



2025 DENTAL

Salary Survey Report

HIRING | WAGES | TURNOVER



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Salary Survey Report

All Positions Report Summary

Conducted from October to November 2024 in partnership with Endeavor Business Media (*Dental Economics and RDH Magazine*) and Endeavor Business Intelligence, DentalPost's *2025 Dental Industry Salary Report* is the most comprehensive industry offering of its kind, covering income and benefits, hours, job turnover, retirement plans, and more for dentists, hygienists, assistants, and front-office specialists.

This fifth annual report distills the perspectives and experiences of more than 3,500 dental professionals from many walks of life. More than a quarter (28.1%) of respondents are industry veterans with upward of 30 years' experience; 22% are newer entrants to the field with tenures under 10 years.

They hail from all 50 states and Washington, D.C., where they work in a range of dynamic environments. In addition to the 83.6% in general dentistry, 5.7% are in multidisciplinary practices and the rest are in specialized organizations, such as periodontist or endodontist. Most respondents are in private (78.2%) or corporate (11.9%) settings; the remaining span academic, military, public health, or multiple arenas.

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2025 Key Highlights & Takeaways

2024 Wages and salaries

Pay increased significantly in 2024 for dental assistants, RDHs, and front office associates.

Although the hourly wages of dental practice managers rose in 2024, the average total income of dental practice managers dove by -6.5%.

Nearly two-thirds (65.7%) of respondents have received a raise within the past two years, but for some, this bump may have fallen short of expectations: Less than half (48.1%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation packages

Benefits

91.9% of respondents received benefits of some kind in 2024, up from 85% in 2023. The most ubiquitous perks were paid holidays and vacation, retirement, and dental. The most coveted ones, when not already in play, were far and away medical and retirement.

2024 Tenure and Turnover

Despite the apparent room for improvement on the compensation front, respondents are largely pleased with their work circumstances. **Two-thirds (66.5%) are satisfied or very satisfied** in their current job, and nearly as many (65.2%) have no plans to look elsewhere.

Employment tenures also tend long, with more than half (55%) of respondents clocking five or more years with their current organization.

As for the **18.1% who have changed jobs** in the past 12 months, many were in search of a better work environment, a bigger paycheck, or a more appreciative employer — goals that 76.6% say they achieved in the transition.

Looking Ahead

Heading into 2025, roughly **a third (35%) of all respondents** are considering a job change, down notably from the 41.4% who were mulling an imminent switch at this time last year.

As for those nearing the end of their careers, **11.5% of respondents** plan to retire within three years, comparable to the level reported in 2024 (12.4%).

Dentist Report

SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Between October and November 2024, DentalPost conducted its annual *Dental Industry Salary Report*, drawing participation from 472 dentists. Three-quarters of responding dentists are owners and partners; the remaining quarter are associates.

Key Highlights & Takeaways

- ◆ In 2024, the average full-time income of general dentists who are practice owners or partners is **\$320,316**, compared to **\$300,273** in 2023. The average full-time income of general dentists who are employed associates is **\$225,929**, compared to **\$217,867** in the previous reporting period.
- ◆ The average incomes of dentist-owners and associate dentists increased in 2024. Compared with DentalPost's 2023 metrics, the income of dentist-owners rose by **9.92%** and the income of associates rose by **8.54%**.
- ◆ **Compensation sentiment continues to flag**, with 57.3% dentist-owners and 44.9% of associate dentists reporting they were satisfied or very satisfied with their total package (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits) in 2024, compared to 58% of owners and 45.6% associates in 2023.
- ◆ In the previous 12 months, **28.8% of responding associates changed jobs**, a nearly identical proportion to those in this position the previous reporting period (28.2%). The top motivations for such moves in 2024 were a better work environment, higher pay, and better hours.

Key Highlights & Takeaways (Continued)

Nearly half (46.6%) of responding associates are **considering or actively seeking a job move within the year**, driven primarily by the search for higher income, a better work environment, better benefits, and more career opportunities.

Like last year, roughly one-third (34.2%) of responding **dentist-owners plan to retire within six years.**

“Work-life balance is difficult to achieve, and I am currently filling two roles in the academic setting. This is leading to stress and burnout.”

“I am at the point in my career when I am practicing because I still love dentistry. I enjoy the interactions I have with most of my patients. I enjoy the clinical aspect of providing dentistry and I enjoy learning new procedures while I perfect and modify the treatment I have always provided.”

General Dentists Who Are Practice Owners/Partners

204 full-time general dentists who are practice owners or partners reported total primary income from their dental practice ranging from **\$100,000** to **\$1,800,000**.

- ◆ **91.2%** of respondents are owners or partners in private practice, and 3.4% are owners or partners in a corporate DSO; the rest are split across university or hospital, military, public health, and multiple or other settings.
- ◆ The mean annual income of full-time general-dentistry owners and partners was **\$320,615.00**, up 6.77% from \$300,273 in 2023.
- ◆ In 2024, **31.96%** of the respondents were practicing in the southern region of the U.S., **25.09%** in the midwestern region, **25.77%** in the western region, and **17.81%** in the northeastern region.

Associate General Dentists

71 associate general dentists reported their hourly wage and total primary income from dental practice. **57.7%** were employed by a private practice, **16.9%** by a corporate DSO, and **19.7%** in public health; the rest spanned military, university or hospital, and multiple or other settings.

Mean & Median Hourly Wage

Associate general dentists reported an hourly wage ranging from **\$40** to **\$336**.

- ◆ The mean hourly wage of associate general dentists was **\$113.18**.
- ◆ The median hourly wage was **\$100.00**.

Mean & Median Full-Time Income

Associate general dentists working full-time reported income ranging from **\$100,000.00** to **\$1,500,000.00**.

- ◆ The mean income of the associate general dentists was **\$225,929.58** in 2024, a 3.7% increase from \$217,867.00 in 2023.
- ◆ In 2024, **30.43%** of the respondents were practicing in the southern region of the U.S., **31.51%** in the western region, **11.96%** in the northeastern region, and **26.09%** in the midwestern region.

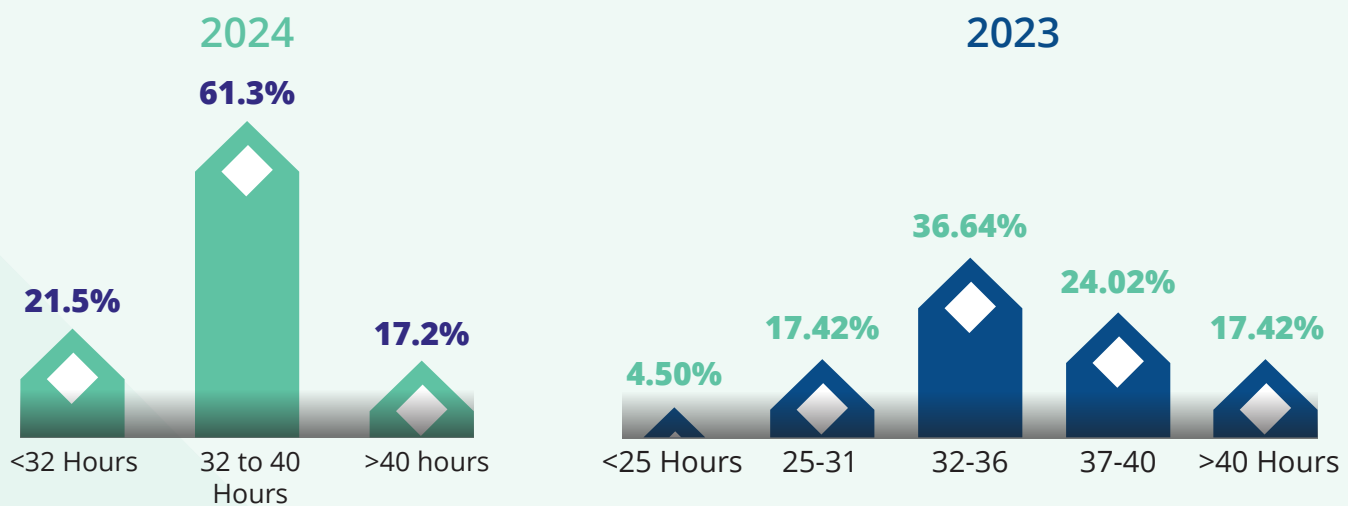
Specialists (Owners & Associates Combined)

10 specialists reported total primary income from dental practice in 2024 ranging from **\$110,000** to **\$700,000**.

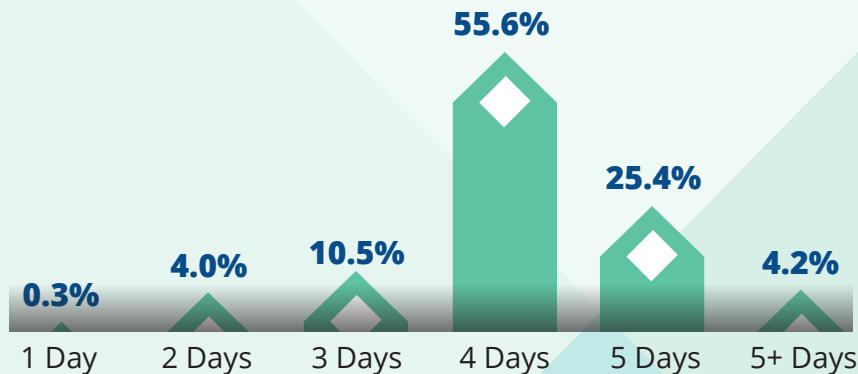
Average Workweek Hours

Dentist-Owners

78.5% of responding dentist-owners were working full-time (32 or more hours per week on average), and 17.2% reported they were working more than 40 hours per week in 2024 — rates very similar to 2023's results.

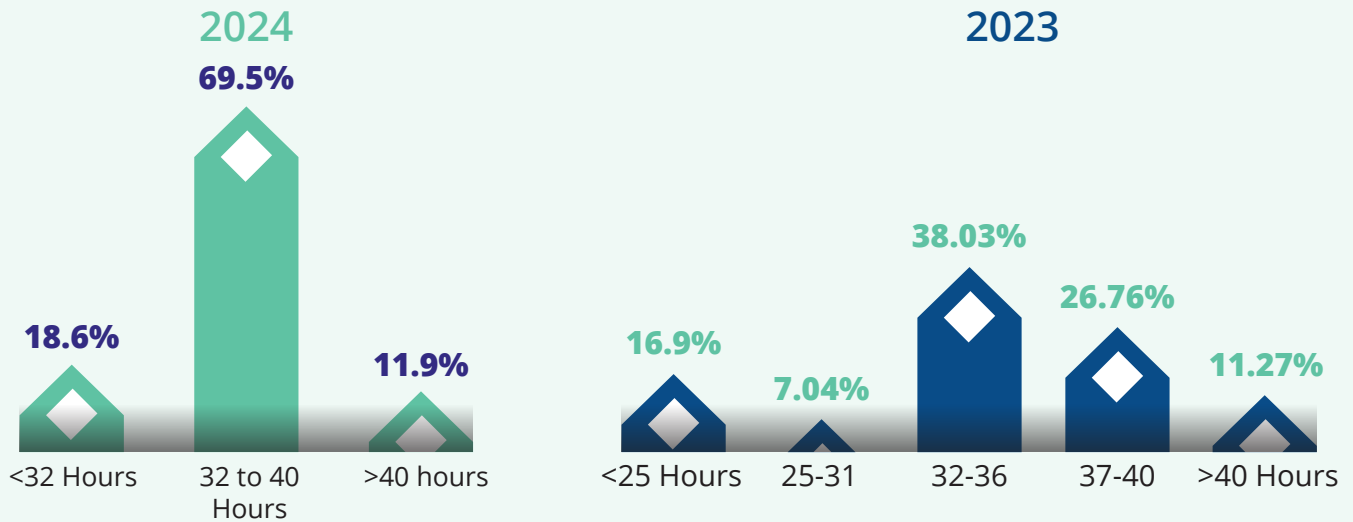


70.3% work fewer than five days in the average week; four-day schedules are especially popular, with more than half (55.6%) of owners opting for them.

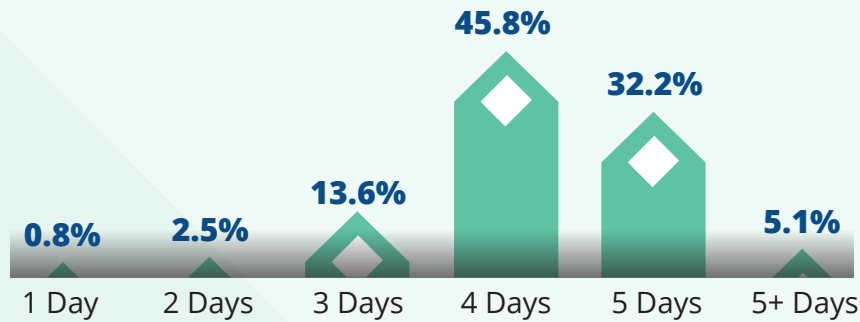


Associate General Dentists

81.40% of responding associate general dentists were working full-time (32 or more hours per week on average), and **11.9%** were working more than 40 hours per week in 2024. In 2023, 76.0% were working full-time, and 11.3% were working more than 40 hours per week on average.



Nearly two-thirds (62.7%) of associate general dentists work fewer than five days in the average week; nearly half (45.8%) of responding associates have four-day schedules.



Dentists of all stripes consider 4-day workweeks a big win

“Helping others is #1, but I actually enjoy practicing dentistry and having a diverse workload day to day. I like talking to patients and coworkers day to day. I do also love having 3 day weekends.”

Benefits

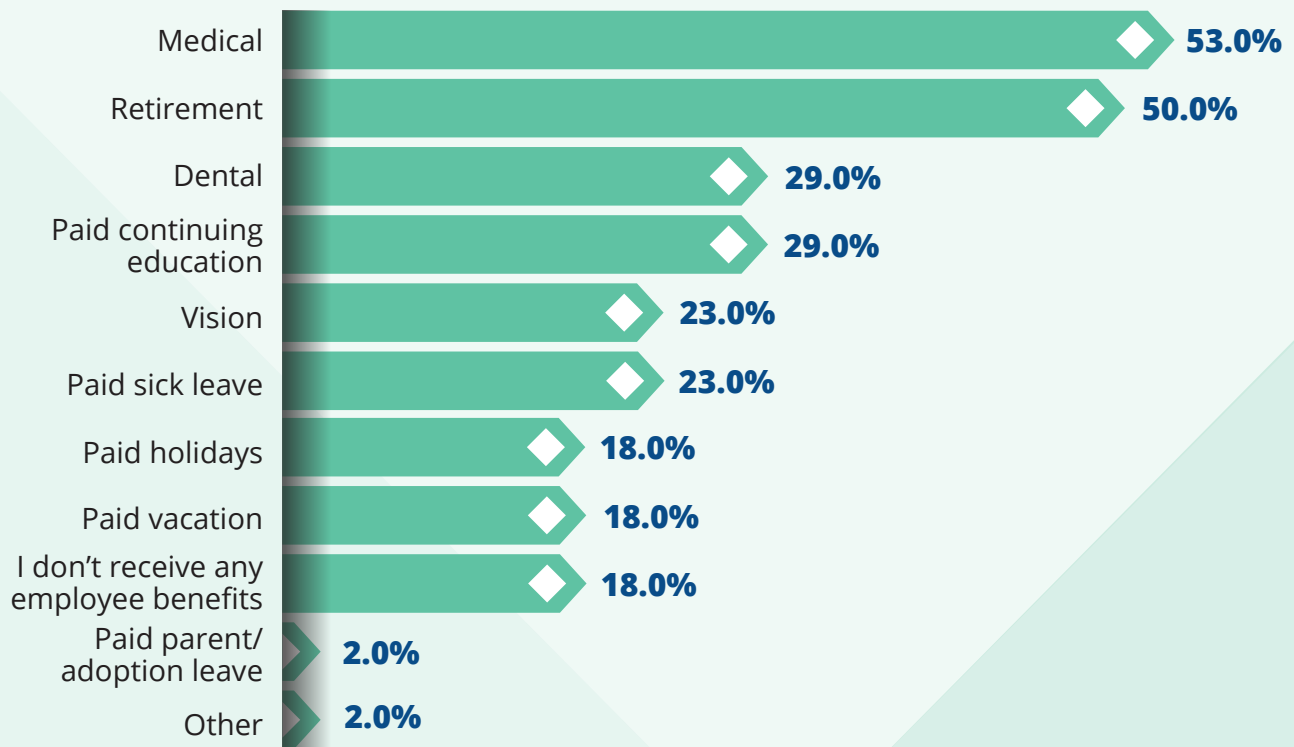
Associate Dentists in Private Practices

78% of responding associates in private practices received benefits in 2024, compared to 60.6% in 2023.

Among the responding associates working full-time in private practices, the most common benefits received in 2024 were Medical, Retirement, Dental, Paid Continuing Education, and Vision. (In 2023, they were medical/health, retirement/401k, dental, paid continuing education, and vision.)

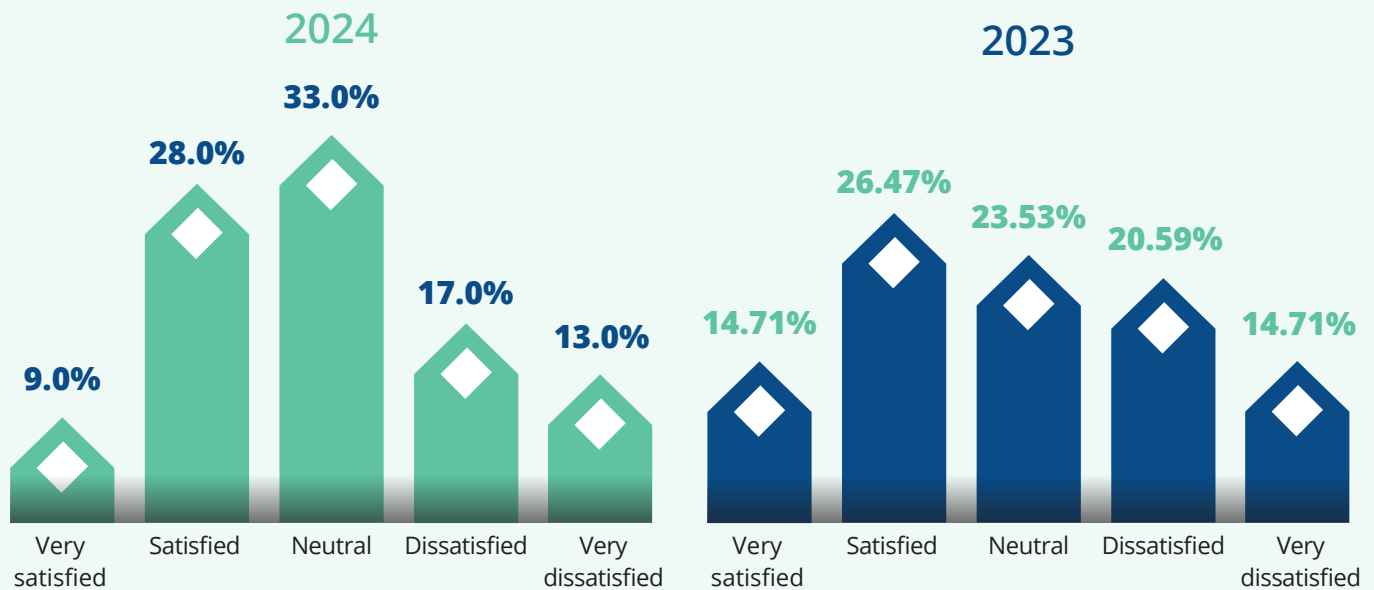
- ◆ **18%** received paid vacations or holidays.
- ◆ **18%** did not receive any benefits, compared to 39.4% in 2023.
- ◆ The benefit they wanted most if they did not have it was Medical.

