

So You're Thinking About Retirement . . . What Now?

By Ingrid Nye, Examination & Licensing Manager

You've had a long and happy career practicing dentistry or dental hygiene in Oregon, and you're starting to think about retirement, or perhaps you have already retired from practice. First of all, congratulations! When your next Oregon license renewal approaches, what will you choose to do? Do you want to maintain your license, retire it, convert it to a volunteer license, or perhaps just let it expire? This article will help you understand all of your options!

Maintain An Active License:

What Does It Mean? Maintaining your active license means that you will complete all the requirements for renewal, and continue renewing your license as you have done previously. You will be able to practice dentistry/dental hygiene legally in Oregon as long as your license is active.

Why? Maintaining your dental/dental hygiene license in an active status once you retire from your practice allows you to return to the practice of dentistry/dental hygiene if and when you choose to do so, without requiring you to contact the OBD or go through the reinstatement process. We are all living in uncertain times; you may retire from practice, and discover that your investments are not adequate to cover your needs in the future, and wish to return to practice in Oregon or elsewhere! If you move to a different state, or wish to practice abroad, many states/countries require that you hold an active license in another state in order to obtain a license in that state/country. If you have sold your practice and have taken part of the sales price on as a receivable asset, you may need to re-enter the practice and work again to preserve that asset if the buyer defaults on the obligation. Finally, you may feel the sentiment we hear from many of our licensees: "I worked hard to earn this license, and I want to keep it!"

How? To maintain your license, you will need to pay your renewal fees, keep your Healthcare Provider BLS/CPR certification current at all times (even if you are no longer practicing), and complete your CE requirements on the same schedule as always. If you hold a sedation permit, you will also need to complete the appropriate CE to renew that permit; if you hold a Moderate Sedation, Deep Sedation, or General Anesthesia permit, you will also need to maintain a current ACLS and/or PALS certification.

Retire Your License:

What Does It Mean? We offer our licensees who are no longer practicing dentistry/dental hygiene in any jurisdiction the option to retire their licenses. Licensees who are still practicing in other jurisdictions are not eligible for license retirement. Retiring your license means voluntarily choosing to take your license off "active" status and placing it into "retired" status. A retired license does not allow you to practice dentistry/dental hygiene in Oregon under any circumstances.

Why? A retired license is not an active license. You are not able to practice in Oregon with a retired license, but also, you are no longer required to pay your renewal fees, maintain a current Healthcare Provider BLS/CPR certification, or complete the required CE. You can enjoy your well-deserved retirement without worrying about renewing your Oregon license! By our current rules, you have up to four years to apply to reinstate your retired dental/dental hygiene license; the requirements do not change based on how long your license has been retired, and the cost to reinstate a retired license is generally lower than the cost to reinstate an expired license. Please read on to learn more about reinstating a retired license.

How? Contact the Board prior to your license expiration date and request a retirement form. Once you receive the retirement form, you will sign and date it, then return it by mail to the OBD. The signed retirement form must be received within 60 days of the date your license expires (no later than May 30th for dentists, and no later than November 29th for dental hygienists) in order for us to place your license on retired status.

Allow Your License to Expire:

What Does It Mean? Allowing your license to expire means that you voluntarily choose not to complete your renewal process at your next renewal date. If the license is not renewed, it will expire on the listed expiration date (March 31st for dentists; September 30th for dental hygienists). An expired license does not allow you to practice dentistry/dental hygiene in Oregon under any circumstances. If you are still practicing dentistry/dental hygiene in any other jurisdiction, but do not wish to renew your Oregon license, retiring your license is not permitted, and allowing your license to expire would be your only option.

Why? Like a retired license, an expired license is not an active license. You are not able to practice in Oregon with an expired license, but also, you are no longer required to pay your renewal fees, maintain a current Healthcare Provider BLS/CPR certification, or complete the required CE. You will no longer need to worry about renewing your Oregon license! By our current rules, you have up to four years to apply to reinstate your expired dental/dental hygiene license; the requirements change, and the costs increase, based on how much time has passed since your license expired. Please read on to learn more about reinstating an expired license.

How? Allowing your license to expire simply requires that you do not go through the process to renew the license. Without renewal, your license will expire on the listed expiration date. Although no action is required, the OBD does appreciate being notified by mail or email if you plan to allow your license to expire, as it lets us know we do not need to keep sending you reminders to renew!

Convert License To A Volunteer License:

What Does It Mean? The OBD offers licensees the ability to apply for a volunteer license. Once your license is converted into a volunteer license, you are permitted to practice in Oregon on a volunteer basis only. In applying for a volunteer license, you agree that you will not accept any remuneration for providing dental/dental hygiene services in Oregon as long as your license remains a volunteer license, and you agree to provide at least 80 hours of volunteer pro bono dental/dental hygiene services in Oregon per renewal cycle. As a volunteer license is still considered an active license, as such, you will need to complete your CE and maintain a current Healthcare Provider BLS/CPR certification at all times, along with all of the CE/certifications required for your anesthesia permit (if any), in the same manner as a non-volunteer license. If you wish at any time to return to practicing for remuneration, you must contact the Board and follow the steps we will provide for paying the renewal fees. Once the OBD removes the volunteer status from your license, you may return to accepting remuneration for the dental/dental hygiene services you provide. Rules regarding the volunteer license can be found in [OAR 818-021-0088](#).

