

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

### **Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024**

Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Commencement)  
Notice 2026

### **Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156)**

Dentists Registration (Consequential Amendment) Regulation 2026

## INTRODUCTION

The Secretary for Health has made –

- (i) the Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Commencement) Notice 2026 (“the Notice”) (at **Annex A**) to appoint 24 August 2026 as the day on which the provisions on Dental Care Professionals (“DenCPs”) in the Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (“the Amendment Ordinance”) come into operation, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Amendment Ordinance; and
- (ii) the Dentists Registration (Consequential Amendment) 2026 (“Consequential Amendment Regulation”) (at **Annex B**) Regulation under section 34 of the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156) (“DRO”) to make a consequential amendment that is necessary consequent on enactment of the Amendment Ordinance.

## JUSTIFICATIONS

2. Following the passage of the Dentists Registration (Amendment) Bill 2024 (“the Bill”) by the Legislative Council (“LegCo”) on 10 July 2024, the Amendment Ordinance was gazetted on 19 July 2024. The amendments, amongst others, include the introduction of a statutory registration system for ancillary dental workers including dental hygienists and dental therapists, who will be retitled as DenCP to recognise their professional status while better ensuring their service quality under a more formalised regulatory framework. In practice, dental hygienists and dental therapists will be required to register afresh and, in future, to renew their

practising certificates annually. The Dental Council of Hong Kong (“DCHK”) has been empowered to accredit their training programmes, benchmark the qualifications for the purpose of registration and take disciplinary actions where circumstances warrant.

3. The Notice will bring into operation on 24 August 2026 the provisions that –

- (i) create registration and class for DenCPs;
- (ii) empower the Registrar to maintain registers of DenCPs;
- (iii) empower the Dental Council of Hong Kong and its committees to process applications, and issue practising certificates for DenCPs;
- (iv) provide for qualification, training and experience requirements for DenCPs registration;
- (v) provide for scope of practice for DenCPs; and
- (vi) apply disciplinary and complaint-handling mechanisms to DenCPs similar to those for dentists.

### **Implementation Schedule**

4. The Government has earlier explained to the LegCo that the Amendment Ordinance, which covers multiple parts, will come into operation by stages starting from 2025<sup>1</sup>. In earlier discussions, it was stated that the statutory registration system for DenCPs would be established by DCHK within three years after passage of the Bill. The current notice appoints 24 August 2026 as the day on which the relevant provisions on DenCPs in the class of Dental Hygienist will come into effect.

5. The appointed date serves to allow sufficient time for the DCHK to streamline relevant administrative and preparatory work, including drawing up detailed registration and accreditation procedures, as well as developing and promulgating codes of practice and guidelines for DenCPs. It also facilitates the early processing of applications for registration from dental hygienists already on the roll<sup>2</sup>. For graduates from the local dental hygiene

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<sup>1</sup> The provisions of the Amended Ordinance on limited registration, special registration, temporary registration, as well as most of the provisions on the DCHK’s composition, mandatory continuing professional development for dentists and technical amendments came into effect on 1 January 2025. The provisions on provisional registration, internship and period of assessment also came into operation on 1 April 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Currently, dental hygienists are required to enrol with DCHK once and for all under the Ancillary Dental Workers (Dental Hygienists) Regulations (Cap. 156B). As at end April 2026, there were 684 enrolled dental hygienists in Hong Kong. The DCHK will promulgate notice on the website and issue letters to invite dental hygienists on the roll to apply for registration.

programmes recognised by the DCHK, this will provide sufficient time for them to apply for registration upon graduation from the end of August 2026.

6. Relevant provisions on DenCPs in the class of Dental Therapists, who are currently allowed to work only in the Department of Health, will be commenced later, after enhancing their training and professional development pathways, so that they may work in the public or private sector in due course to tie in with their enhanced roles in providing dental care services.

7. Other provisions of the Amendment Ordinance will commence at later dates as originally planned<sup>3</sup>.

## SUBSIDIARY LEGISLATIONS

8. The Notice at **Annex A** appoints 24 August 2026 as the day on which the provisions of the Amendment Ordinance listed therein (on matters relating to DenCPs in the class of Dental Hygienists) come into operation<sup>4</sup>.

