

Orange County Ryan White Dental Services Client Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



The questions and answers below are for the Ryan White Dental Program based on information known as of October 09, 2025.

1. How do I get Ryan White dental services?

You will need to get a referral from your assigned Ryan White provider:

- 17th Street Care Clinic
- 17th Street Eligibility
- AltaMed
- APAIT
- Radiant Health Centers
- Shanti Orange County

When getting the referral, your provider will check your eligibility and insurance information. A referral will only be made if you have valid eligibility. If you do not have valid eligibility, you will be referred to get screened for Ryan White eligibility. You can get a 30-day grace period to complete eligibility screening.

You can choose the dental office that is most convenient for you. The referral form will be sent to the dental provider's office on your behalf once it has been approved. The dental office will call you to set up an appointment after they have received the referral form. If you do not get a call from the dental office within two (2) weeks, please call the office directly and state that a referral form was sent in for you.

2. How do I get a referral if I do not have a Ryan White medical care or case management provider?

Individuals who have completed eligibility, but are not case managed, may request a dental referral by making an appointment with the eligibility staff that completed your eligibility screening.

3. Where can I get dental services?

You can get dental services at any of the Ryan White-funded dental provider offices.

- Orange: **Pablo Lazaro DDS Inc. (Dr. Lazaro)**
- Santa Ana: **Bristol Family Dental (Dr. Begino)**
- Tustin: **Families Together of Orange County**

4. If I have Medi-Cal Dental (formerly Denti-Cal), what is the benefit of going to one of the Ryan White providers above?

As of January 1, 2018, Medi-Cal Dental adult dental care was fully restored. Individuals with Medi-Cal Dental can go to any Medi-Cal Dental provider. Going to a Ryan White provider is a benefit because they work with HIV-positive patients and may have more expertise in HIV-related dental issues. There may also be some services covered by Ryan White that are not covered by Medi-Cal Dental.

5. If I have private dental insurance, can I use Ryan White instead?

No. Ryan White is a payer of last resort and can only be used when there is no other coverage available. Patients with private insurance should be referred to dentists covered by their insurance. Patients with private insurance should not be referred to a Ryan White dental provider unless that Ryan White dentist also accepts their private dental insurance. A Ryan White referral should **NOT** be submitted for patients with private dental insurance. Ryan White will not cover dental services if the patients has reached their annual maximum benefits.

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6. Will Ryan White dental cover my private dental insurance co-pays?

No. Ryan White dental is not an insurance company and does not act as a secondary insurance.

7. What services does Ryan White cover?

Ryan White covers services allowable under the Ryan White Dental Program (ex. cleanings, fillings, etc.). Since March 8, 2021, the Ryan White Dental Program has a yearly limit for dental services for each patient. The yearly limit (March-February) is the amount that a patient has to cover any dental service allowable under Ryan White. Currently, the yearly limit is **\$1,800** per patient for dental services provided from **March 1 through February 28**. **See page 4 for an example of the yearly limit.** The yearly limit is based on the Ryan White fiscal year and may change every year based on funding available.

8. What services are not covered by Ryan White?

Ryan White does not cover dental implants, cosmetic procedures or materials, periodontal services, complex root canals, or oral surgery cases requiring specialist care. Providers may be able to provide the services for a fee or help refer you to other dental offices that may charge for these services.

9. Do all Ryan White dental providers offer the same services?

Yes, all of the providers can offer the same services.

10. How long will it take to get my first appointment?

The time from referral to your first appointment will depend on each dental office's capacity and your dental needs. Appointments are required for all new patients. The dental office will call to make an appointment once the referral is received.

11. How long does the referral process take?

The referral approval process can take up to five (5) business days.

12. What is the referral process?

Your Ryan White provider (eligibility worker or case manager) will complete the dental referral and send it to the Dental Specialty Coordinator for referral processing. The Dental Specialty

Coordinator will do the following:

- Verify Ryan White eligibility
- Check for Medi-Cal coverage
- If eligible, an authorization number will be added to the referral form and will be sent to the dental office
- Once the referral is received, the dental office will call you to schedule an appointment

13. How long does it take to finish treatment?

The time it takes to complete treatment for one (1) tooth is based on what needs to be done and the patient's ability to keep all appointments and arrive on time. Sometimes treatment can be done in one (1) visit (for example, a cleaning or simple filling). Other treatments could take several visits to complete (for example, a bridge, root canal, or dentures). Talk to your dentist about the timeframe for finishing treatment for your situation.

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14. What can I expect during a visit?

It depends. Each visit is different, but you should expect the dentist to discuss the treatment plan with you. If the treatment is not covered or is optional (for example, upgraded services like porcelain crowns), the dentist will review the treatment plan with you, and you will be asked to sign the treatment plan to acknowledge that the treatment plan was reviewed. If you choose an optional treatment or treatment that is not covered, you will be responsible for paying the fee. Ryan White does not cover optional services your dental provider may recommend.