Why? There are many reasons to consider converting your license to a volunteer license! First and foremost, the OBD waives the renewal fees for individuals who apply for/renew a volunteer dental/dental hygiene license! Applying for and obtaining a volunteer license is a relatively risk-free “soft exit” from your dental/dental hygiene practice, and a great option for individuals who have a passion for providing dental care to needy Oregonians, and aren’t quite ready to let go of their licenses. You can decide at any time to return to a regular dental/dental hygiene license, and after paying the renewal fees, you can return to non-volunteer practice in Oregon within a relatively short timeline. Once you have applied for and obtained your volunteer license, you must provide at least 80 hours of volunteer pro bono dental/dental hygiene services in Oregon within the following renewal cycle. However, if you do not complete those hours, you do not need to worry about the OBD taking action against your license! The only consequences for failing to complete the required volunteer hours are as follows: at your next renewal cycle, you will not be able to renew your license as a volunteer license. Once you reached your next renewal, if you did not complete all of the required volunteer hours, you would either have to renew the license as a regular dental/dental hygiene license (and pay the renewal fees), retire the license, or allow it to expire. Finally, some organizations (notably the Oregon Dental Association) may waive or reduce some fees for individuals who hold volunteer dental or dental hygiene

licenses. For example, in the past, the ODA has allowed volunteer dentists and dental hygienists to attend the Oregon Dental Convention at no cost!

How? Download the Volunteer License Application packet from the website. Fill out and sign all of the forms in the packet. Mail the documents in the packet to the OBD office. Shortly thereafter, you will receive a new license, reflecting the volunteer status, by mail. If you are converting your license to a volunteer license at the same time as your renewal, you will also need to complete your online renewal. *Please note: The OBD is in the process of migrating to a new database system, and the application process for volunteer licenses is expected change in the near future! If you wish to apply for a volunteer license, please contact the OBD by email at information@oregondentistry.org or by phone at 971-673-3200, so we can make sure to direct you to the proper application process.*

How Does Reinstatement Work?

Reinstate an Expired License

Any license that is not renewed by the listed expiration date will expire. A license that has expired may be brought back to active status any time up to four years after the expiration date. You may not practice under any circumstances until your license has been renewed/reinstated and returned to an active status. For the rules relevant to renewal/reinstatement of an expired license, please see [OAR 818-021-0085](#).

If expired 10 days or less;

- Pay the biennial renewal fee, and;
- Submit a completed renewal application form and certification of having completed the Board's continuing education requirements.

If expired 30 days or less;

- Pay a \$50 penalty fee, and;
- Pay the biennial renewal fee, and;
- Submit a completed renewal application form and certification of having completed the Board's continuing education requirements.

If expired more than 30 days but less than 60 days;

- Pay a \$100 penalty fee, and;
- Pay the biennial renewal fee, and;
- Submit a completed renewal application form and certification of having completed the Board's continuing education requirements.

If expired more than 60 days but less than one year;

- Pay a \$150 penalty fee, and;
- Pay all renewal fees that would have been due while the license was expired, and;
- Pay a \$500 reinstatement fee, and;
- Submit a completed reinstatement application form, and;
- Submit certification of having completed the Board's continuing education requirements (the Board may request evidence of satisfactory completion of the CE courses.), and;
- Complete a new background check (instructions for completion of the background check will be sent upon receipt of a reinstatement application).

If expired more than one year but less than four years;

- Pay a \$250 penalty fee, and;
- Pay all renewal fees that would have been due while the license was expired, and;
- Pay a \$500 reinstatement fee, and;
- Pass the Board's Jurisprudence Exam, and;
- Submit evidence of good standing from all states in which the applicant holds a license/certificate in a health care profession, and;

- Submit a completed reinstatement application form and certification of having completed the Board's continuing education requirements (the Board may request evidence of satisfactory completion of the CE courses.), and;
- Complete a new background check (instructions for completion of the background check will be sent upon receipt of a reinstatement application), and;
- Pass any qualifying examination as may be determined necessary by the Board after assessing the applicant's professional background and credentials.

If expired more than four years, renewal/reinstatement of the expired license is no longer possible. The dentist or dental hygienist must apply for a new license under the current statute and rules of the Board.

Reinstate a Retired License

A dentist or dental hygienist may retire their Oregon license if they do not practice dentistry or dental hygiene in any other state. Once your license is retired, you may not practice under any circumstances until your license has been renewed/reinstated and returned to an active status. For the rules relevant to renewal/reinstatement of a retired license, please see [OAR 818-021-0090](#).

- Pay a \$500 reinstatement fee, and;
- Pass the Board's Jurisprudence Exam, and;
- Submit evidence of good standing from all states in which the applicant holds a license/certificate in a health care profession, and;
- Submit a completed reinstatement application form and certification of having completed the Board's continuing education requirements. (The Board may request evidence of satisfactory completion of the C.E. courses.), and;
- Complete a new background check (instructions for completion of the background check will be sent upon receipt of a reinstatement application), and;
- Pass any qualifying examination as may be determined necessary by the Board after assessing the applicant's professional background and credentials.

If retired more than four years, renewal/reinstatement of the retired license is no longer possible. The dentist or dental hygienist must apply for a new license under the current statute and rules of the Board.

What About Resignation?

Resignation of a License

A dentist or dental hygienist who no longer practices in Oregon, but wishes to continue to practice in another state, may resign their Oregon license. Licenses that are resigned under this rule ([OAR 818-021-0095](#)) may not be reinstated.

When dental professionals near the end of their careers in dentistry and dental hygiene, there are many choices to be made, some of which are exciting, and others which may prove to be quite nerve-wracking! Talking with friends, family, and fellow professionals can often be helpful in making these decisions. When it comes to making a decision about what to do with your Oregon dental/dental hygiene license, OBD Staff would be happy to be a part of the decision-making team! Please feel free to reach out to the OBD at information@oregondentistry.org or 971-673-3200 at any time, if you wish to discuss your options, or if you need more information about any of the options included in this article. The OBD is deeply grateful to you for your years of service to the people of Oregon, and we congratulate you on taking steps towards this new phase of your life!