The Benefits They Received



Satisfaction with Benefits

37% of associate dentists in private practices were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits.



“I am at the point in my career when I am practicing because I still love dentistry. I enjoy the interactions I have with most of my patients. I enjoy the clinical aspect of providing dentistry and I enjoy learning new procedures while I perfect and modify the treatment I have always provided.”

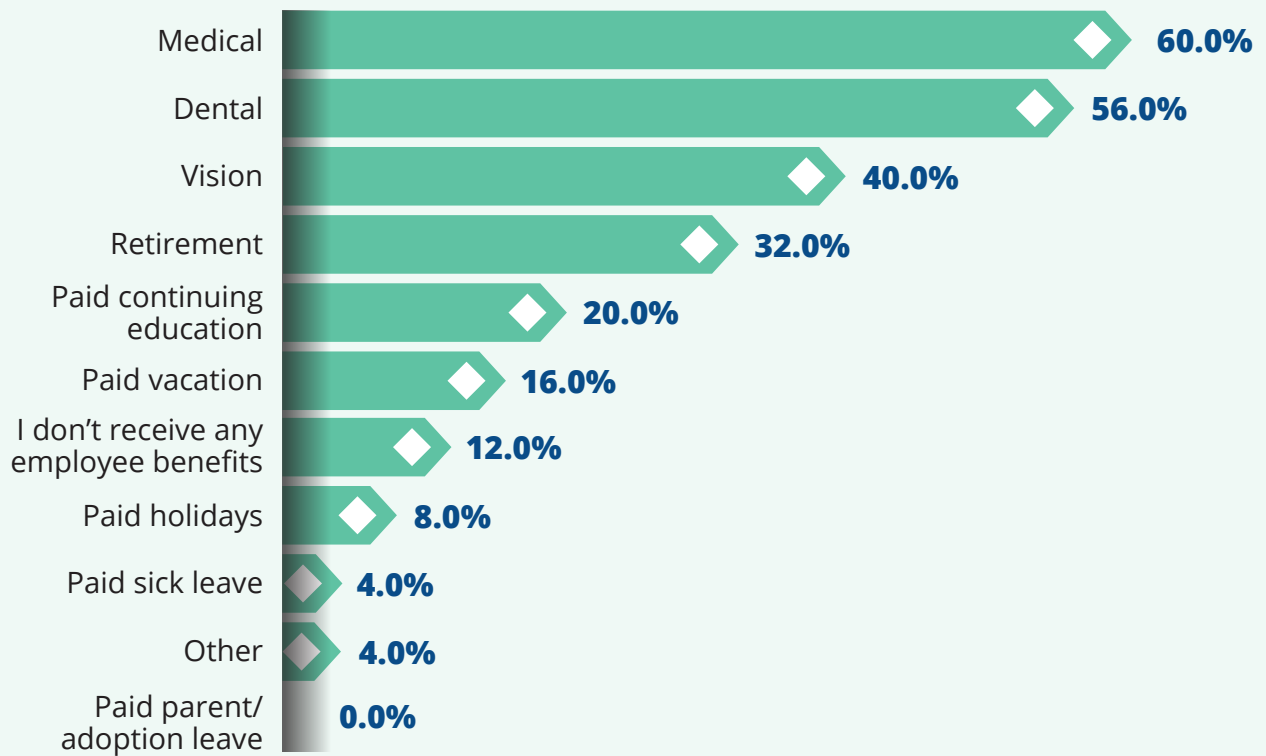
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Associate Dentists in DSO Practices

The Benefits They Received

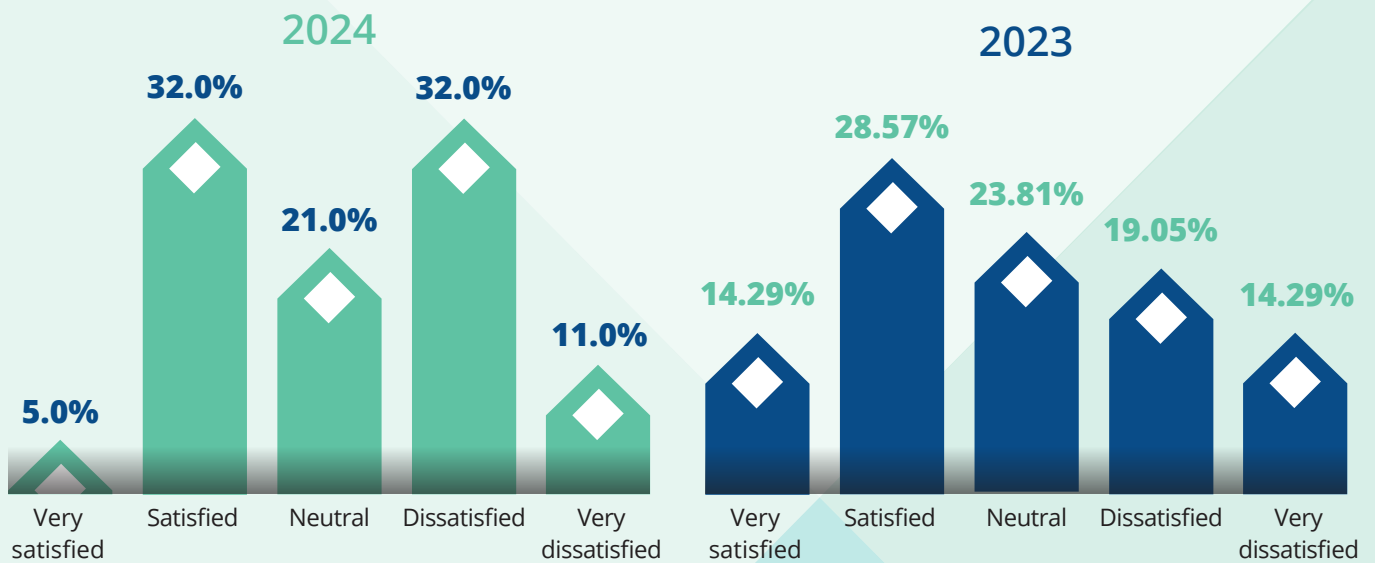
In 2024, responding associates who work in DSO practices were likeliest to receive Medical (**60%**), Dental, Vision, Retirement, and Paid Continuing Education. (In 2023, 76% of responding associates, who work in DSO practices, received medical benefits, and over 60% received retirement, dental, and vision benefits. Over 50% received paid continuing education.)

- ◆ **12%** didn't receive any benefits, compared to 9.5% in 2023 and 16.4% in 2022.
- ◆ The benefit they wanted most if they did not have it was Paid Vacation.



Satisfaction with Benefits

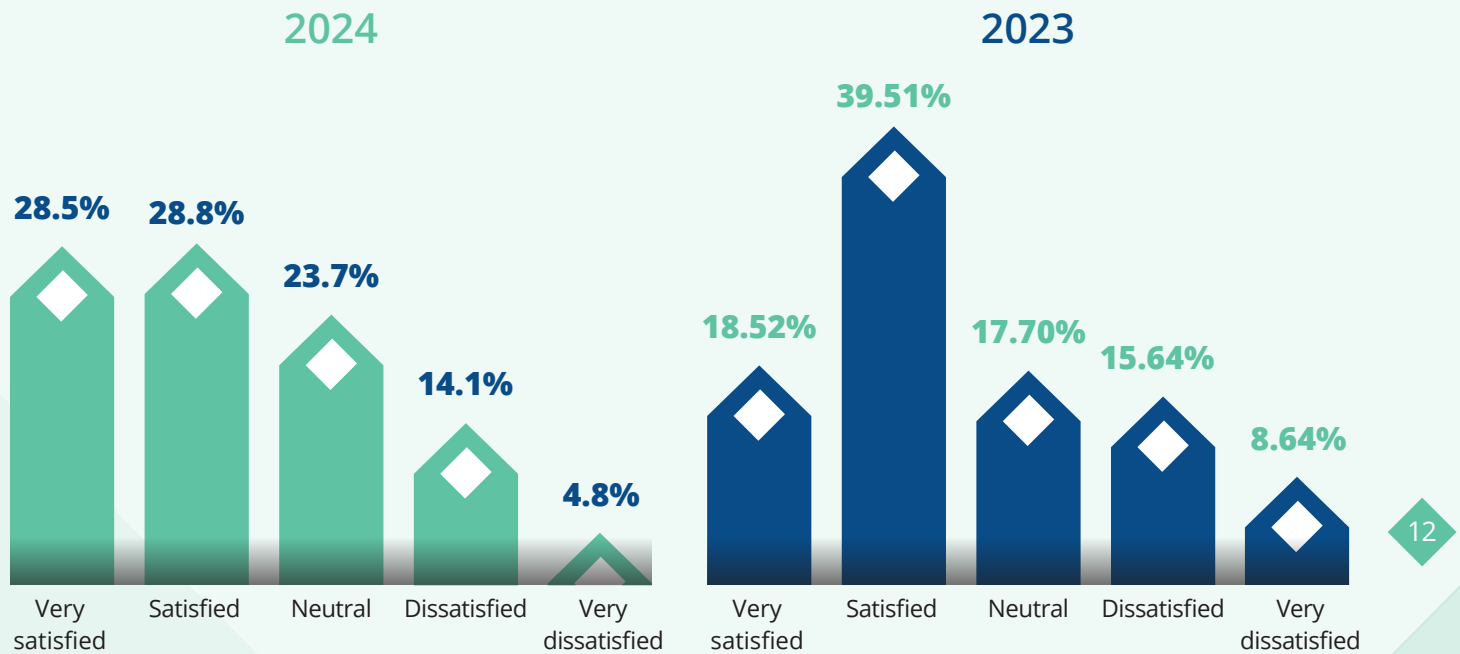
37% of associate dentists who work full-time in DSO practices were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits in 2024.



Satisfaction with Total Compensation

Dentist-Owners

Satisfaction with overall compensation appears to be leveling out after a nosedive between 2022 and 2023: **57.3%** of the responding dentist-owners were satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits) in 2024 — a rate just shy of 2023’s 58.0% and far below 2022’s 80.0%.

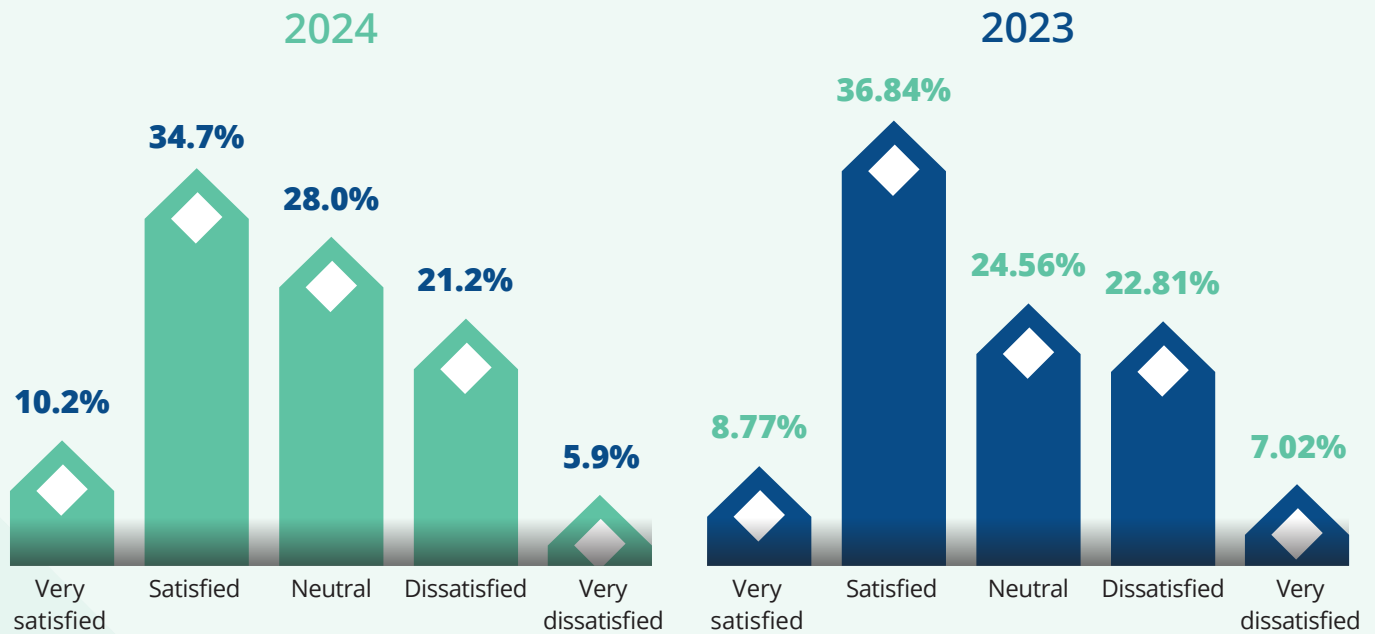


THE HIGHER COST OF DOING BUSINESS CAN BE A BIG DRIVER OF DISTRESS FOR DENTIST-OWNERS

“I’m a practice owner. With added costs, inflation, lack of a stable workforce, lack of qualified individuals, consistent turnover, I’m burned out. It makes enjoying my job nearly impossible.”

Associate Dentists

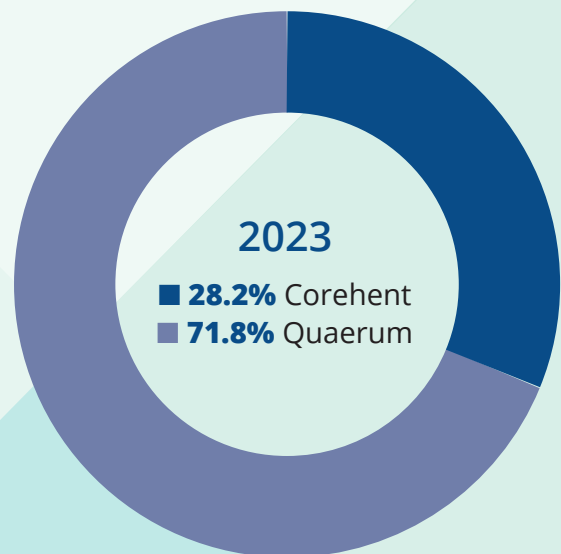
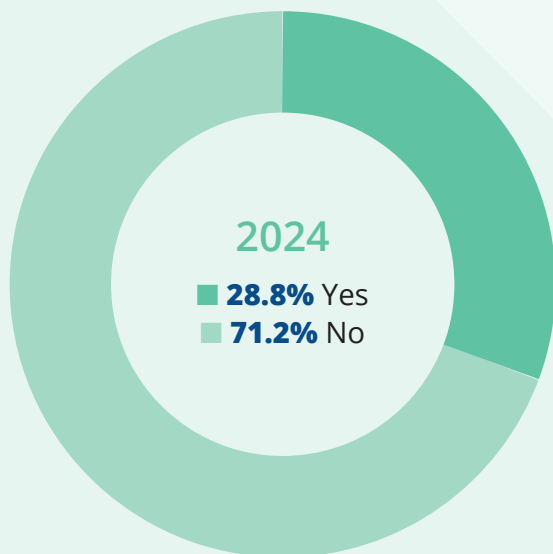
Satisfaction has been steadier, albeit on a marginal decline, for associate dentists over the past few years: **44.9%** of the responding associates were satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits), compared to 45.6% in 2023 and 53.1% in 2022.



Associate Dentists: Job Turnover

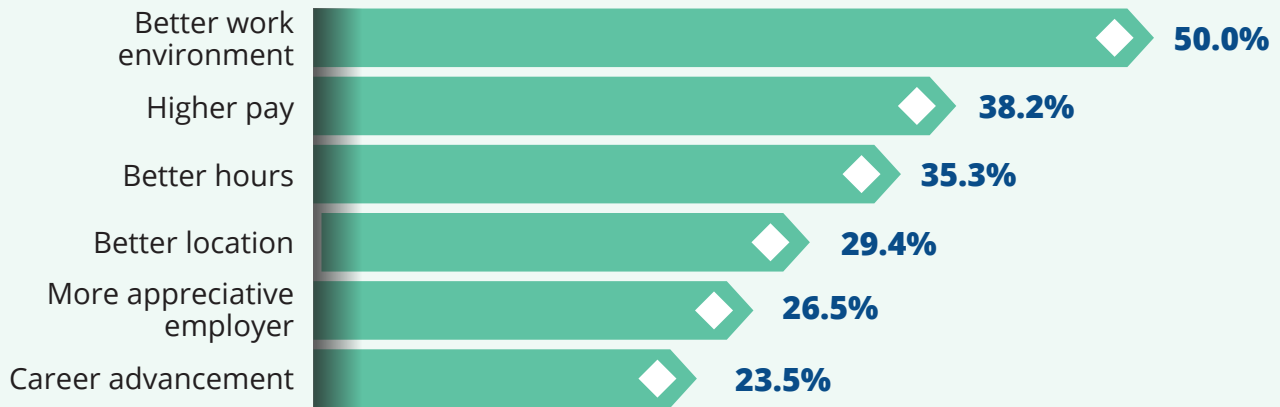
Changed Employers in the Previous 12 Months

Like last year, more than a quarter (**28.8%**) of associates changed employers within the previous 12 months.



Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

Those who changed employment were motivated to make the change primarily for a better work environment, higher pay, and better hours.

