

Surrounding states have begun to announce that dental offices are "reopening" and that is certainly adding to the high-level of anxiety all members are feeling. Please know that **the SDDA's number one priority at this time is getting you back to work safely.** Several things need to happen in order for dental offices to reopen in South Dakota: 1. A green light from the State of South Dakota (via a change to the Governor's Executive Order) or updated CDC guidance; 2. Offices need to have appropriate PPE (see the latest guidance from the ADA); and, 3. Staff need to return to work.

The Governor has assembled a medical team to advise her on how to safely reopen South Dakota and later this week the ADA will be sharing a protocol for "reopening" safely. If South Dakota's numbers continue to trend in the right direction, things are looking positive for reopening health care, and any advisory to reopen will certainly include added safety precautions in dental offices. Now is a good time to become familiar with the guidance being provided by the CMS (attached) and also OSHA: <https://www.ada.org/en/publications/ada-news/2020-archive/march/osha-issues-coronavirus-guidance>. There are also videos on respiratory safety available through OSHA: https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/respiratoryprotection/training_videos.html#video

Obtaining proper PPE is a major challenge and will likely continue to be problematic for several more weeks. Nationally, most PPE is still being directed to, and stockpiled in, areas of high need. We are looking everywhere for PPE and are attempting to get PPE for dentists from the State cache of PPE. Although the projected number of COVID cases has been lowered dramatically, the state continues to hold the PPE stockpile in the event of a surge of positive cases. Please conserve, decontaminate and reuse PPE as allowed by the CDC. We are currently preparing to train people to do N95 fit testing for dental offices. We plan to have fit testing available to dental offices by the time N95 masks are available.

Also, a quick reminder that if you intend to use the \$10,000 advance from Delta for April, your application needs to be submitted by April 25. The application is attached.

We are all in this together and want to thank you for your unified voice and effort through these extremely trying times. We appreciate your support and adherence to the highest standards of care in our state.