9. As the registration for DenCPs will take effect under the Notice, the Consequential Amendment Regulation at **Annex B** has been made pursuant to section 34 of the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156) to make a consequential amendment to item 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 1 to the Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance (Cap. 650), to substitute a reference to a registered dental care professional for a reference to an enrolled dental hygienist.

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<sup>3</sup> After the commencement of the current Notice, major provisions of the Amendment Ordinance that have yet to come into operation include –

- (a) **provisions on the DCHK’s composition regarding elected members:** the Government and the DCHK tabled regulations on the election of the DCHK members for the LegCo’s scrutiny on 16 July 2025. The LegCo completed negative vetting on 13 August 2025, and the relevant provisions will come into effect on a date to be appointed by the Secretary for Health;
- (b) **Health Committee under the DCHK:** the Government and the DCHK will table regulations on the amended procedural matters for the LegCo’s scrutiny, and thus relevant provisions will commence when the regulations are available; and
- (c) **remaining provisions on technical amendments:** some legislative amendments may only take effect at a later stage for better transition, e.g. abolition of “deemed-to-be registered” status dentists.

<sup>4</sup> Pursuant to section 1 of the Dentists Registration (Fees) Regulation (Cap. 156E) (“the Fees Regulation”) enacted previously, the fee items concerning DenCPs set out in the Fees Regulation (i.e. items 3, 5, 9 and 12 in the Schedule to the Fees Regulation) will also come into operation on the same date.

## **LEGISLATIVE TIMETABLE**

10. The legislative timetable will be –

Publication in the Gazette	22 May 2026
Tabling at the Legislative Council for negative vetting	27 May 2026
Commencement of provisions in the Notice and the Consequential Amendment Regulation	24 August 2026

## **IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL**

11. The Notice serves to commence the provisions of the Amendment Ordinance. Relevant implications are mentioned in the LegCo brief submitted by the Government earlier for the Bill. The Consequential Amendment Regulation, which only makes technical amendments arising from the Notice, is in conformity with the Basic Law, including the provisions concerning human rights. It will not affect the current binding effect of the DRO.

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

12. The DCHK supported the commencement arrangement of the Amendment Ordinance at its policy meeting on 9 April 2026. As for the Consequential Amendment Regulation, since it only concerns a technical amendment arising from the Notice, no public consultation is conducted in this regard.

## **PUBLICITY**

13. A press release will be issued on 20 May 2026, and a spokesperson will be available to answer enquiries.

## **ENQUIRIES**

14. Any enquiries on this brief can be addressed to Mr Larry Chu, Principal Assistant Secretary for Health (Tel: 3509 8917).

**Health Bureau**  
**20 May 2026**

## Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (Commencement) Notice 2026

Under section 1(2) of the Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (22 of 2024), I appoint 24 August 2026 as the day on which the following provisions of the Ordinance come into operation—

- (a) section 5(9) in so far as it relates to paragraph (b) of the new definition of *registered address*;
- (b) section 5(18) in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new definitions of *dental care professional*, *Register of Dental Care Professionals* and *registered dental care professional*;
  - (ii) paragraph (c) of the new definition of *registrant*;
- (c) section 5(20) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15K(9)(b);
- (d) section 6 in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new section 2A(a)(ii);
  - (ii) the new section 2C;
  - (iii) the new section 2D(a)(ii);
- (e) section 8(2);
- (f) section 8(6) in so far as it relates to the new section 3(1A);
- (g) section 13(4) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E;
- (h) section 14 in so far as it relates to the new section 5A(1) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E);
- (i) section 26 in so far as it relates to the new section 5L(b) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15H(3));