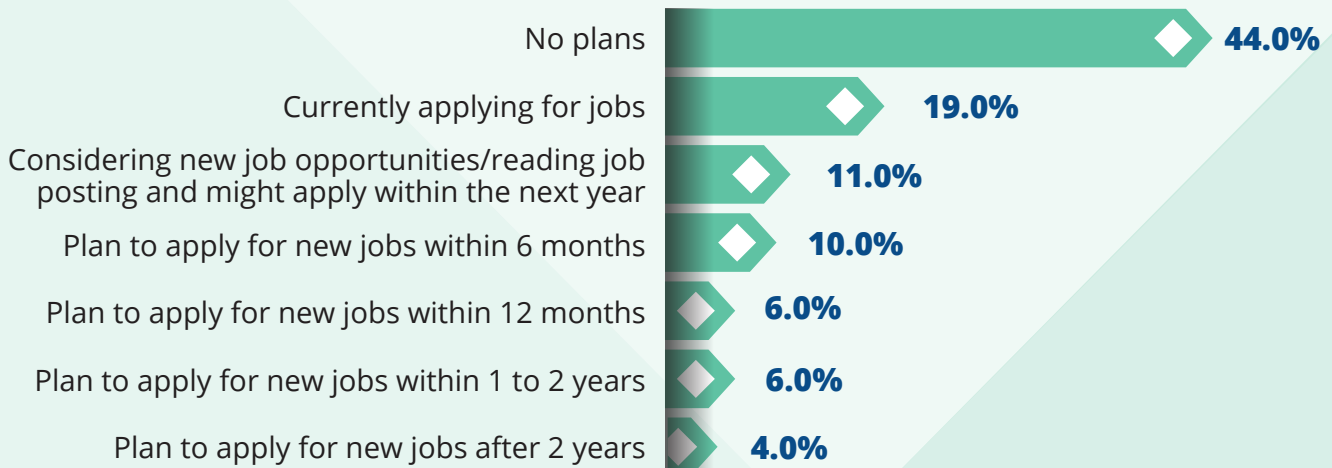


More than three-quarters (**76.5%**) of those who made the leap achieved their goals in doing so.

Plan to Apply to New Jobs Before 2025

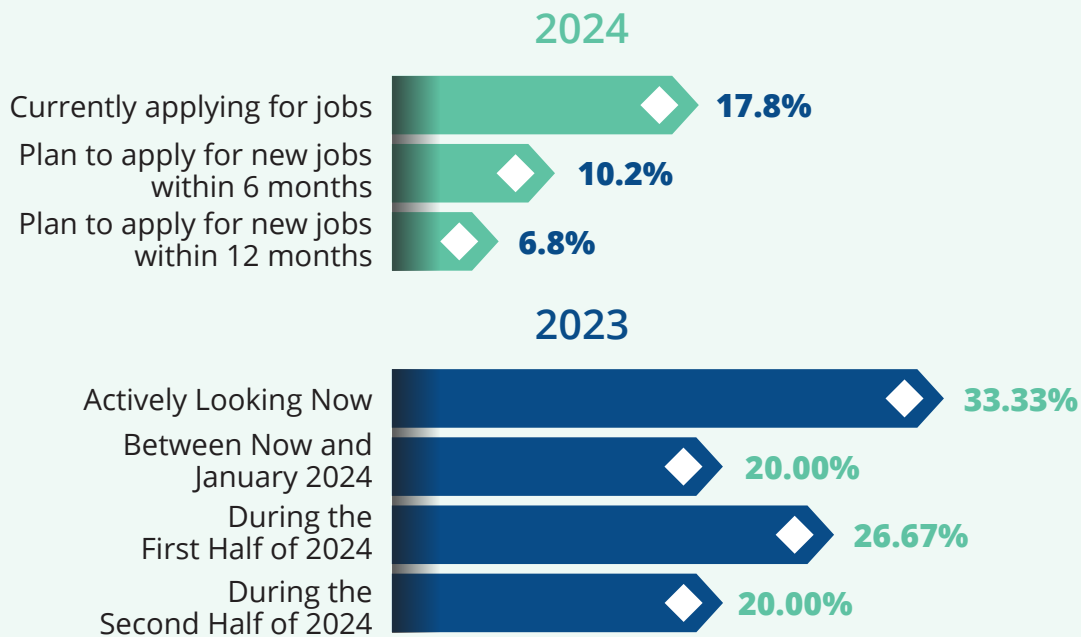
Nearly half (**46.6%**) of responding associates are considering or actively seeking a job move within the year. Nearly as large a proportion (42.3%) have no plans to pursue new employment, almost identical to last year's 42.9% staying the course.

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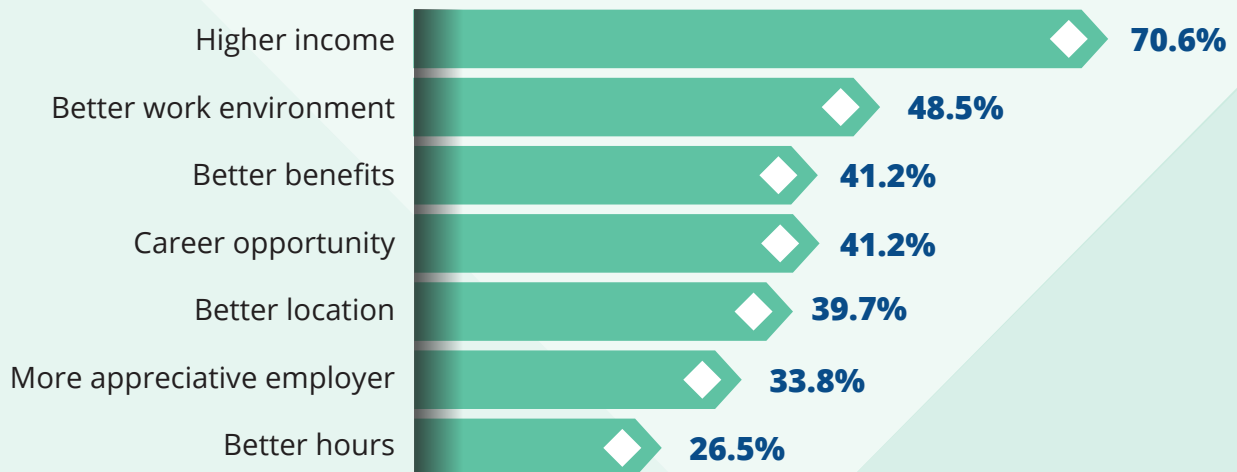
When They Plan to Apply to New Jobs

17.8% of respondents who are planning to apply elsewhere were actively looking for new opportunities at the time of the survey.



Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2025

Among those mulling or actively seeking a job change, top motivations are higher income, a better work environment, better benefits, and more career opportunities.

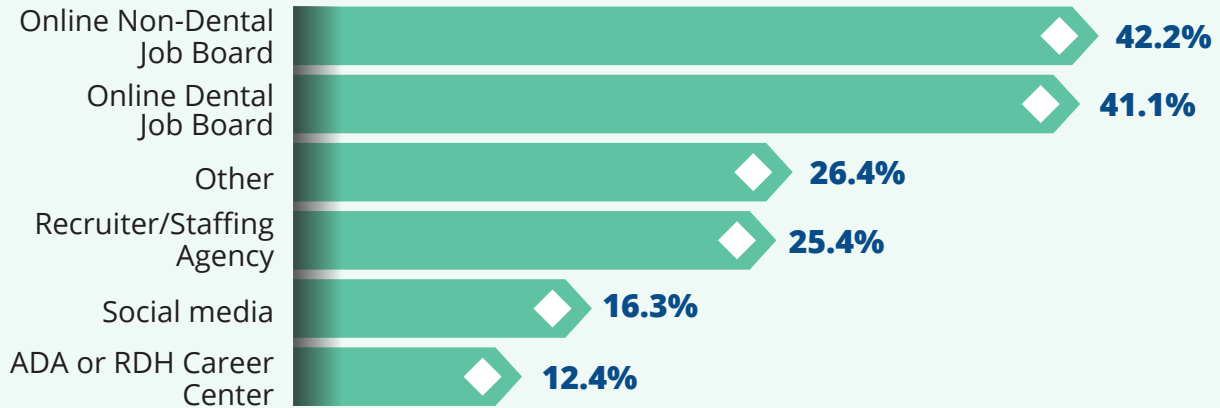


POOR MANAGEMENT AND LIMITED CAREER MOBILITY AND CAN BE BIG STRESSORS FOR ASSOCIATE DENTISTS

“Early working times, limited room for growth in other areas of dentistry like implants and ortho, micromanagement in all aspects, lack of trust, poor management.”

Where They Look for Jobs

Like last year, associate dentists reported they primarily look for new job opportunities on dental-specific online job boards like DentalPost, other online job boards, and via recruiters and staffing agencies.

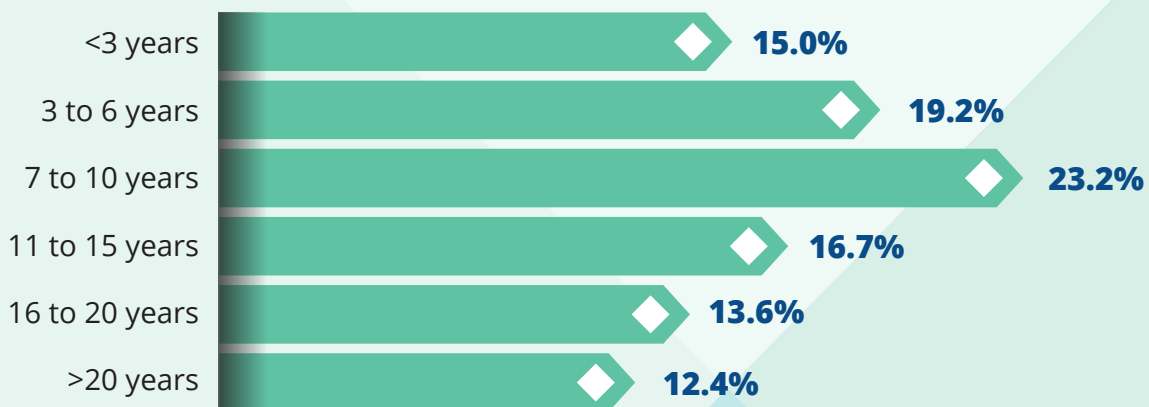


Both owners and associates mentioned through write-in responses that they also find new opportunities through colleagues, professional contacts, and friends, as well as dental communities like schools, societies, and associations.

Planned Years to Retirement

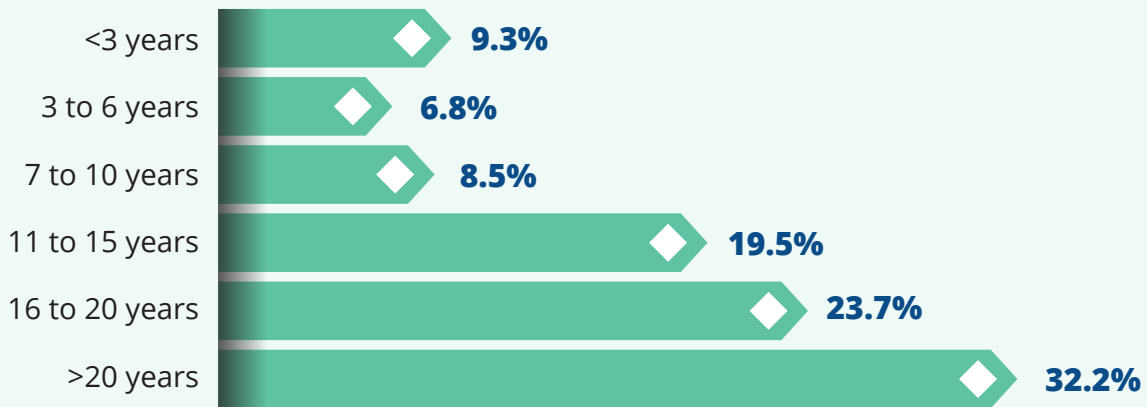
Dentist-Owners

Like last year, roughly one-third (**34.2%**) of responding dentist-owners plan to retire within six years.



Associate Dentists

Compared to their owner counterparts, associate dentists report longer career trajectories: Just **16.1%** of responding associates say they plan to retire within six years.

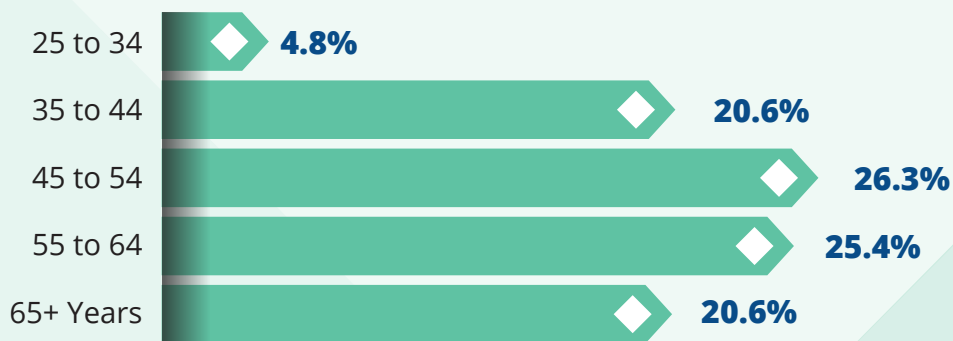


Age & Experience

Dentist-Owners

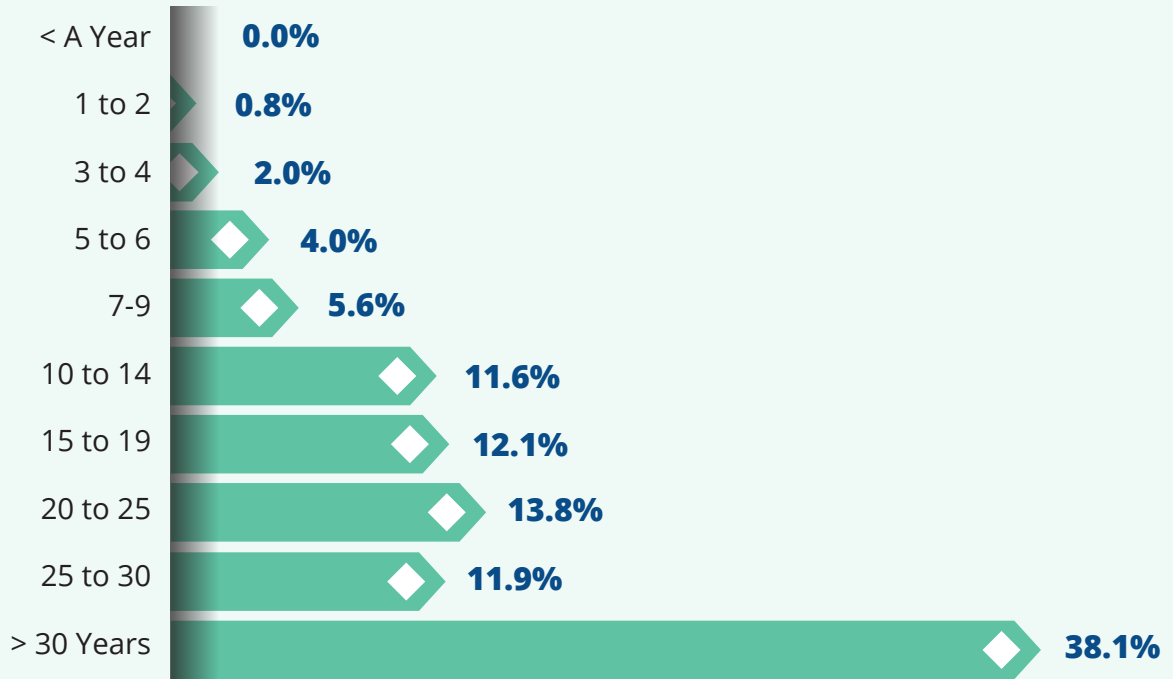
Age

One in two (**51.7%**) dentist-owner is between the ages of 45 and 64.



Years of Experience

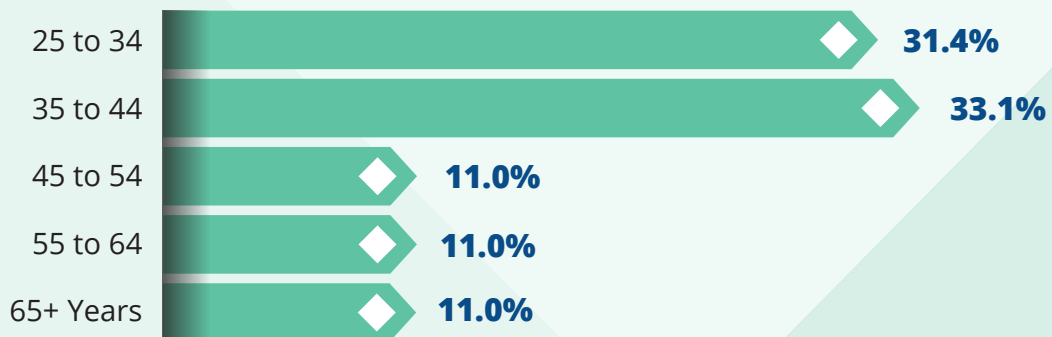
Nearly 9 in 10 dentist-owners (**86.4%**) have at least a decade of experience in the dental profession.



Associate Dentists

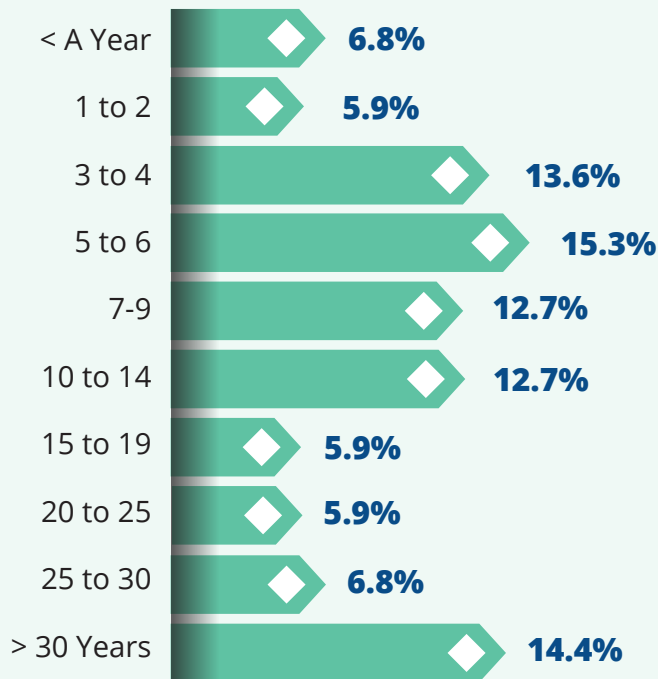
Age

Two in three (**64.4%**) responding associates are younger than 45.



