

Press Release Primer

A press release is a simple, cost-effective means of promoting your state or local organization and the dental assisting profession. Writing an effective press release is not enough; you must get the press release placed in newspapers and other media. This will take time, organization, and follow-up, but it is often worth the effort. The publicity that press releases generate for your group is invaluable. If you have not established a regular media contact (a local reporter, columnist, or editor who prints items about your group), then follow these pointers:

- Get an early start. Publications generally work well in advance of their publishing date.
- Make a list of local newspapers and publications. Be sure to include suburban, community, and neighborhood papers. To find all media sources, use internet searches or ask a local librarian for assistance.
- Scan the publications you are interested in to determine which reporters and columnists usually print community news items. Address your release to those individuals.
- Retype the press release (double-spaced) on your organization's letterhead. Be sure to include your own name and phone number in case the editor needs additional information. If you do not use your organization's stationery, include a cover letter with your name and phone number. Also, state when the press release should be published.
- Address the release to a specific person rather than to "the editor" or the newspaper office. If you cannot determine an appropriate recipient for your material, at least try for a specific department (such as community calendar or upcoming events, etc.)
- If you cannot decide who should receive the press release, follow these guidelines: address the CITY DESK for daily newspapers; NEWS ASSIGNMENT DESK for radio and television stations; and LOCAL NEWS for wire services and periodicals.

Note: If you're fortunate enough to receive a Proclamation, this information should be included with your press release, including a photo of the event (if available) and information on when and where the signing took place, along with the names of those appearing in the photo. You can also email it if it is more convenient, but a hard copy of a proclamation would, of course, have to be mailed.

PRESS RELEASE SAMPLE CONTENT

DATE: Month and Year

CONTACT: Your name and phone number

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Smile! It's Dental Assistants Recognition Week™

Dental assisting continues to diversify and expand. Whether working chairside with the dentist, taking X-rays or managing the business office, teaching or working in insurance or sales, dental assistants are vital to the success of the dental practice. [Name of your state or local or school here] is excited to recognize the contributions of dental assistants.

Dental Assistants Recognition Week™, scheduled for March 6–12, 2022, is a week-long tribute to the commitment and dedication dental assistants exhibit throughout the year.

"Dental Assistants—Passionate About Our Patients, Dedicated to Our Profession" is the theme for the 45th annual Dental Assistants Recognition Week. It is a time for dental assistants to receive greater recognition for their own unique and diverse contributions to the dental profession and the dental health care of the public.

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Dental Assistants Recognition Week is sponsored by the American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA). ADAA has been the recognized voice of dental assisting for more than 90 years. It remains committed to promoting quality dental health care to the public and enhancing the public image and stature of the dental assisting profession.

Radio and Television Announcements

Most television and radio stations set aside time for public service announcements that are aired free of charge. Getting your announcement aired is usually a matter of submitting it early enough for the station to broadcast.

Try following these simple steps:

- Call your local radio and television stations to get the name of the public service manager. You may also ask how far in advance announcements should be sent.
- Retype the spot announcements on separate sheets of paper. Be sure to double space and type in the name of your state or local organization. Type the contact information (your name, organization, phone number, etc.) in the upper left hand corner of each page.

- Address the announcements to the Public Service Manager.
- Follow up with a phone call to make sure that the stations received the announcements.
- Keep a log of the aired announcements. You may ask members of your organization to let you know if they hear the announcement. If the radio or television station can tell you when and if the announcement will be aired, your job will be easier.
- Visit your local stations' websites. Some will tell you the names of the personnel you need to contact and how to reach them through email or by post.

SAMPLE 30-SECOND SPOT ANNOUNCEMENT

NAME:

Your State Association or Local Organization

CONTACT:

Name of your Public Relations Chair or other contact

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

Flash That Smile — It's Dental Assistants Recognition Week™!

Dental assistants apply their skills and training to make your visit to the dentist productive, safe and as pleasant as possible. **March 6-12, 2022**, is Dental Assistants Recognition Week, a time to remember the contributions dental assistants make to the dental profession and the dental health care of the public.

SAMPLE 60-SECOND SPOT ANNOUNCEMENT

NAME:

Your State Association or Local Organization

CONTACT:

Name of your Public Relations Chair or other contact

ADDRESS:

PHONE NUMBER:

Flash That Smile — It's Dental Assistants Recognition Week™!

