

April 29, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader, United States Senate
S-230 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
H-204 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader, United States Senate
S-221 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McConnell, Leader McCarthy, and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of our 163,000 members, the American Dental Association (ADA) applauds Congress' efforts to combat the challenging effects of the COVID-19 outbreak.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act continues to provide support to small businesses across the country and helps ease the burdens dental practices and other small businesses face during this public health emergency. However, the dental community continues to face additional challenges that require your continued support.

As Congress looks to its next legislative package to help the country deal with this extraordinary crisis, we would like to offer the following recommendations aimed at assisting dental practices, dentists, their staff, and patients:

- Allow small businesses increased flexibility within the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for which they seek forgiveness for the PPP loans. This will allow small businesses to make more appropriate decisions about staffing and payroll based on when they plan to fully reopen.
- Ensure adequate oversight over the distribution and loan forgiveness provisions in the CARES Act for PPP loans. This will guarantee that only those small businesses that were economically distressed as a result of the pandemic receive the funds and forgiveness.
- Intensify the production of personal protective equipment (PPE) and focus its distribution to health care providers, including dentists, who are treating emergency cases or near emergency cases now and in the future without an adequate supply of N95 masks and face shields. This will help the dental office staff to continue to practice in a safe environment for themselves and their patients.
- Provide tax credits for the purchase of additional PPE and safety improvements to the office. This will assist financially stressed practices in providing an additional layer of safety and protection for the dentists, their staff, and their patients.

- Extend the Department of Health and Human Services' discretionary authority during public health emergencies to provide targeted liability protections for providers who administer FDA-authorized COVID-19 diagnostic tests within their scope of practice until the end of 2020. This will expand the nation's capacity to screen patients for COVID-19 outside of already burdened hospital emergency departments.
- Permit 501(c) (6) organizations to utilize the PPP loan program. This will ensure that non-profit medical and dental associations can continue to serve as a trusted resource for their health care professionals and patients.

While many challenges persist, it is critical to meet these challenges with a long term strategy that includes planning for a post-pandemic future. Because conditions regarding virus transmission vary greatly across the U.S., many state and local governments are considering plans for a multi-phased reopening starting with essential businesses, including dental practices. The ADA's current [recommendation](#) urges dentists to remain closed to all except urgent and emergent dental issues until April 30, though state and local mandates take precedence.

As you work on the next legislative package, please consider these recommendations. With your help, we can lessen the burden of this difficult crisis and restore a more stable and safe environment in the provision of dental care.

Many thanks for your work on these important issues. If you have any questions, please have your staff contact Chris Tampoio at 571-213-7756 or tampioc@ada.org. Additional information is also available at ADA.org/virus.

Sincerely,



Chad P. Gehani, D.D.S.
President



Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

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¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Infection Control – Dental Settings](#), April 2020.