

What to Expect as Dental Offices Reopen

On April 27th, Governor Beshear issued an [executive order](#) to allow dental offices to reopen for non-emergent care. This order does not require any dental office to reopen and dental offices are encouraged to open only after ensuring they can meet the safety requirements mandated before scheduling non-emergent patients.

Good oral health is essential to good overall health and wellbeing, and we know that individuals across the state are eager to return to their dental offices for non-emergent care. As dental offices begin reopening and you make plans to go see your dentist, keep in mind there are a number of changes you may see.

Prior to your appointment



- You may receive communication from your dental office about their commitment to safety and the changes they are implementing as they reopen.
- You may be asked to schedule a teledentistry appointment, rather than an in-person dental appointment.
- There may be fewer appointment times available to allow for proper cleaning and disinfecting between patients and social distancing within the office.
- You will be asked screening questions when setting up an appointment.
- Based on your screening, you may be assigned the first or last appointment of the day, and that may mean you have to wait longer for an appointment.
- You may be asked to present a negative COVID-19 test that is less than 72 hours old, in order to schedule an appointment.

When you arrive at the office



- You will be asked to stay outside, in your car if possible, and call the office to seek further instructions.
- You may be screened again upon arrival at the office, which could include having your temperature taken.
- You may be asked to enter the office alone and leave all visitors outside the office to wait.
- You will be asked to wear your own face mask when entering the office.

During your visit



- You may be asked to wash your hands or rinse your mouth upon entering your dental office.
- You may see dental hygienists and dentists wearing more protective gear than usual, including gloves, masks, gowns, goggles, face shields, foot and head covers.
- Your treatment may be modified to reduce aerosol production- this means a routine cleaning could be a little different than normal.
- Any unnecessary contact will be avoided, such as handshakes.
- Ask the dental team questions if you see something you don't understand or want more information about.

Changes inside the dental office



- You may see signs hanging in the office explaining changes made.
- You may see additional sanitary or disinfection measures used in the office.
- You may see fewer people in the office than usual to ensure social distancing guidelines are met.
- You may see new features in the office to ensure staff and patient safety, such as a clear barrier at the check-out area.

After your appointment



- Your dental office may do a follow-up screening a few days after your appointment.

It is important to remember that each dental office has their own mission and each dental office will look different as they begin to reopen. The changes implemented in dental offices throughout the state will be based on the professional judgment of the dentist and dental team in each office. If you have questions about the changes and procedures listed, please contact your dental office.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive and it is subject to change as more information and guidance becomes available.