Years of Experience

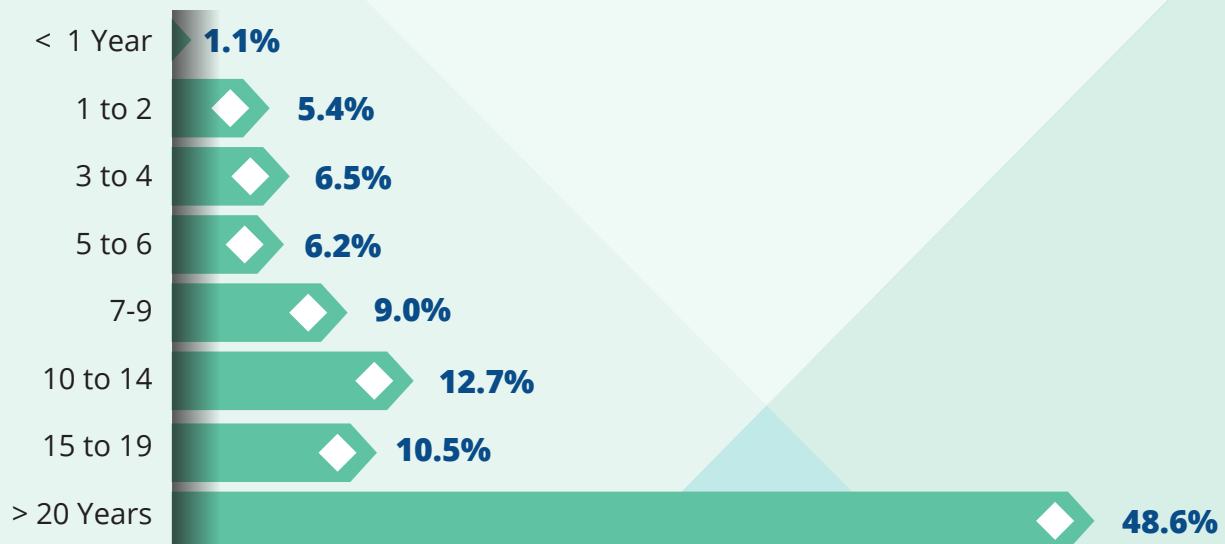
Compared to dentist-owners, associate dentists are far likelier to be newer to the profession: Less than half (**45.8%**) have a decade or more of experience.



Longevity with Current Practice

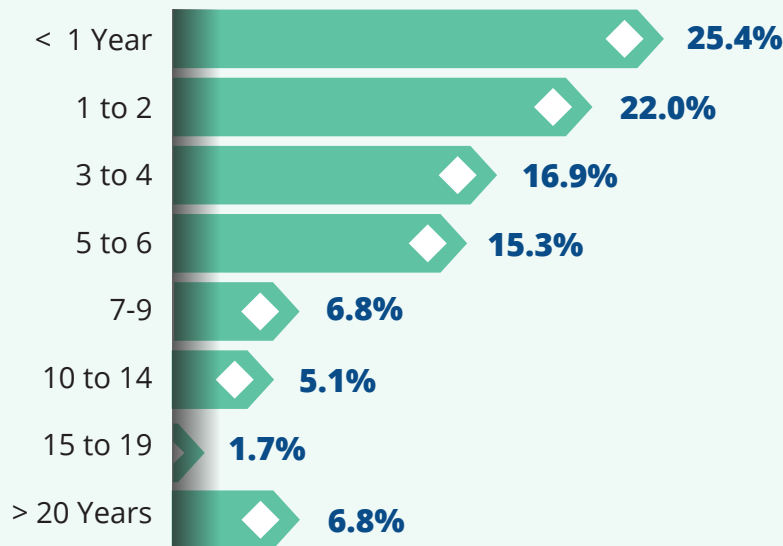
Dentist-Owners: Years as the Practice Owner/Partner

Like last year, nearly half (**48.9%**) of responding dentist-owners have led their practice for more than 20 years. Very few (13.0%) have had their practice under five years.



Associate Dentists: Years with Current Employer

Also like last year, the lion's share (**80.0%**) of responding associates have been with their current employer for six or fewer years.

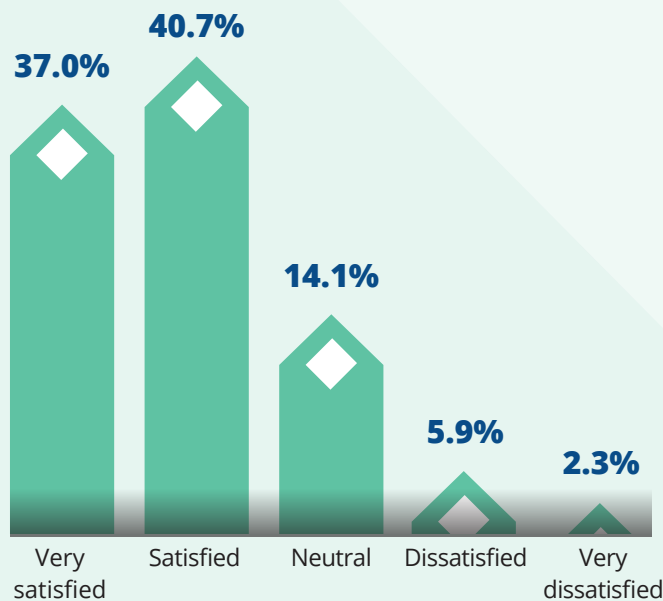


Biggest Career Wins and Washes in 2024

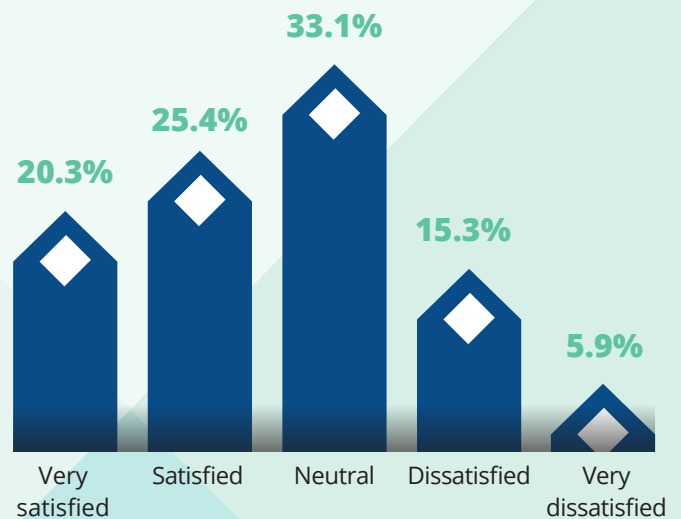
Overall job satisfaction is (a very auspicious) **77.7%** for dentist-owners and a more lukewarm **45.8%** for associate dentists.

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Dentist-Owners



Associate Dentists



Ahead are some top drivers of this uneven sentiment.

Challenges

The biggest career challenges for dentists in 2024 were far and away financial, with many respondents citing struggles with insurance companies and plans (PPOs especially), as well as collections, compensation, overhead, and taxes.

The responsibilities of running a business were another leading cause for concern among dentist-owners, with stressors including regulations, bureaucracy, and paperwork; people management and patient satisfaction; and talent pipelines and turnover. For some, overwhelming schedules are leading to burnout, and the physical demands of the job have taken their toll.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

“Corporate takeover with no consistency or patient-centered care concerns”

“Dealing with the stresses of the business. Trying to be the best boss and business owner while also trying to be the best clinician as possible. Also trying to be the best husband and father on top of that.”

“I dislike the shortage of dental workers in our area. It is a constant stress for me and my practice. We are unable to take new patients and that’s stressful and awkward in the community as well. We need more hygienists.”

“HR, employment issues, rising costs on all sides without rising revenues.”

“I dislike working with insurances and navigating patient dissatisfaction that results from financial barriers.”

“Rarely patient interactions can be unpleasant. I also don’t like dealing with insurance companies and the restrictions they place on treatment needed by their subscribers.”

“Stress of dealing with insurance companies not paying or denying treatment, our overhead increasing (staff wages and supplies), and wondering when it will be unsustainable to run a private independent practice. We want to deliver the best service with the best training and the best products and charge a reasonable price which is becoming increasingly difficult.”

Wins

Despite these challenges, dentists say there's a lot to celebrate in their profession.

Flexibility, freedom, and autonomy came up repeatedly as wins among dentists of all stripes, with circumstances like private-practice ownership and 4-day work weeks enabling control over clinical and administrative decisions, as well as work-life balance.

Many said their people — both patients and colleagues — are the best part of the job. They derive great meaning from using deft hands and hard-won skills to perform complex and varied procedures, help newer professionals progress in their careers, and restore smiles throughout their communities.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

“Mix of community health/FQHC and private clinic work. Get to treat people of all income types. Working with kids keeps me young and hopefully makes a positive impact on their lives for the future.”

“Changing people’s lives by improving their oral and overall health as well as their emotional health”

“Caring for people, and the relationships that have developed. Creating with my hands. Solving how best to treat. Dentistry is art and science.”

“I enjoy the opportunity to educate young people entering the dental profession and the opportunity to engage in research that pushes our profession forward.”

“I am in a leadership position and changing the face of this organization. Flexibility to be with my children.”

“I make a difference in people’s lives. Get to problem solve, and create tiny works of art that nobody notices, when I’ve done it well.”

“Challenging and always changing. I get the opportunity to help people and make money while doing so, and enjoy a decent family life too...what could be better?”

RDH Report

SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Between October and November 2024, DentalPost conducted its annual dental professional salary survey, drumming up participation from 2,230 registered dental hygienists — a 23.8% increase compared to the prior year's pool.

Key Highlights & Takeaways

◆ Compensation is on the upswing. The mean (average) total income of responding RDHs rose for the third year running, hitting an all-time high of **\$81,627 in 2024**.

◆ While satisfaction with compensation trails behind 2022 levels, we saw a slight rebound in 2024 compared to the year prior, and **negative sentiment dipped even more notably**.

◆ **One in five RDHs (20.5%) have changed jobs** within the past 12 months, up just slightly from the 19.4% who did the same in the previous period. Chief among desires in making the jump were a better work environment, higher pay, and a more appreciative employer; 78.3% of job changers say they accomplished such goals in the switch.

◆ As for those looking to leap soon, **12.5% of responding hygienists** say they're currently applying for new jobs or plan to do so before 2026, up just slightly from the 11.8% on the hunt this time last year. Additionally, nearly a third (31.2%) say they plan to retire within six years.

◆ Despite these impending staffing changes, **66.3% of RDHs** have no plans to pursue a new job, representing a 13.3% increase in statis compared to the previous year.

Total Annual Income

National Mean & Median

1,254 full-time RDHs reported total annual income from their hygiene practice ranging from \$37,000 to \$170,000.

- ◆ The median full-time income of responding RDHs was **\$80,000**.
- ◆ The mean (average) was **\$81,267, a 2.9% increase** compared to the 2023 mean of \$79,340 and a 10% bump compared to the 2022 mean of \$73,745.

Mean & Median by Region

Full-Time Income by Region	Range	Median	Mean
East South Central (AL, KY, MS, TN)	\$40,000 - \$128,000	\$60,000	\$65,319
East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)	\$40,000 - \$150,000	\$75,000	\$75,007
South Atlantic (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)	\$37,400 - \$160,000	\$75,000	\$78,791
West North Central (IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD)	\$40,000 - \$140,000	\$76,500	\$79,592
Mid-Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA)	\$37,000 - \$140,000	\$80,000	\$80,929
West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)	\$40,000 - \$150,000	\$80,000	\$81,227
Northeast (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	\$55,000 - \$125,000	\$80,000	\$82,233
Mountain (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY)	\$44,000 - \$135,000	\$85,000	\$83,235
Pacific (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)	\$55,000 - \$170,000	\$95,500	\$98,910

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Hourly Wage

National Mean & Median

1,948 responding full-time and part-time RDHs reported hourly rates ranging from \$17 to \$90 per hour.

- ◆ The average hourly rate of full-time responding **RDHs rose notably to \$48.85** per hour, compared to \$45.75 in 2023.
- ◆ The median hourly wage was **\$47.00 per hour**.

All Respondents: Hourly Wage Levels

Hourly Wage by Region	Range	Median	Mean
East South Central (AL, KY, MS, TN)	\$25,000 - \$62,000	\$38,000	\$38,690
East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)	\$30,000 - \$70,000	\$45,000	\$44,980
West North Central (IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD)	\$30,000 - \$65,000	\$45,000	\$46,376
South Atlantic (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)	\$22,000 - \$160,000	\$45,000	\$53,982
Mid-Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA)	\$29,000 - \$75,000	\$45,500	\$46,897
Northeast (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	\$34,000 - \$65,000	\$48,000	\$48,911
West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)	\$32,000 - \$350,000	\$48,000	\$50,053
Mountain (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY)	\$34,000 - \$70,000	\$50,000	\$50,731
Pacific (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)	\$39,000 - \$87,000	\$60,500	\$59,990

“I love the culture of our office. We all work well together and help each other out. Collaborate and learn together. The hours are amazing I work 7-3. Great work life balance. My office is progressive with technology and my boss collaborates with other dentists to make our office efficient and progressive. And all my doctors are wonderful, sweet human beings that care about all the employees and their patients.”

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Average Hourly Wage Level by Years of Experience

Among this year’s respondents, the average hourly rates in all experience levels vary by a range of \$73 per hour.



Mean & Median by Region

Hourly Wage by Region	Range	Median	Mean
East South Central (AL, KY, MS, TN)	\$25,000 - \$62,000	\$38,000	\$38,690
East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)	\$30,000 - \$70,000	\$45,000	\$44,980
West North Central (IA, KS, MN, MO, ND, NE, SD)	\$30,000 - \$65,000	\$45,000	\$46,376
South Atlantic (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)	\$22,000 - \$160,000	\$45,000	\$53,982
Mid-Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA)	\$29,000 - \$75,000	\$45,500	\$46,897
Northeast (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)	\$34,000 - \$65,000	\$48,000	\$48,911
West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)	\$32,000 - \$350,000	\$48,000	\$50,053
Mountain (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY)	\$34,000 - \$70,000	\$50,000	\$50,731
Pacific (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)	\$39,000 - \$87,000	\$60,500	\$59,990

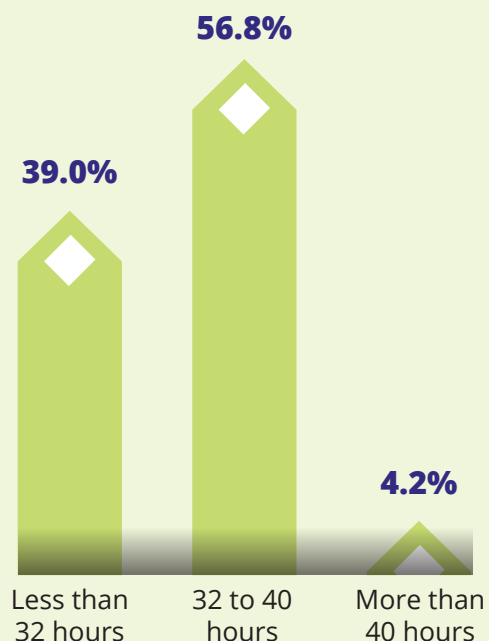
“Lack of autonomy, no bonuses, no commission, lack of respect for my job and professional status, no voice as an oral care provider”

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Average Workweek Hours

61%

Nearly two thirds (61%) of responding dental hygienists work **32 or more hours per week**, a number that’s up just slightly compared to 58.7% who reported this level of work last year.



Benefits

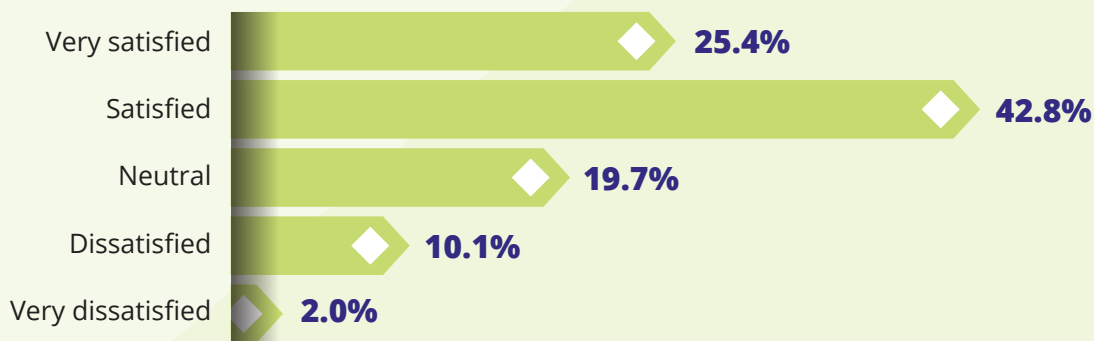
Year-Over-Year Comparison of the % Who Receive Benefits

In 2024, **92.2%** of RDHs received benefits of some kind, showing a promising year-over-year upswing compared to **89%** who received benefits in 2023 and 70% in 2022.



The Benefits RDHs Received

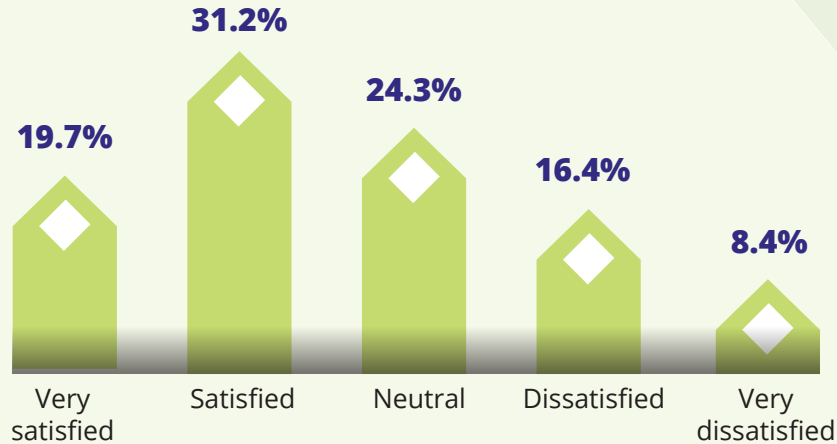
Just as in the last report, the top benefits RDHs received in 2024 were paid holidays and vacation, retirement, and dental.



While medical coverage remains the most coveted benefit among RDHs who don't already have it, retirement replaces paid time off as #2 on the wish list.

Satisfaction with Benefits

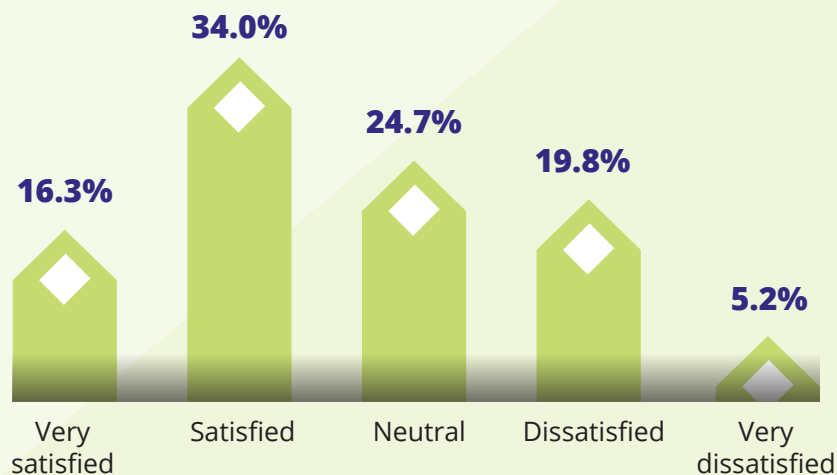
As access to benefits has improved, so too has sentiment about them: More than half of RDHs (50.9%) say they're satisfied or very satisfied with their 2024 package (6.8% better compared to the last report's level), while **24.8%** are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (a 9% improvement).