- (j) section 28(1) in so far as it relates to the Register of Dental Care Professionals;
- (k) section 39(3) in so far as it relates to the new section 11A(2B);
- (l) section 54 in so far as it relates to the new sections 15C, 15D, 15E, 15F, 15G, 15H, 15I, 15J and 15K;
- (m) section 59(9) in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new section 18(1)(f);
  - (ii) the new section 18(1)(g) (in so far as it relates to the references to sections 15E and 15H);
- (n) section 59(10) in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new section 18(1AA)(b);
  - (ii) the new section 18(1AA)(d) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 18(1AA)(b));
  - (iii) the new section 18(1AAB);
- (o) section 59(11) and (18) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 18(1AA)(b);
- (p) sections 61(2), 62(1) and 63(3) in so far as they relate to the reference to section 15E;
- (q) section 64(2) in so far as it relates to the new section 22(1) (in so far as it relates to the Register of Dental Care Professionals);
- (r) section 64(4) in so far as it relates to the Register of Dental Care Professionals;
- (s) section 66(1) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E;
- (t) section 66(3) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15K;
- (u) section 66(4) in so far as it relates to—

- (i) the new section 23(1)(d) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15H);
- (ii) the new section 23(1)(e) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E);
- (v) section 66(6) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15K;
- (w) section 66(7) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15K(8);
- (x) section 66(8) in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new section 23(3A)(ab) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E);
  - (ii) the new section 23(3A)(ac) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E);
- (y) sections 68(8) and 69;
- (z) section 71 in so far as it relates to the new section 27(7);
- (za) section 73 in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new section 27A(1)(a) (in so far as it relates to the Register of Dental Care Professionals);
  - (ii) the new section 27A(1)(b)(ii) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15K(4));
  - (iii) the new section 27D(1)(a) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15E(6));
  - (iv) the new section 27D(1)(b) (in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15K(8));
- (zb) section 75(5) and (6);
- (zc) section 77 in so far as it relates to the new section 29C(3) (in so far as it relates to the reference to Schedule 3);
- (zd) section 78(3) and (9) in so far as it relates to the reference to section 15I;

- (ze) section 79(2);
- (zf) section 82 in so far as it relates to the new Schedule 3 (except in so far as it relates to the class of dental therapist in Part 1 and section 2 of Part 3 of that Schedule);
- (zg) section 91(2);
- (zh) section 96(5) in so far as it relates to—
  - (i) the new regulation 13(f);
  - (ii) the new regulation 13(g) (in so far as it relates to the references to sections 15E and 15H);
- (zi) sections 115(2), 116(2) and 117(2) in so far as they relate to the reference to section 15E;
- (zj) Part 4;
- (zk) Division 9 of Part 5;
- (zl) sections 132(2) and 133(2);
- (zm) Division 14 of Part 5;
- (zn) section 138.



Secretary for Health

15 May 2026

**Dentists Registration (Consequential Amendment)  
Regulation 2026**

(Made by the Secretary for Health under section 34 of the Dentists  
Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156))

1. **Commencement**  
This Regulation comes into operation on 24 August 2026.
  2. **Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance amended**  
The Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance (Cap. 650) is  
amended as set out in the Schedule.
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**Schedule**

[s. 2]

**Amendment to Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse  
Ordinance**

1. **Schedule 1 amended (specified professionals)**  
Schedule 1, Part 1—  
**Repeal item 3**  
**Substitute**  
“3. A registered dental care professional as defined by section  
2(1) of the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156).”.



Secretary for Health

15 May 2026

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### **Explanatory Note**

The Dentists Registration (Amendment) Ordinance 2024 (22 of 2024) amends the Dentists Registration Ordinance (Cap. 156) (*Cap. 156*) to, among other things, provide for a new regime for the registration of dental care professionals in place of the existing regime for the enrolment of dental hygienists under the Ancillary Dental Workers (Dental Hygienists) Regulations (Cap. 156 sub. leg. B) (*Cap. 156B*).

2. Consequentially, references in other enactments relating to the enrolment of dental hygienists under Cap. 156B need to be substituted by references relating to the registration of dental care professionals under Cap. 156. This Regulation makes a consequential amendment to the Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Ordinance (Cap. 650) to substitute a reference to a registered dental care professional for a reference to an enrolled dental hygienist.