental emergencies, as defined by the American Dental Association (ADA):

### Dental emergency

Dental emergencies are potentially life threatening and require immediate treatment to stop ongoing tissue bleeding, alleviate severe pain or infection, and include:

- Uncontrolled bleeding
- Cellulitis or a diffuse soft tissue bacterial infection with intra-oral or extra-oral swelling that potentially compromise the patient's airway
- Trauma involving facial bones, potentially compromising the patient's airway

### Urgent dental care

Urgent dental care focuses on the management of conditions that require immediate attention to relieve severe pain and/or risk of infection and to alleviate the burden on hospital emergency departments. These should be treated as minimally invasive as possible.

- Severe dental pain from pulpal inflammation
- Pericoronitis or third-molar pain
- Surgical post-operative osteitis, dry socket dressing changes
- Abscess, or localized bacterial infection resulting in localized pain and swelling.
- Tooth fracture resulting in pain or causing soft tissue trauma
- Dental trauma with avulsion/luxation
- Dental treatment required prior to critical medical procedures

You can find more information by visiting the [ADA](#) and the [Alaska Dental Society](#) (ADS) websites.

We recommend also visiting the [Alaska Department of Health and Social Service](#) and the [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC) websites for more information and treatment guidelines related to COVID-19.

We also want to assure you that we are dedicated to business continuity during the outbreak. We have a large number of employees across the organization that work from home on a full or part-time basis and have increased that capacity. We are fully operational and are committed to processing claims in a timely manner. Customer service is available during our regular scheduled hours.