Satisfaction with Total Compensation

Half of registered hygienists (50.3%) are satisfied or very satisfied with their total 2024 compensation (including primary wages or salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits), a nominal bump compared to 2023's level of **49.6%**. The proportion of respondents who are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied has dropped to 25%, compared to **27.3%** in 2023.

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All told, although satisfaction hasn't yet rebounded to levels seen in 2022 (when 61.5% of RDHs reported a positive view of their compensation), it seems to be heading in the right direction.

Job Turnover

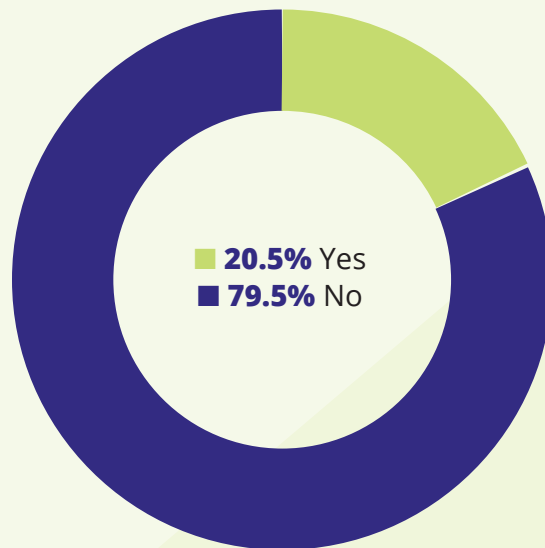
Changed Employers in the Previous 12 Months

20.5%

20.5% of responding RDHs changed employers within the past 12 months, up marginally from the **19.35%** who did so in the previous period.

Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

More than three-quarters (**78.3%**) of registered hygienists who found new employment in the past year say they achieved their goals in doing so. As was the case in 2023, higher pay and a better work environment were among the top motivations for making the jump. Whereas the desire for a new location was also a key driver for those who changed jobs in 2023, it's been usurped in the latest report by the search for a more appreciative employer.



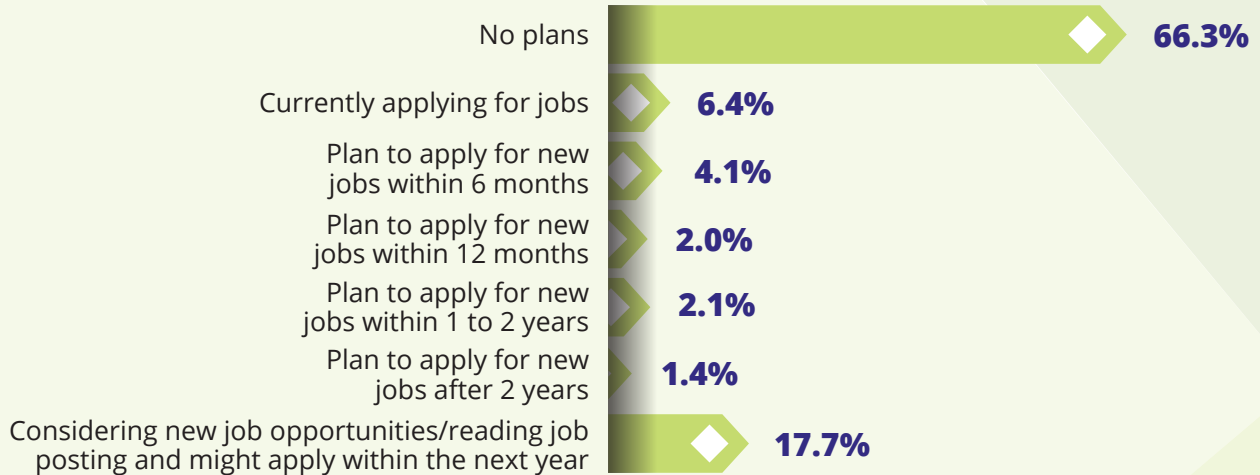
66.3% Do Not Plan to Apply for New Jobs

33.7%

One third (**33.7%**) are job hunting or considering hunting, a 7.7% decrease compared to one year ago when 41.4% were hunting or thought they might. Two thirds (**66.3%**) of RDHs are planning to stay in their current job for the foreseeable future.

When Job Searchers Plan to Apply to New Jobs

As for those exploring their options, **12.5%** are currently applying for new jobs or planning to do so before 2026, up just slightly from the **11.84%** who were on the hunt this time last year. Another **17.7%** are toying with the idea.

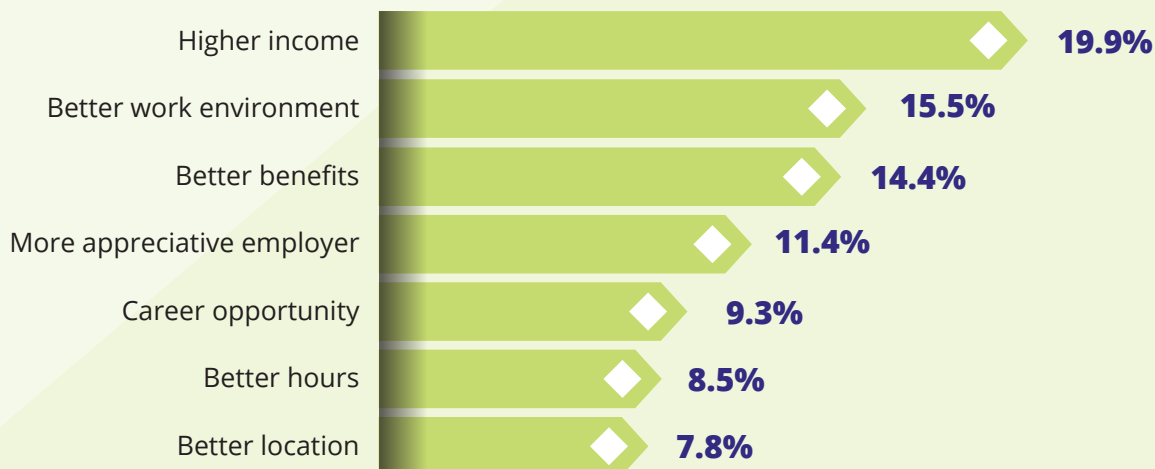


“Helping others to achieve good hygiene for both oral and physical health. Performing a thorough and gentle prophylaxis. Helping patients to overcome their dental fears and to feel comfortable during dental procedures. I enjoy the people I work with and the patients I see.”

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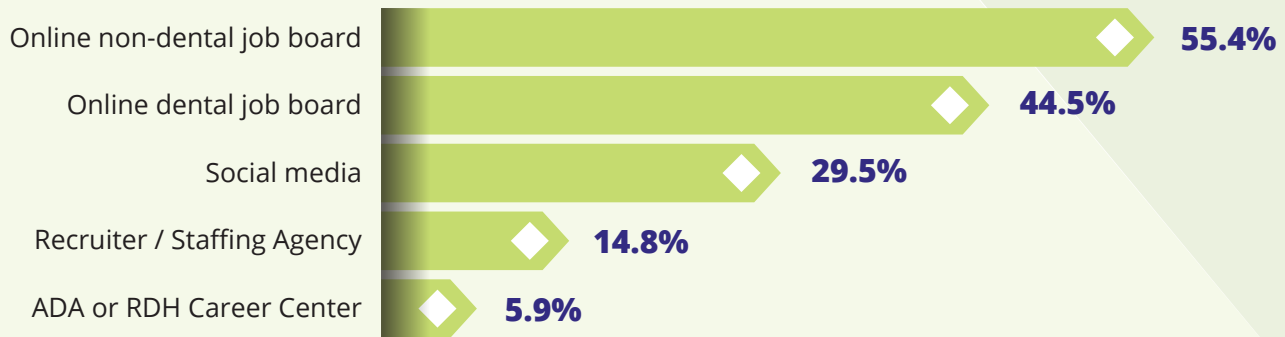
Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

Going into 2025, RDHs on the move are most motivated by higher pay and a better work environment — the same drivers cited by those in a similar position the year prior.



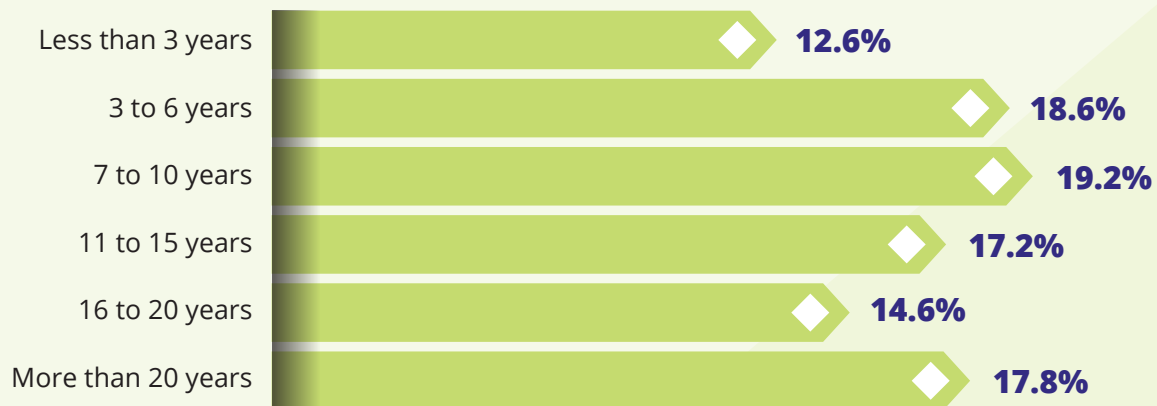
Where RDHs Look for New Jobs

As was the case last year, RDHs primarily look for new opportunities via online job boards like DentalPost and social media.



Planned Years to Retirement

Nearly a third (31.2%) of RDHs plan to retire within the next six years, a **9.7%** dip compared to the proportion who had these plans in 2023.

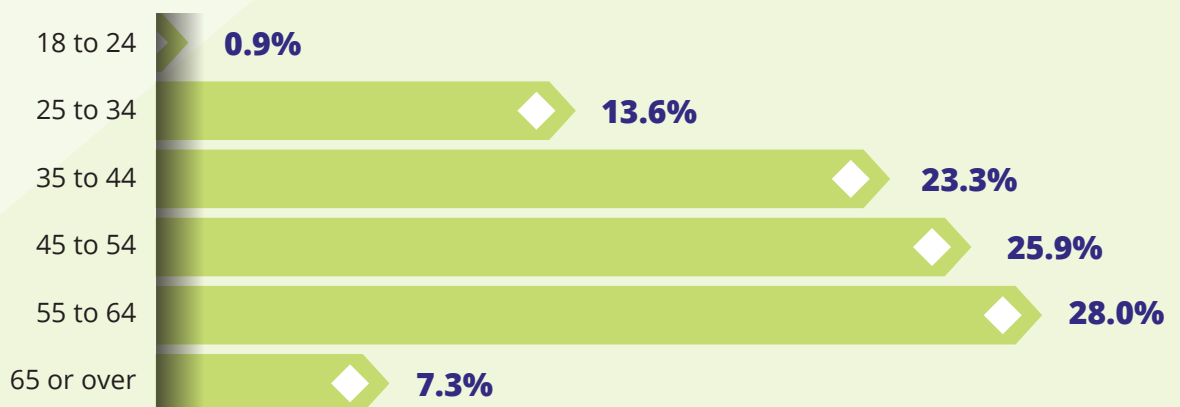


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Age & Experience

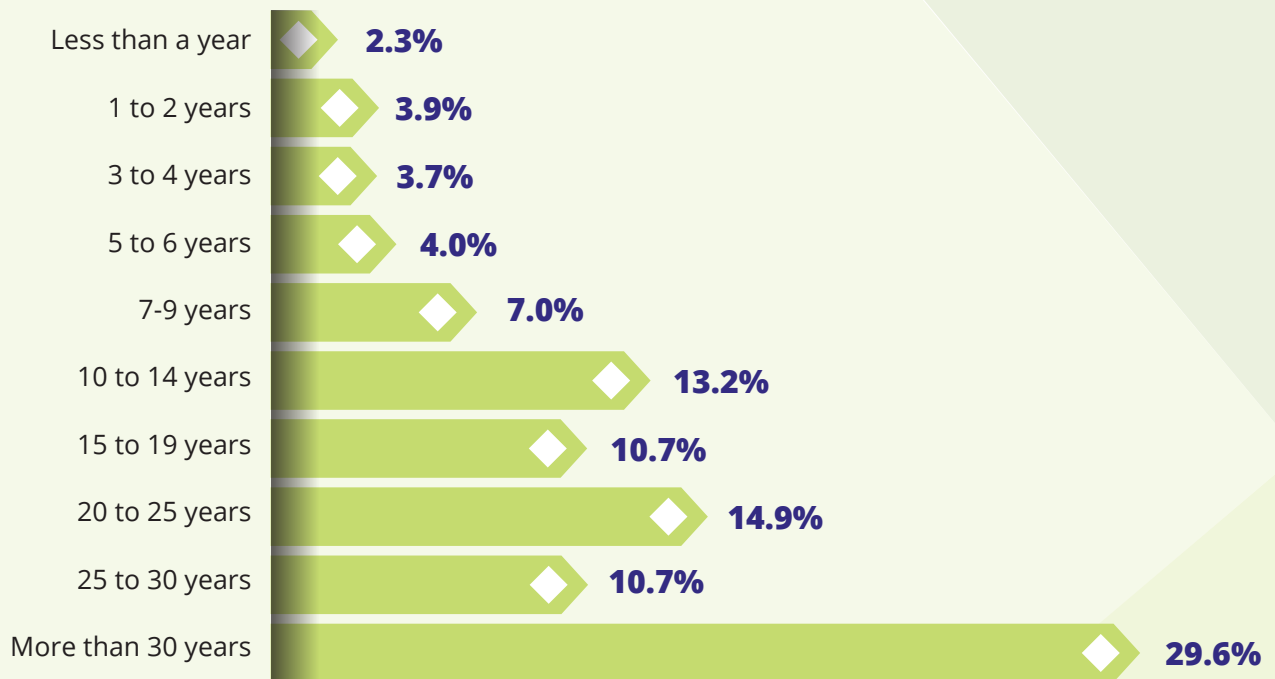
Age

Like last year, more than half of responding RDHs (53.9%) are between the ages of 45 and 64.



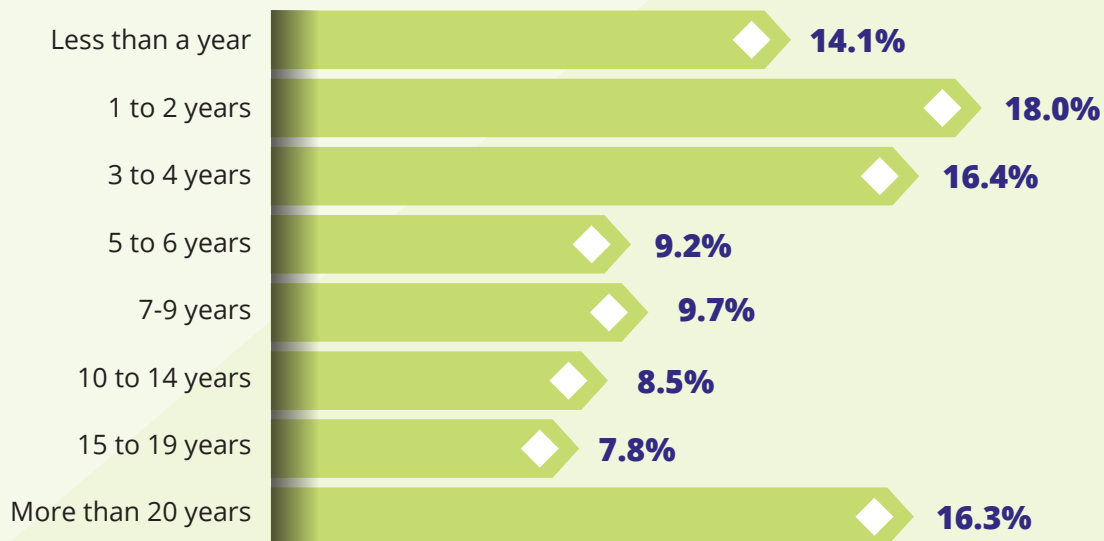
Years of Experience as a Dental Hygienist

Tenures are also holding steady: Nearly a third (29.6%) of registered hygienists have more than 30 years' experience in the field. **6.2%** have two or fewer years of experience.



Longevity with Current Employer

There's strong representation on both poles: Just under half of responding RDHs (48.5%) have been with their current employer for 4 or fewer years, while nearly a quarter (24.1%) have tenures of 15+ years.



Top Career Wins and Washes

Time and again, RDHs say these are the best parts of their job: autonomy, respect for their expertise, short commutes and flexible schedules, relaxed environments, commitment to and compensation for continuing education, ethical and caring practices, and the ability to improve patients' lives through education and service. Many also value the technical aspects of their job, noting scaling and rootplanning as favorite procedures.

Conversely, hygienists without these experiences consistently note their absence as their least favorite aspect of their work, citing top stressors like challenging patient and office dynamics, long commutes, lack of appreciation and autonomy, repetitiveness of routine, and packed schedules, along with care-compromising insurance practices, convoluted or inconsistent corporate policies, poor compensation, prevalent turnover, and proliferating paperwork. Several specify that sharpening instruments is their least favorite core task.

The following responses have been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Challenges

“That it’s corporate-owned and everything we try to order is either approved, denied, or subject to change before the order is placed by someone not even working in this office”

“Not having a union that can help us acquire pay raises and secure medical benefits”

“Management and corporate that dictates the amount of time that each patient has per appointment. Insurance rejecting insurance claims for scaling and rootplanning; not covering fluoride and other services that dentists submit for treatment. Insurance rejecting claims is not only stressful for the patient but stressful for the clinician who is recommending necessary procedures.”

“I wish we had more of group effort to learn more. I love when an office goes to ce courses together or brings back info from a ce course to share with the rest of the team.”

“How it’s always rush, rush, rush. It’s set up, see a patient, clean up, and then back to set up, see a patient, and then clean up. No break except for lunch break. Lack of flexibility. It’s a hard job. Feel like I am always ‘on.’”

“Emotionally, physically, mentally demanding. It’s difficult to meet the needs of every single patient. My body hurts after 8 hours, burnout is super prevalent with me.”

