



Rules for Observing a Hearing In-Person or Virtual

About the College of Registered Dental Hygienists of Alberta

The College of Registered Dental Hygienists of Alberta (CRDHA) is the professional regulatory body for Alberta's over 3,300 Registered Dental Hygienists. Created under the *Health Professions Act* (HPA), our mandate is to ensure Alberta dental hygienists have the knowledge, skills, attitude, and judgement to provide safe, effective, ethical, and competent oral healthcare to Albertans.

A regulatory college's role is to protect the public from unsafe practice and hold members of the profession accountable for the care they provide. Colleges ensure that Albertans are provided with safe, high quality care by professionals who adhere to the highest standards and ethical conduct.

Complaints Referred to Hearing

The hearings process, as prescribed by the HPA, is managed by the hearings director, who is appointed by CRDHA Council. A hearing tribunal is selected by the hearings director from a roster comprised of impartial peers appointed by Council and public members appointed by the Alberta Government. The hearing tribunal will hear evidence to determine whether the allegations resulting from the complaint investigation process are true and, if true, whether the actions or omissions of the investigated person constitute unprofessional conduct. The hearing tribunal is also responsible to determine what penalties, if any, are to be imposed on the investigated person.

Hearings are open to the public unless the hearing tribunal accepts a motion or application from either party to close all or part of the hearing.

Rules for Observers Attending Virtual Hearings

1. Observers must register with the hearings director prior to the hearing.
2. Observers must ensure that they have, and know how to use, the required video conferencing platform for any virtual hearing, which will be communicated in advance of the hearing. Technical troubleshooting will not be provided to Observers at a hearing.
3. Observers must connect to the videoconferencing platform 10 - 15 minutes prior to the posted hearing start time and identify themselves to the hearings director or their delegate.
4. Observers must display their first and last names along with "Observer" on their screen name.
5. Observers will be placed into the virtual waiting room until the tribunal is ready to start the hearing.
6. Observers at virtual hearings may be placed into the waiting room for the duration of every recess, for any portion of a hearing held in private, and when the tribunal deliberates.

7. Observers' microphones will be disabled on the video conferencing platform for the duration of a virtual hearing.
8. Observers are requested to position themselves in a quiet, private space with minimal background movement and may be asked to leave the hearing if their video presence is causing distraction.
9. At the discretion of the hearing tribunal, as Observers are not hearing participants, Observers may be asked to turn off their cameras for the duration of a virtual hearing.
10. Observers must not use audio or video recording devices of any kind, including, but not limited to, cameras, cell phones, and screen recording software to capture any portion of a hearing.
11. Observers are not permitted to address the members of the hearing tribunal (in or out of session) and must remain quiet during the proceedings.
12. Observers arriving after a hearing has started will remain in the waiting room and not allowed entry into the hearing room until the end of the next recess.
13. If an Observer needs to leave the virtual hearing room for any reason while the hearing is in session, they will not be permitted to return to the hearing room until the end of the next recess.
14. Only the registered Observer will be provided and allowed to connect through the video conferencing link for virtual hearings. Any additional members of the public that would like to attend the hearing must submit their request to the CRDHA Hearings Director in advance of the hearing to obtain their own video conferencing link.
15. Observers are requested to monitor any messages that may be broadcast to the waiting room advising of any delay in resuming or other pertinent information regarding the hearing.

Rules for Observers Attending In-Person Hearings

1. Observers must register with the hearings director prior to the hearing.
2. Observers must arrive to the meeting room 10 - 15 minutes prior to the posted hearing start time and identify themselves to the hearings director or their delegate.
3. Observers must sign in upon arrival and wear an "Observer" name tag for the duration of the hearing.
4. Observers must turn off **ALL** communication devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.,) for the duration of the hearing.
5. Observers must leave the hearing room during all recesses, when the tribunal deliberates, or for the duration of any portions of the hearing held in private.
6. During brief recesses Observers may quietly wait outside the meeting room for the hearing to reconvene.
7. Should the Observer need to leave the hearing room for any reason while the hearing is in session, the Observer will not be permitted to return to the hearing room until the end of the next recess.
8. No food is allowed to be brought into the hearing room.