When you visit your dentist, your first and last contact is probably with the dental assistant at the front desk or at chairside with the dentist. The *(name of your State association or Local organization)* wants to remind you that **March 6-12, 2022**, is Dental Assistants Recognition Week, a time to remember that dental assistants help make your visit to the dentist productive, safe and as comfortable as possible. The theme of this year's celebration is "**Dental Assistants—Passionate About Our Patients, Dedicated to Our Profession.**"

Gubernatorial and Mayoral Proclamations

Many state and local dental assisting organizations have been very successful in obtaining gubernatorial and mayoral proclamations or greetings for Dental Assistants Recognition Week observations.

Often, a short ceremony accompanies the signing of such proclamations. The event offers state and local societies an ideal opportunity to have photographs taken and also increases the likelihood that news of DARW will appear in local newspapers.

If you would like to try to obtain a proclamation from your governor or mayor, you will have to contact the proper authorities well in advance of DARW (at least four weeks).

You are welcome to use the sample request letter included in this packet. Retype the letter on your organization's stationery and fill in the missing information. Be sure to enclose the sample proclamation with your request and follow up with a polite call as indicated in the letter.

If the governor or mayor consents to issuing a proclamation, they may have a staff photographer record the event. If not, after you receive word that a proclamation will be issued, ask the communications manager or media relations coordinator if you may bring your own camera to record the event.

Regardless of whether you have a photo, you should try to use the proclamation to gain some publicity for your organization and for DARW. Send the photo (if you have it), a copy of the proclamation and copies of the press release to your local newspaper and state/local dental publications. Be sure to check if your local newspaper and state/local dental publications prefer hard copy or electronic file submissions. Make sure to follow up with the publications to see if your efforts have been successful. Make a personal follow-up phone call about a week after you send the press release to find out whether the material has been routed to the appropriate person. This phone call may also give you some indication as to whether the item will be used. When you call, identify yourself, your group and your connection to the release. For example, "I'm Jody from the Springfield Dental Assistants Society. We're promoting Dental Assistants Recognition Week. Have you received our press release?" If the reporter cannot locate the release, offer to email it. If the reporter has received it, they will probably mention if and when it will be used.

Check the papers daily to see if the release has been printed.

SAMPLE LETTER REQUESTING GUBERNATORIAL OR MAYORAL PROCLAMATION

(Name of State/Local Association)
(Address)
(Phone Number)

Hon. (Name of Elected Official)
(Title)
State of (Name of State or City)
(Address)

Dear (Title and Name):

Each year, many of the nation's (*governors or mayors*) salute the dental assisting profession by issuing a proclamation or sending greetings to state dental assisting leaders during **Dental Assistants Recognition Week**.

This year, Dental Assistants Recognition Week is scheduled for **March 6-12, 2022**. The 45th such celebration to be held acknowledges the vital role the nation's more than 200,000 dental assistants play in providing quality dental health care to the American public.

We of the (*Name of state/local association*) would feel very honored if you, as (*governor or mayor*) of (*name of state or city*), would agree to salute dental assistants by signing a proclamation or by sending a greeting on this occasion.

If you decide to honor us with such a tribute, we shall request the privilege of sending representatives of our association to your office for a brief ceremony at the time you sign the proclamation.

We will telephone your press secretary within the next two weeks to verify receipt of our request.

We appreciate your time and attention and sincerely hope to receive a favorable reply in the near future.

Sincerely,

President,
(*Name of state/local association*)
Enclosure

PUBLICITY OPPORTUNITY

If you receive a proclamation, please let us know! We'd love to include an announcement with a photograph in *The Dental Assistant* journal.

Sample Proclamation

- WHEREAS, dental assistants, working with the dental profession, play an important part in maintaining the dental health of the citizens of (Name of State or City) and of the United States; and
- WHEREAS, dental assistants, through their skills and knowledge, make dental care possible for increasing numbers of our citizens; and
- WHEREAS, for over 90 years the **American Dental Assistants Association** has encouraged and made possible continuing education for dental assistants in order to enhance the delivery of dental health care to the public; and
- WHEREAS, the American Dental Assistants Association and (Name of State/Local Association) have designated the week of **March 6-12, 2022** as **Dental Assistants Recognition Week™** in (Name of State or City) and throughout the United States.
- NOW, THEREFORE, I (Name of Elected Official), (Governor or Mayor) of the (Name of State or City), do hereby proclaim the week of March 6-12, 2022 as Dental Assistants Recognition Week in (Name of State or City), and bring its importance to the attention of the citizens of (Name of State or City).
- WHEREAS, I have set my hand and caused the seal of (Name of State or City) to be affixed.

Signature

Date