“Feeling undervalued in the majority of the dental and healthcare community. Preventing disease and infection is our primary role, I just wish other professionals would see that we are far more important than they realize.”

Wins

“Friendly environment, ample time to complete patient care, employer’s love for learning and using new things”

“I enjoy the environment of the office I work at. The pace is ideal. I feel like I am provided everything I need to provide the best care to my patients. The dentist I work for is understanding and flexible if I need time off. I trust the care he provides to his patients.”

“I feel very supported by my doctor and the rest of the staff. They all make me feel like I am a valuable part of the team. We all respect each other and get along very well.”

“I love educating my patients on the link or oral health and systemic health and building a relationship with them that will make their dental visits fun and exciting.”

“I work for an ethical dentist, not production focused. No micromanaging.”

“Pay is incredibly generous for the area. Owner dentist is flexible, kind and great to work for. Entire team works well together.”

“Excellent quality, wonderful employer, many great coworkers, many great patients. A boss who totally respects me and my work and supports me. When I wanted to shorten my days, he told me I could do anything I wanted as long as I don’t quit. I am seventy-five years old. It doesn’t get better than that.”

Dental Assistant Report

SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Between October and November 2024, DentalPost conducted its annual *Dental Industry Salary Report*, drawing participation from 366 dental assistants.

Key Highlights & Takeaways

◆ **Earnings** hit a three-year high. The mean (average) total income of responding full-time dental assistants in 2024 was \$47,440.00, a 7.1% increase compared to \$44,295 in 2023.

- ◆ Additionally, of all responding assistants, two in three (**66.4%**) have seen a pay raise within the past two years.
- ◆ Despite these increases, many don't think compensation is keeping pace with their needs: More than one-third (**36.6%**) of DAs are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their total package, compared to 33.3% who are satisfied or very satisfied.

◆ **Job happiness** looks sunnier, with more than half (54.9%) of responding DAs saying they're satisfied or very satisfied with their current work.

◆ Still, there's lots of **movement on the career front**, propelled in part by the desire for more pay. All told, less than half (47%) of DAs plan to stay put for the foreseeable future.

- ◆ Nearly one in four (**23.2%**) have changed jobs within the past 12 months. Chief among desires driving the jump were a better work environment, higher pay, and a more appreciative employer.
- ◆ As for those looking to leap soon, **30.1%** of responding DAs say they are currently applying for new jobs or plan to do so before 2026, a 38.5% increase compared to the proportion on the hunt this time last year.
- ◆ Additionally, one in five (**21.9%**) DAs say they plan to retire within the next six years.

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Total Annual Income

249 full-time dental assistants reported total primary income from their dental practice ranging from **\$20,000 to \$150,000**.

- ◆ The mean (average) full-time income of responding dental assistants was **\$47,440**.
- ◆ Their median total income was **\$45,000**.
- ◆ Year over year, the average income **increased by 7%** in 2024.

Hourly Wage

Topline Trends

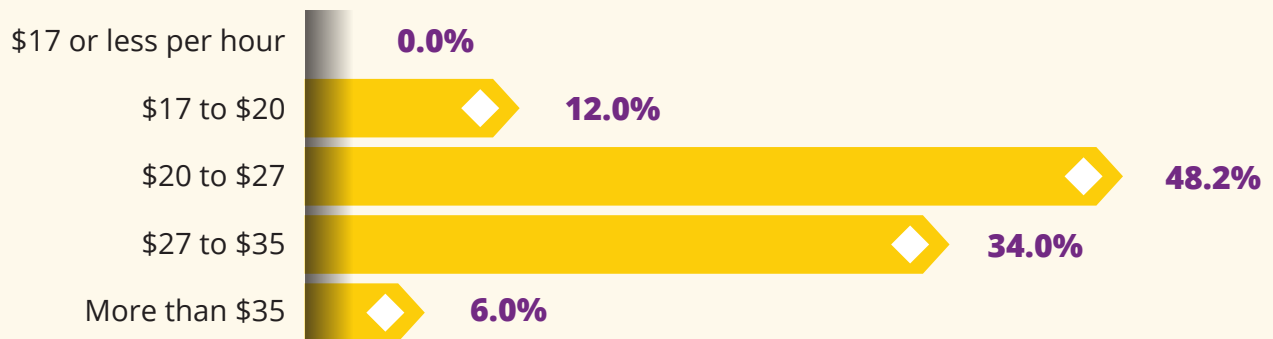
366 dental assistants reported an hourly wage in 2024 ranging from **\$15 to \$118 per hour**.

- ◆ The mean (average) hourly rate of responding dental assistants was **\$26.96**, a 7% increase compared to the mean reported in 2023.
- ◆ Their median rate was **\$26.00** per hour, a full dollar less than the median in 2023. While this decrease is noteworthy, it's important to consider that the smaller sample size this year (366) compared to last year (547) may have influenced the findings.
- ◆ Despite bumpy hourly rates, two-thirds of responding DAs (**66.4%**) have received a pay raise within the past 1–2 years.

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Earning Levels

Responding DAs earned between **\$18 and \$118 per hour**.

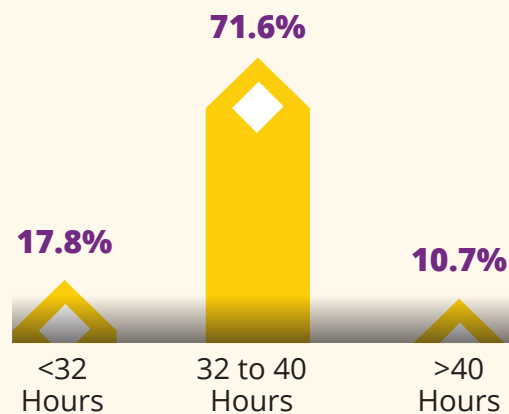


Hourly Rate by Years of Experience

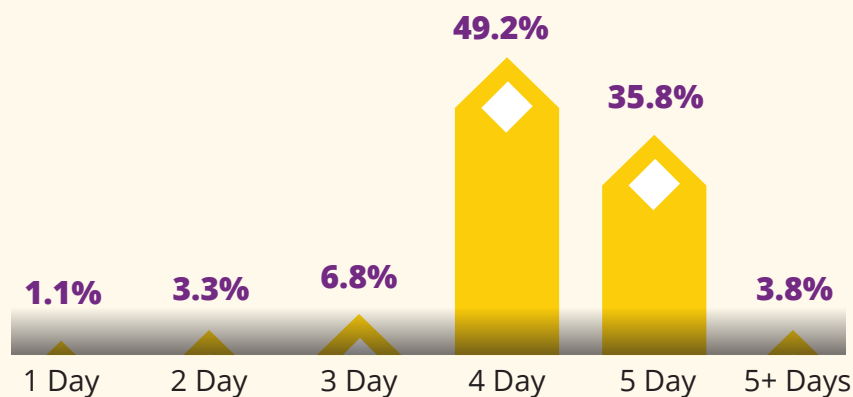


Average Workweek Outlook

82.3% of responding DAs worked an average of 32 or more hours per week in 2024 — roughly the same proportion that worked this level in 2023. 10.7% reported working more than 40 hours a week, a notable uptick compared to the 6.49% who worked this much in 2023, and a rate more consistent with 2022 levels.



Nearly half of DAs (**49.2%**) worked four days in the average week last year.



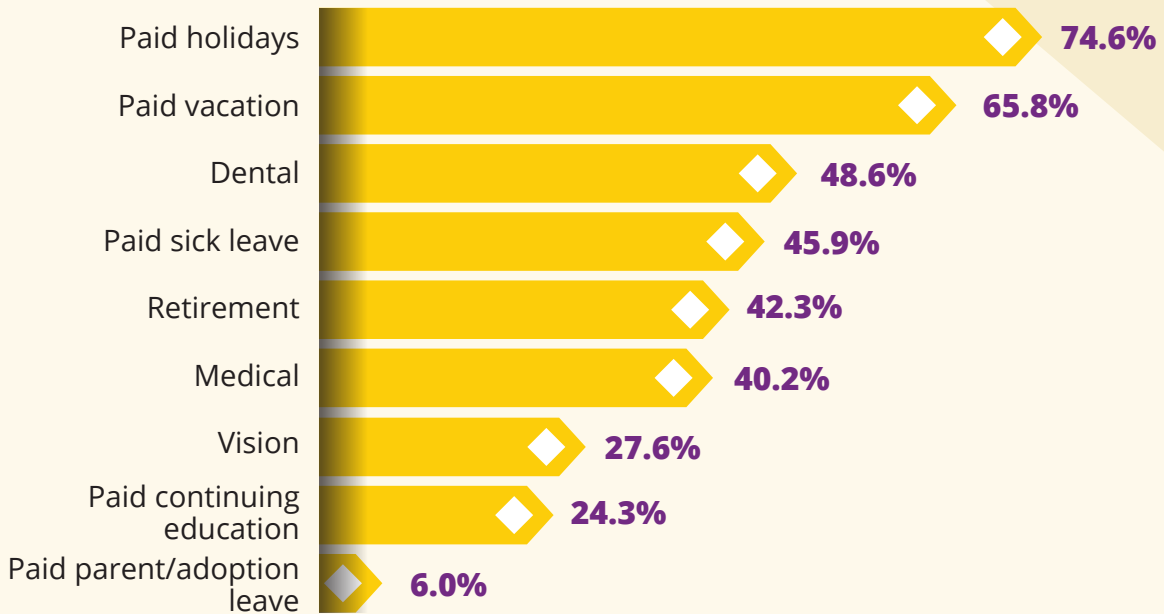
Benefits

Year-Over-Year Comparison of the % Who Receive Benefits

In 2024, **88.5%** of DAs received benefits of some kind, roughly the same proportion who received them in 2023 (89%).

The Benefits Dental Assistants Received

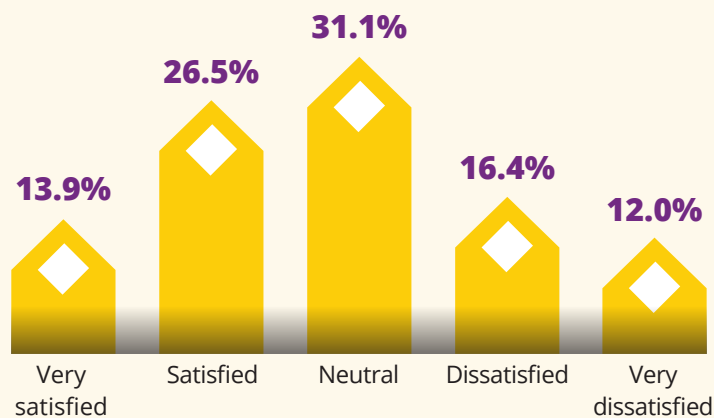
As in 2023, the top benefits DAs received in 2024 were paid vacation, holidays, and sick leave, along with dental and retirement. The benefits they wanted most if they did not already have them were medical and retirement.



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Satisfaction with Benefits

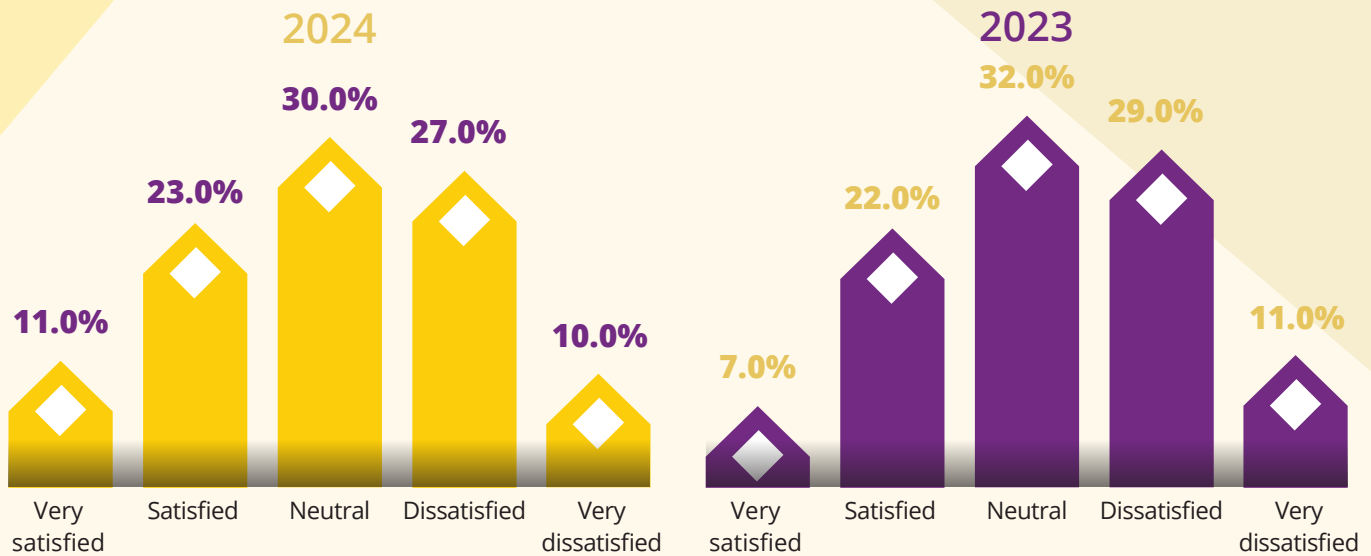
Overall, sentiment about benefits was up in 2024: 40.4% were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits, compared to 37.3% in 2023; 28.4% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, compared to 33.6%.



Satisfaction with Total Compensation

When it comes to total compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions and benefits), we saw a rise in strong sentiment — on both ends of the spectrum:

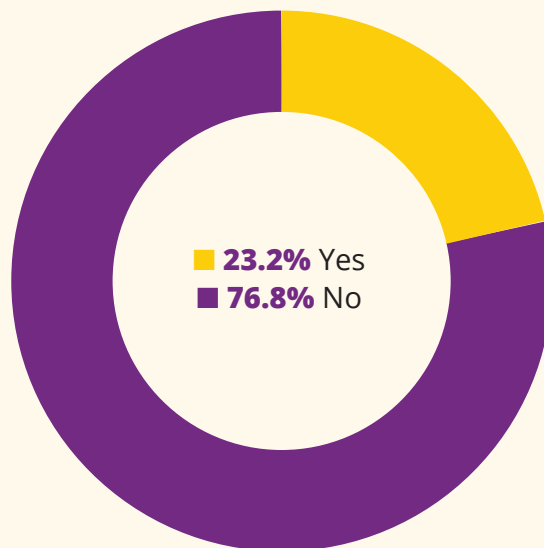
- ◆ More than one third (**36.6%**) are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their total compensation, down from reported dissatisfaction in 2023 (39.7%).
- ◆ That said, nearly as many (**33.3%**) say they're satisfied or very satisfied with their 2024 compensation, a notable improvement compared to 2023 levels (28.8%).



Job Turnover

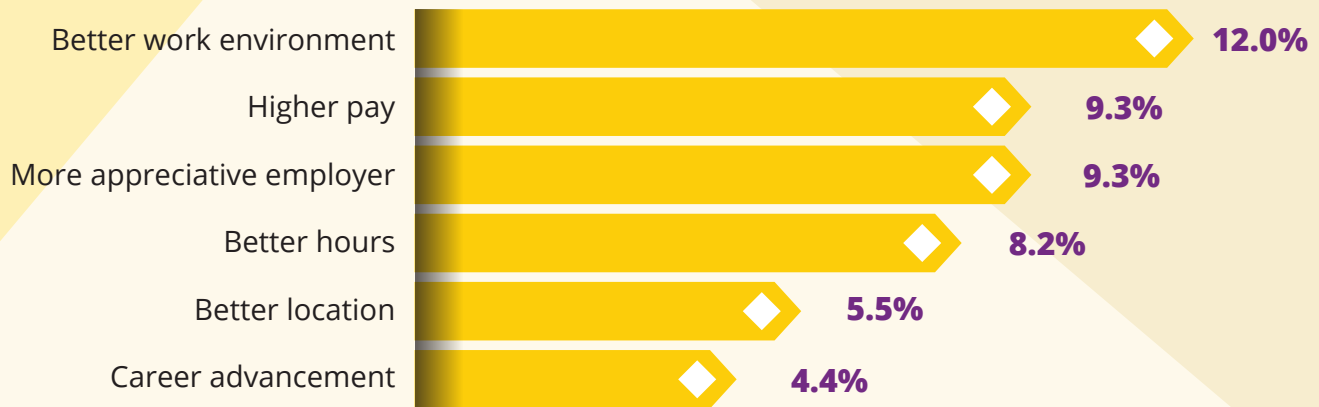
Changed Employers in the Previous 12 Months

23.2% of dental assistants changed jobs within the previous 12 months, a slight dip compared to the 24.7% who transitioned in 2023.



Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

Those who made the jump were most often motivated by the desire for a better work environment, a more appreciative employer, higher pay, and/or better hours — all among the top drivers for those in this position the year prior. Nearly three-fourths (**74.1%**) of transitioners reported that they achieved their goals.

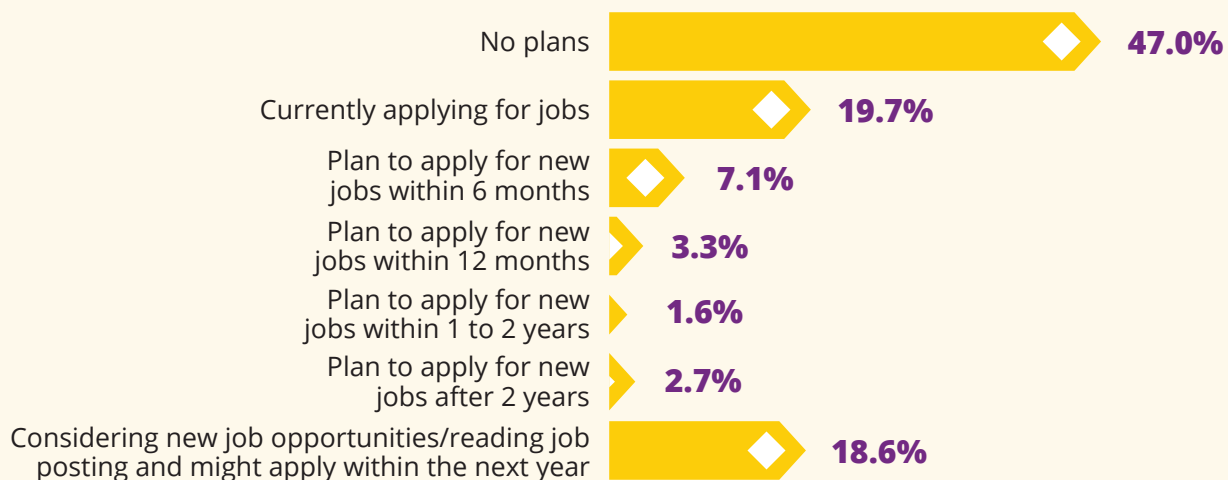


“The wide array of newfound technologies I am exposed to. The newer techniques that are implemented. Growth within the company. Lastly, the amount of continuing education that is invested into me.”