15. If I have Medicare and Medi-Cal (Medi/Medi), can I receive Ryan White dental services?

It depends. You first need to find out if you have dental coverage under your plan (for example, individuals who have CalOptima OneCare HMO automatically have dental coverage. If you have OneCare, you are not eligible for Ryan White services). Individuals who have Medi/Medi, but do not have dental benefits under Medicare, are eligible to receive dental benefits through Medi-Cal Dental. Talk to your Ryan White provider if you have questions about your dental coverage.

16. If I have a Medi-Cal Share of Cost (SOC) that I cannot pay, can I receive Ryan White dental services?

It depends. If the dental service needed is not covered under Medi-Cal Dental, but is covered by Ryan White, then Ryan White can pay for the service, regardless of the SOC being paid. If the service is covered by Medi-Cal, Ryan White cannot cover the service.

17. Can I change my dentist at any time?

Yes, you can change your dentist at any time. However, to maintain continuity of care, it may be best for you to stay with the same dentist while a treatment is being completed. If possible, talk to your dentist or Ryan White provider before you change your dentist. You should not change dentists in the middle of treatment.

The following FAQs are related to the yearly limit for dental services.

18. How will I know I have reached the yearly limit?

Your Ryan White dentist will let you know when you have reached the yearly limit and talk to you about your options if you still need dental services.

19. What are my options if I have reached the yearly limit and I still need dental services?

You have two (2) options if you have reached the yearly limit and still need dental services:

- Option one (1) is to be placed on a waitlist for dental services not covered by the yearly limit. If the Ryan White Dental Program has extra funding during the year, you will be taken off the waitlist on a first come first serve basis.
- Option two (2) is to pay out of pocket for services not covered by the yearly limit. Your Ryan White dentist may provide the services for a fee or help refer you to other dental offices that may provide services for a fee.
 - You are responsible for all fees after you have met the yearly limit if you choose this option.

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20. What are my options if I have reached the yearly limit for dental services under the Ryan White Dental Program and I have Medi-Cal Dental (formerly Denti-Cal)?

If you have Medi-Cal Dental, your Ryan White dentist can still provide services covered by Medi-Cal Dental after you have reached the yearly limit.

21. How can I be added to the waitlist if I have reached my yearly limit?

Your Ryan White dentist will submit the request for you to be added to the waitlist. Once you are removed from the waitlist, the dental office will call you to schedule an appointment.

22. Whom can I contact to ask about my status on the waitlist?

You can contact the Ryan White Dental Coordinator at (714) 834-6651 to ask about your status on the waitlist.

23. Are there any other changes to the Ryan White Dental Program?

No, there are no other changes to the Ryan White Dental Program at this time. All other requirements, including eligibility for services and referral process, remain the same.

24. Whom can I contact if I have more questions about the yearly limit for dental services?

You can contact your Ryan White Eligibility Worker or Case Manager to help answer any other questions you might have.

Example of the Yearly Limit for the Ryan White Dental Program:

- Ryan White has a yearly limit of \$1,800 per patient for dental services.
- You get a dental filling in April. The cost for that filling is \$100. Ryan White will cover the full cost of the filling; you now have \$1,700 left of your yearly limit for dental services for the year.
- In July, you get a root canal. The cost for the root canal is \$800. Ryan White will cover the full cost of the root canal; you now have \$900 left of your yearly limit for dental services for the year.
- In October, you get a crown. The cost for the crown is \$1,000. Because the cost of the crown is more than the \$1,800 yearly limit, you have the option to be placed on a waitlist or pay for the services out of pocket.
- The Ryan White Dental Program covers the cost of dental services up to \$1,800; you are responsible for the cost of any services above the \$1,800.
- At the start of the new Ryan White fiscal year (March 1), your yearly limit will reset to \$1,800.

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Seven (7) Reminders for Clients

1. You must have Ryan White eligibility complete to access or continue dental services.
2. Your dental referral expiration date is based on your eligibility expiration date. If your eligibility is expired, your dentist may reschedule your appointment. **Do not** miss your eligibility appointments.
3. Talk to your dentist or Ryan White provider any time you feel **pain** or a **change** in your condition.
4. Go to all of your scheduled appointments. Each dental office has a policy for billing clients a non-show fee. If you are billed a fee for missing an appointment, Ryan White will not pay the fee.
5. Be on time to all of your appointments.
6. Keep your contact information updated with your dentist and Ryan White provider.
7. If you cannot make it to an appointment, call the dental office to let them know at least 24 hours before the appointment to avoid a missed appointment fee.