

School Dental Screening – Audit Frequently Asked Questions

1) Who is responsible for completing the school dental screening audit?

Each local board of health, or their designee, is responsible for auditing the certificates of dental screening. Regional I-Smile Coordinators may serve as the board of health designees and coordinate the audit process in their respective service areas. Contact information for I-Smile Coordinators can be found at <https://hhs.iowa.gov/health-prevention/dental-oral-health/i-smile>.

2) What grades and schools are included in the audit?

The requirement only includes students enrolling in kindergarten and 9th grade in an Iowa public or accredited non-public elementary or high school. A list of the public and non-public schools to be included is found on the Iowa Department of Education Website at <https://educate.iowa.gov/directories>. Locate the Iowa School Directory Spreadsheets and click on “Iowa Public School Building Directory” or “Iowa Nonpublic School Directory,” as applicable.

3) What screening documentation is included in the audit?

The only acceptable forms to audit are the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Certificate of Dental Screening or Certificate of Dental Screening Exemption. No other forms should be included and counted in the audit.

4) What is required for the Certificate of Dental Screening to be valid?

Student Information—This section must include the student’s last name, first name, and birth date. The provider or school staff may assist with completing this section.

Screening Information—This section must be completed. If any of the fields are blank, the form is not valid and should not be included in the audit. The form is also invalid if more than one treatment is needed or more than one provider type is checked. This section may only be completed by an authorized screening provider. The following question defines “authorized screening provider.”

5) Who can sign the Certificate of Dental Screening?

The certificate can be signed by the provider who does the screening or by a recorder* who transfers information from another health document. A stamped or electronic signature is allowed.

*Effective July 2010, a recorder (i.e., dentist, dental hygienist, physician, physician assistant, or registered nurse) may transfer information onto the HHS certificate from another health document that contains the required information. The HHS certificate must include the recorder's signature, credentials, and signed date. The other health document should be attached to the HHS certificate.

6) Are screenings performed by out-of-state providers valid?

Yes, out-of-state providers may perform a dental screening and sign the certificate.

7) What is the timeline for a valid screening?

For kindergarten, a screening is acceptable if completed no earlier than age 3, but no later than four months after enrollment. For 9th grade, a screening is acceptable if completed no earlier than one year prior to enrollment and no later than four months after enrollment. **Note:** The rules allow for HHS to make exceptions to the timeline (e.g., if a screening is completed after the 4-month deadline, but a valid certificate is on file at the time of the audit, HHS will allow the certificate to be included in the audit).

8) After the audit is complete, what should schools do with the certificates?

The certificates must be kept at the school in each student's file with other health records.

9) Where should the record review (audit) forms be sent, and what is the deadline?

Electronic forms must be sent to HHS via email by May 31 each year. For quality assurance, HHS recommends that the local I-Smile Coordinator gather all audit forms and submit them to HHS.

10) What documentation should be provided to the local boards of health?

Each board of health should determine whether to review the audit forms or keep permanent copies before sending them to HHS. I-Smile Coordinators will provide an annual summary report to all boards of health.

11) If students who need dental care or urgent dental care are identified during the audit, can the I-Smile program or school nurse contact the family to ensure that care has been completed?

Yes, I-Smile program staff and school nurses may use the certificates to identify students with treatment needs to provide care coordination.

If you have questions, call 866-528-4020 or email oral.health@hhs.iowa.gov.