40

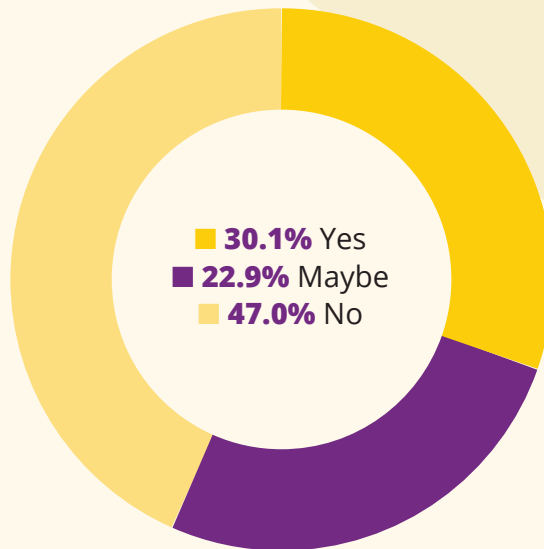
When Job Searchers Plan to Apply to New Jobs

As for those exploring their options, more than half (**56.7%**) are currently applying for new jobs or planning to do so before 2026. Another 35.1% are considering the idea.



Plan to Apply for New Jobs

Echoing mixed levels of pay and job satisfaction, nearly half (**47.0%**) of DAs have no plans to jump ship, while just under a third (30.1%) are actively applying to new opportunities or planning to do so before 2026.

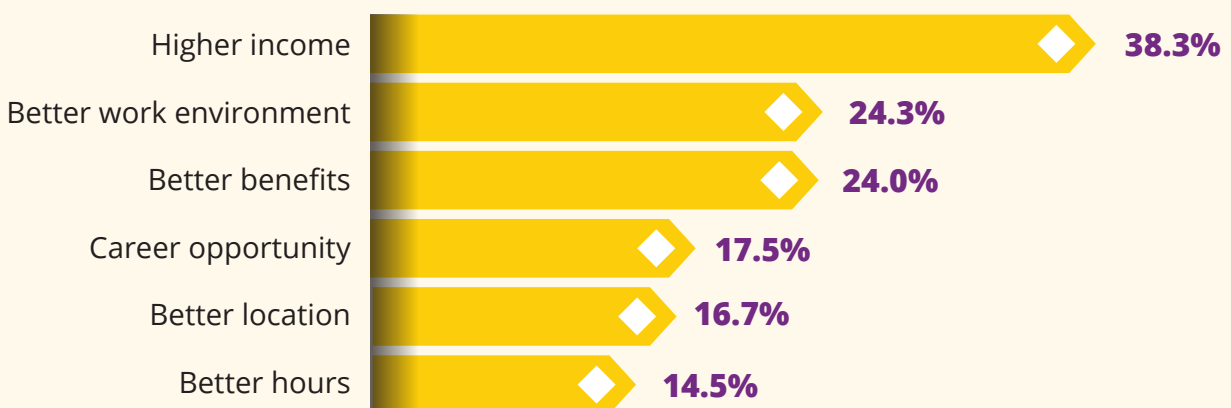


“I absolutely love my community and being able to give back. There is nothing better than going to a hometown Friday night football game and knowing everyone that is walking around, and being able to strike up conversations with them. I absolutely love being an EFDA, but unfortunately what would happen if I became a single parent? There is absolutely no way in this economy for me to raise my children on this income.”

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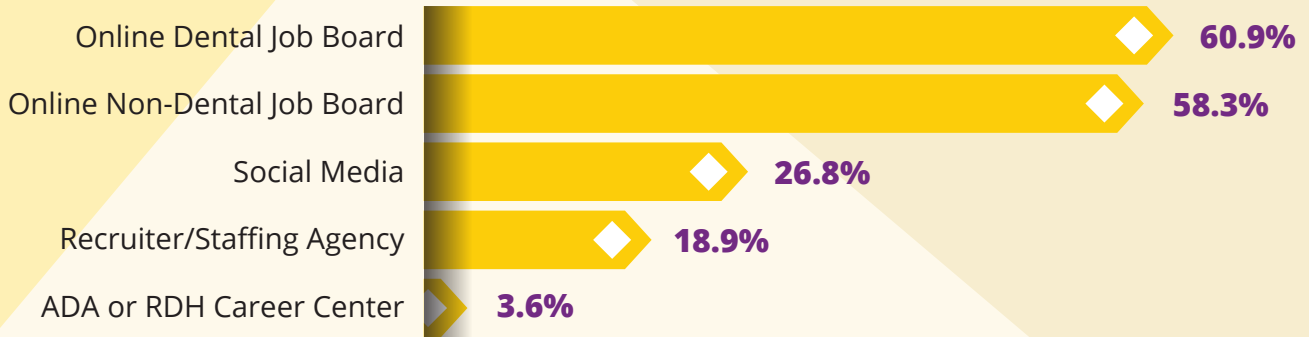
Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2025

Higher income is far and away the top driver for DAs pursuing a job change this year.



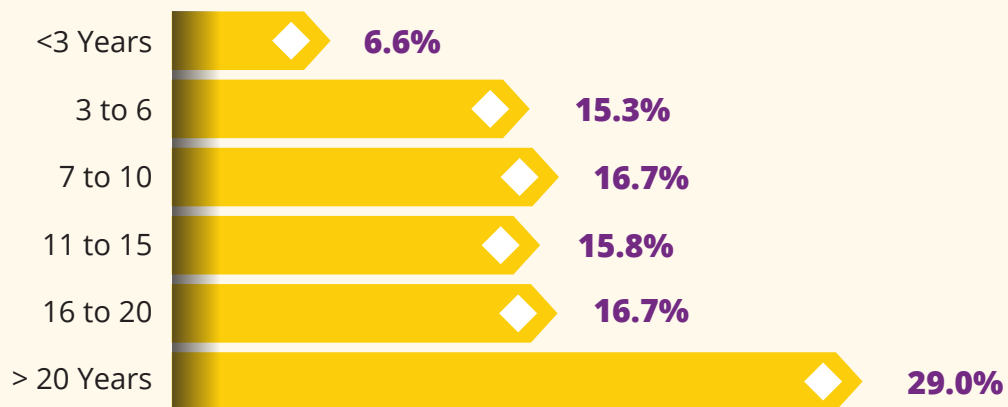
Where Dental Assistants Look for New Jobs

Responding DAs continue to prioritize dental-specific and general job boards in their search efforts.



Planned Years to Retirement

One in five (**21.9%**) responding DAs say they plan to retire within six years, compared to 25.9% of those who said as much last year.

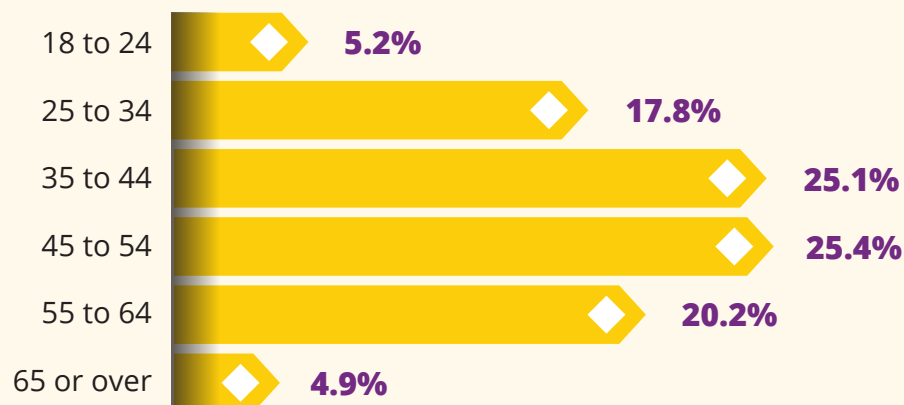


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Age & Experience

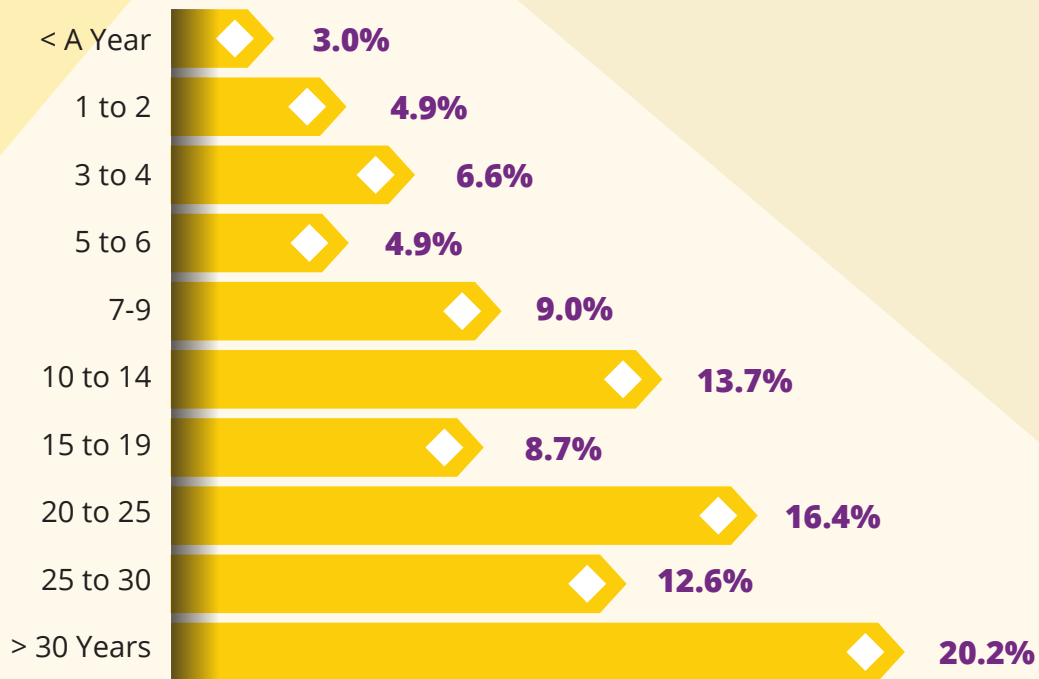
Age

As in 2023, more than half (**50.5%**) of responding DAs were between the ages of 35 and 54.



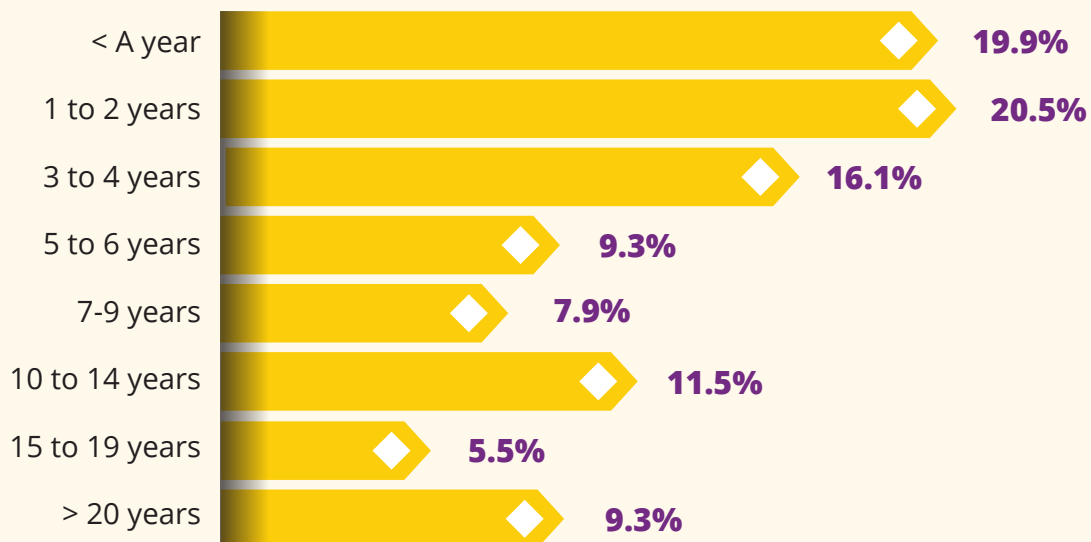
Experience

DA tenures trend long, with nearly three in four (**71.6%**) having at least a decade of experience in the field.



Longevity with Current Employer

Like last time around, more than half (**56.5%**) of responding DAs have been with their current employer for four or fewer years.



Top Career Wins and Washes

Many dental assistants love the autonomy and flexibility their role affords. They take great pride in sharing and being recognized for their expertise; working with kind and skilled teams; and helping patients become healthier and more at ease in what some find a stressful environment. They are also a techy bunch, with several praising their office's use of sophisticated equipment to provide an exemplary experience. Many say the constant change, quick pace, and ample room to learn and grow within their field and workplace keep things interesting.

At the same time, though, some say such a pace is untenable thanks to jam-packed or too-sparse schedules. Other lowlights include disorganization, poor communication, office politics, outdated equipment, and compensation that's not commensurate with contributions and experience. Several say that uneven certification requirements for assistants across states and workplaces undermine the profession, and would prefer to see mandatory licensing that raises the bar for rates and responsibilities.

The following responses have been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Challenges

"Appointment schedule is either feast or famine"

"Double booked schedules, staffing issues, poor management, constant back/shoulder pain, feeling unappreciated and overworked"

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"I am a CA RDA, DANB CDA, AA in dental assisting, and BA in behavioral science, and have 38 years dental assistant experience and yet we are treated like we are the scavengers of the office. I would like to see dental assistants REQUIRED to be certified or licensed before stepping in a dental office treating patients. Make us HAVE to be certified, and let us do more, like local anesthetic for example."

"I am not appreciated enough to be financially compensated for all I do, for how hard I work, & for all the time I have been there. I am good at what I do, and I deserve more \$ and gratitude."

"Stressful environment in a fast-paced, high-volume dental office that is open seven days a week, 12 hours on each weekday."

“The dental assistant has so much on their job list. We are the heart of an office, and it is NEVER enough. We are the least paid of the staff with the most responsibility.”

“The way that the dental assistant profession has been undermined and devalued, working with unqualified and inexperienced people due to lack of regulations and credentialing requirements, not being able to get an actual degree in my field without going to a hygiene or dentist/doctoral specific program.”

Wins

“Being able to freely serve people in my own way without judgement”

“Flexibility with schedule to spend more time with my family”

“Building lasting relationships with patients, restoring the ability to eat and smile. When patients describe their prosthetic as life changing, it makes it all worthwhile.”

“Getting to learn new technology. Working in a smaller practice. Having doctors that listen to my ideas and what I think. Getting along with coworkers.”

“Helping people, relieving their pain and embarrassment. Knowing the dentist I work for does quality work.”

“My dentist is humble, hardworking, and kind. She is fun to work with and leads by example, which means a lot. I care a lot about patient advocacy and education and it’s good to work for a dentist that upholds those values and is not running a practice to make money, but to help people.”

“The ability to use my knowledge and experience to empower both patients and new employees.”

“Team atmosphere, owner dentist’s door is always open, and she truly cares about each member of her staff.”

“The wide array of newfound technologies I am exposed to. The newer techniques that are implemented. Growth within the company. Lastly, the amount of continuing education that is invested into me.”

“I love the environment of a private practice, the relationships we build with our patients. I love being in dental because every day, every patient is so different. We could be doing the same procedure on two different patients, and the appointments could go completely different. Different materials, instruments, complications. Dental never gets boring.”

Dental Front Office Report

In this report, you will find:

- ◆ Individual reports for each front-office role
 - > Dental Practice Managers
 - > Dental Front-Office Associates (including Receptionists and Billing Specialists)
 - > Job highlights and challenges shared by all front-office respondents

Dental Practice Manager

REPORT SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

From October to November 2024, DentalPost conducted its *2025 Dental Industry Salary Report*, generating participation from 271 dental practice managers.

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Key Highlights & Takeaways

◆ Nationwide, the mean hourly wage of practice managers **rose 4.7% to \$36.03 in 2024**, a more modest increase than the 16.4% seen in 2023.

◆ The average full-time income of responding practice managers was **\$71,292.42** in 2024, down from \$76,279.00 in 2023.

◆ Perhaps reflective of these uneven pay circumstances, satisfaction with overall compensation continues to decline: **42.6%** of responding practice managers were satisfied or very satisfied with their total package in 2024, down from 49.3% in 2023 and 58.0% in 2022.

◆ **8.4%** of responding practice managers changed employment within the past year, looking primarily for career advancement and higher pay.

◆ More than a third (**37.5%**) of responding practice managers are planning or actively pursuing a job change within the next few years, in search of higher income, better benefits, and a better work environment.

◆ Additionally, **22.9%** of respondents plan to retire within six years.

Total Annual Income

263 full-time practice managers reported total 2024 income from their dental practice ranging from \$24,000 to \$245,000.

- ◆ The mean (average) annual income of responding practice managers was **\$71,292.42** in 2024, down from \$76,279.00 in 2023.
- ◆ Their median income was **\$67,000.00**, down 1.5% from \$68,000.00 in the previous reporting period.
- ◆ **23.6%** were earning \$75,000.00 or more per year, compared to 40.0% earning this amount in 2023.
- ◆ The year-over-year **6.5%** decrease in the average income is not correlated with lower work hours in 2024. Two factors may have played into the 6.5% decrease. One possibility is that there were fewer practice managers responding to the most recent survey. A second possibility is that the highest wage earners' hours may have been more limited than the hours of lower wage earners.

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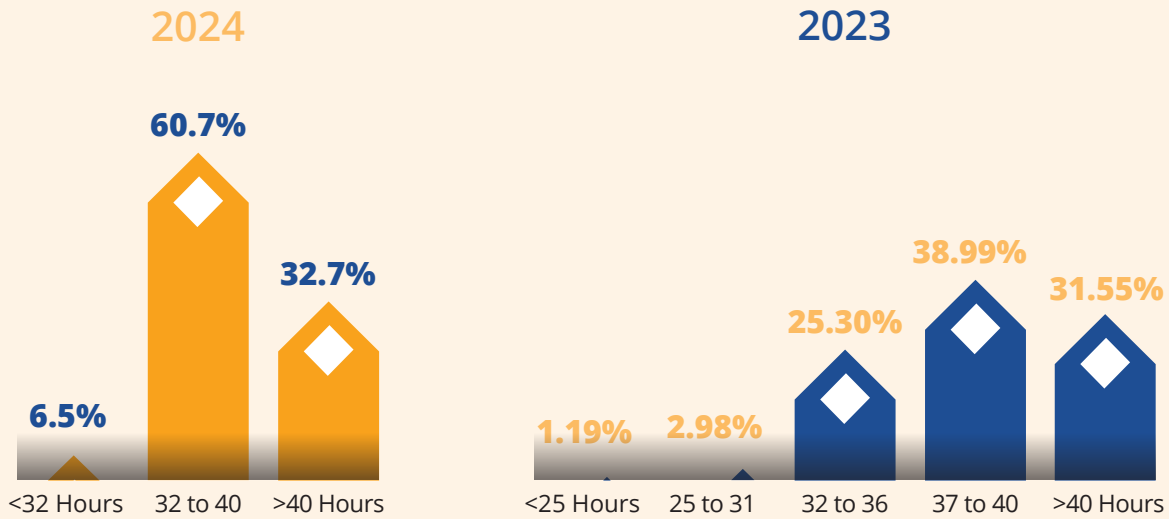
Hourly Wage

271 practice managers reported an hourly wage in 2024 ranging from \$18.00 to \$120.00.

- ◆ The mean (average) hourly wage was **\$36.03** in 2024, compared to \$34.41 in 2023.
- ◆ The median hourly wage was **\$34.00**, compared to \$33.00 in the previous reporting period.
- ◆ **8.2%** were earning \$50.00 or more per hour, compared to 42.0% earning at this level in 2023.
- ◆ Year over year, the average hourly rate increased by **4.7%** in 2024.

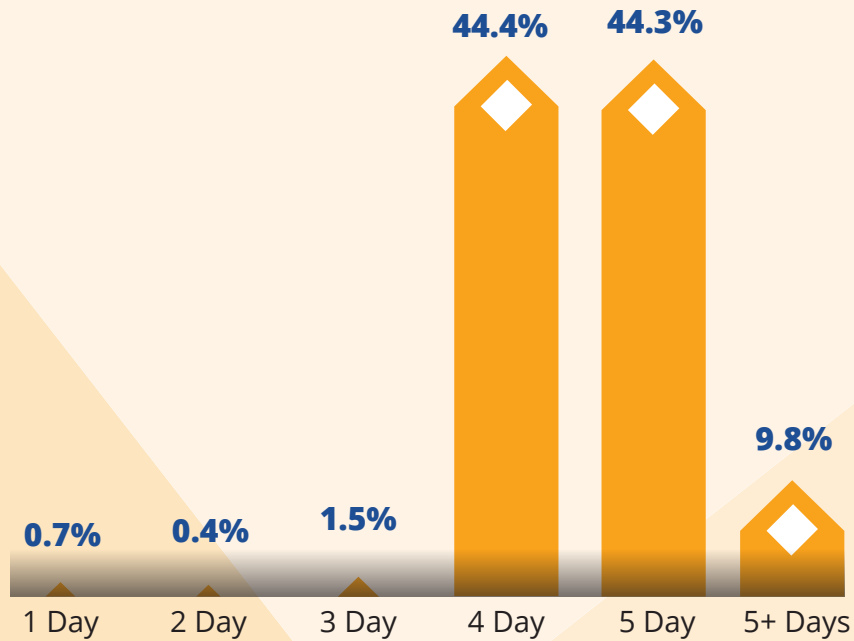
Average Workweek Hours

In 2024, the average workweek hours of responding practice managers were very similar to the past two reporting periods.



Just over half (**53.1%**) of respondents work five or more days a week on average; the rest work four or fewer. Four-day schedules are even more popular than five-day ones.

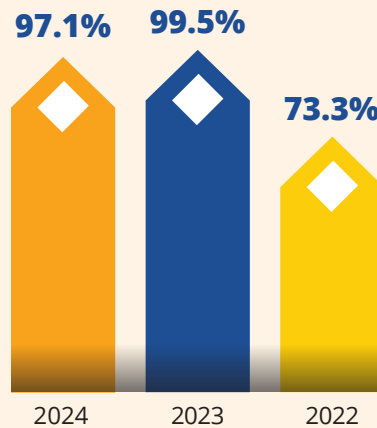
49



Benefits

Year-Over-Year Comparison of the % Who Receive Benefits

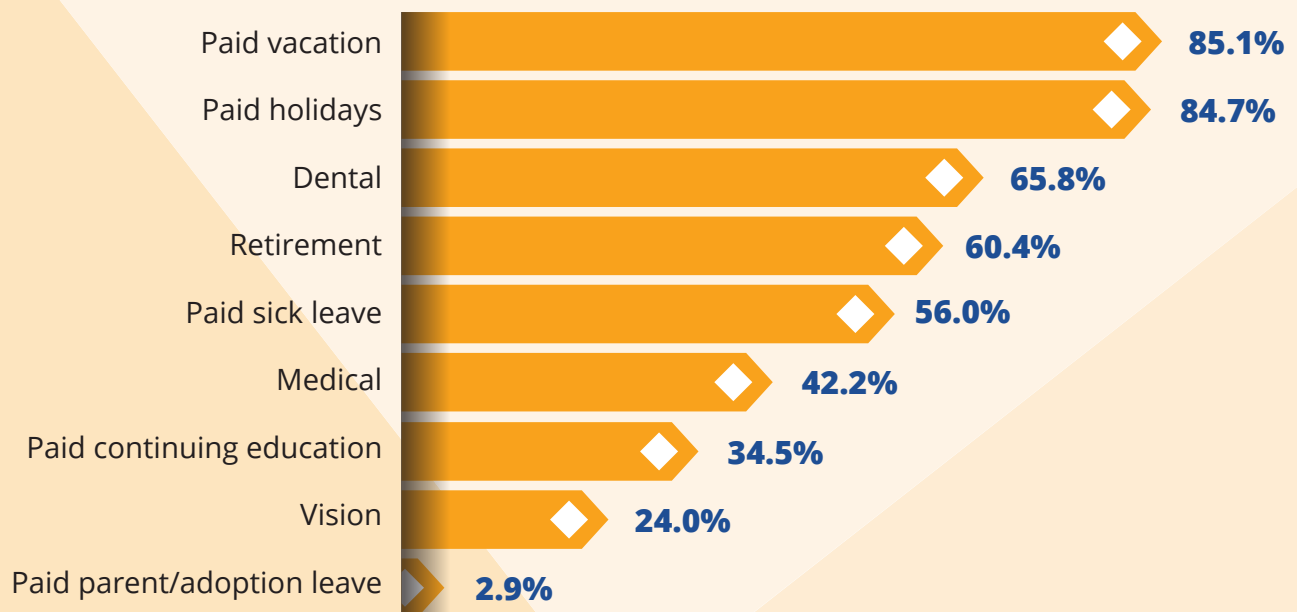
97.1% of responding practice managers received benefits in 2024, compared to 99.5% in 2023 and 73.3% in 2022.



The Benefits Practice Managers Received

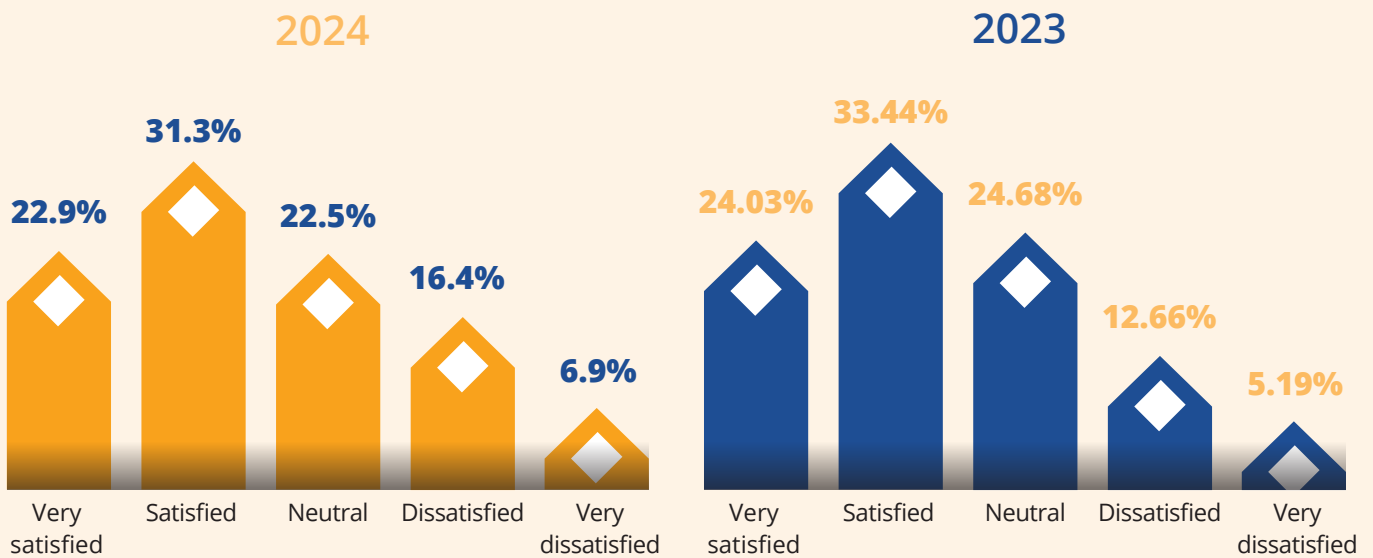
The top five benefits practice managers reported receiving in 2024 were paid vacation, paid holidays, dental, retirement, and paid sick leave. Medical coverage is the benefit most desired among those who don't already have it.

50



Satisfaction with Benefits

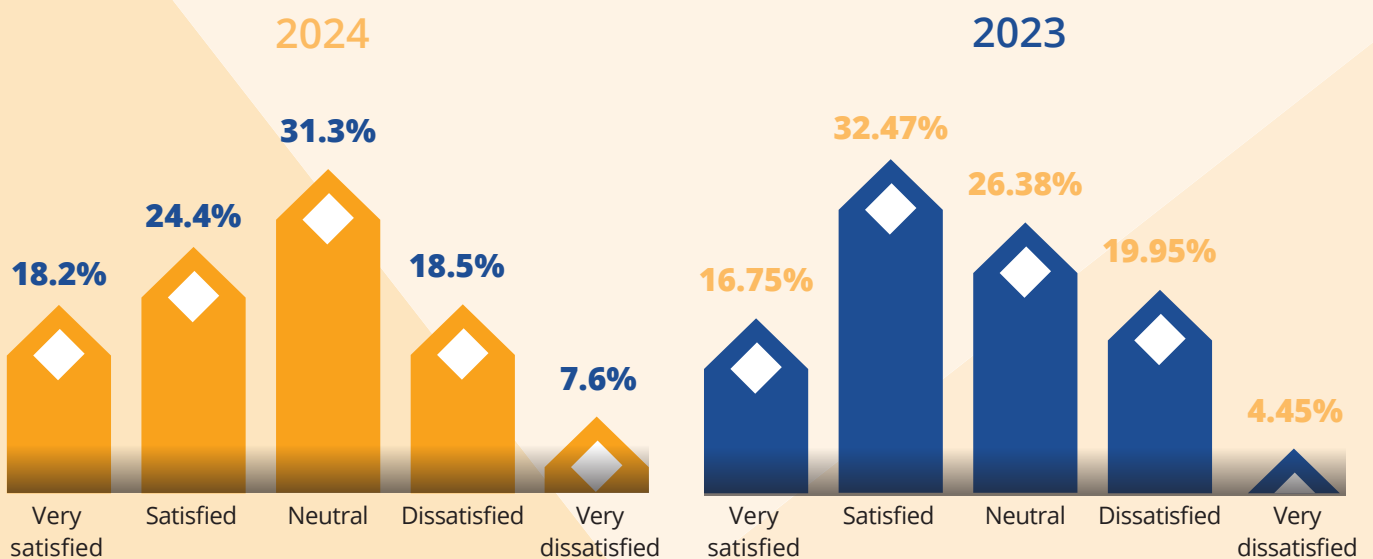
More than half (**54.2%**) of responding practice managers were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits in 2024, similar to 2023's 57.5% with positive sentiment.



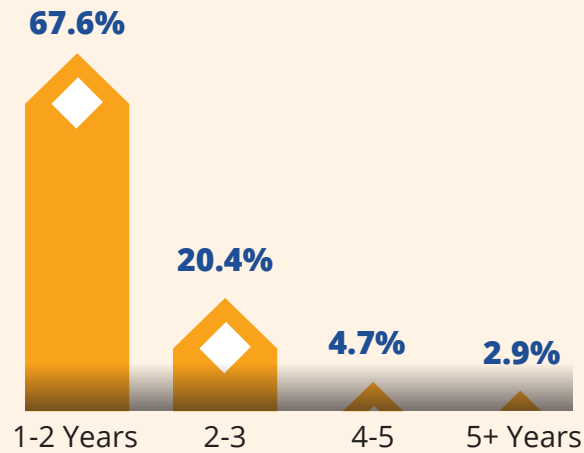
Satisfaction with Total Compensation

51

Satisfaction with compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits) continues to decline: **42.6%** of responding practice managers were satisfied or very satisfied with their total package in 2024, down from 49.3% in 2023 and 58.0% in 2022.



Nearly a third (**32.4%**) of practice managers haven't received a pay raise in the past two years.

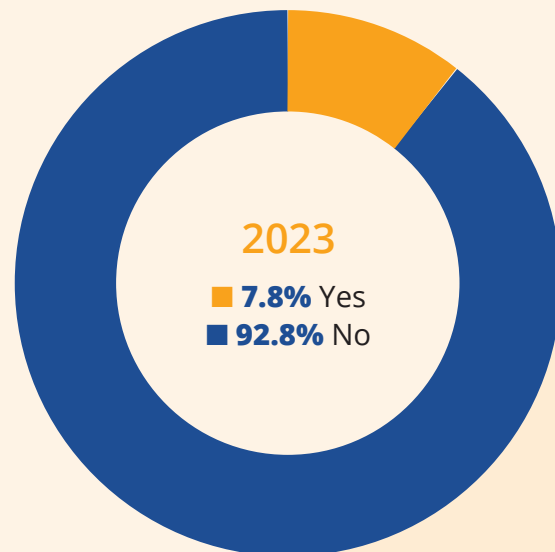
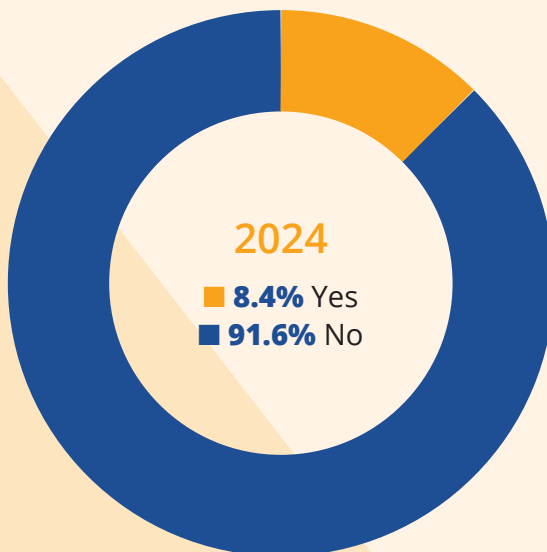


Job Turnover

Changed Employers in the Previous 12 Months

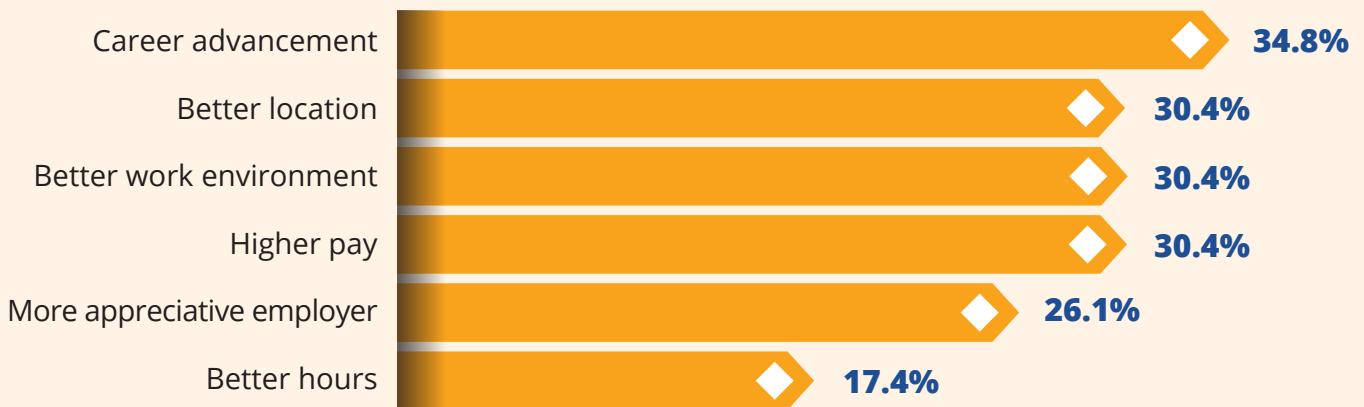
8.4% of responding practice managers changed employment within the past year, a proportion comparable to the 7.8% who made a leap in the previous reporting period.

52



Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

The respondents who changed employment were primarily looking for career advancement or higher pay.

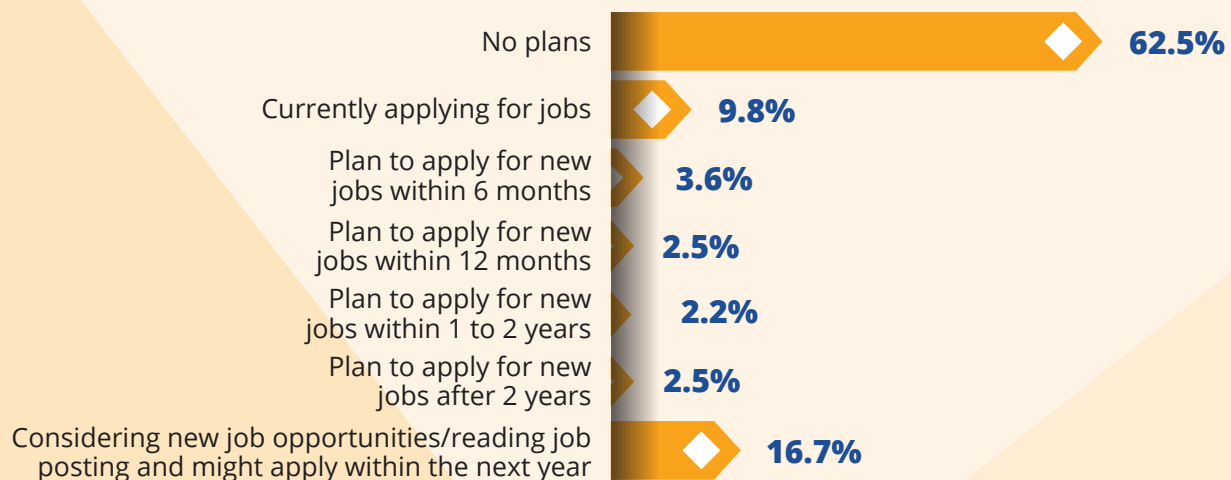


Of those who made the leap, three in five (60.9%) were able to achieve their goals in doing so.

Plan to Apply for New Jobs

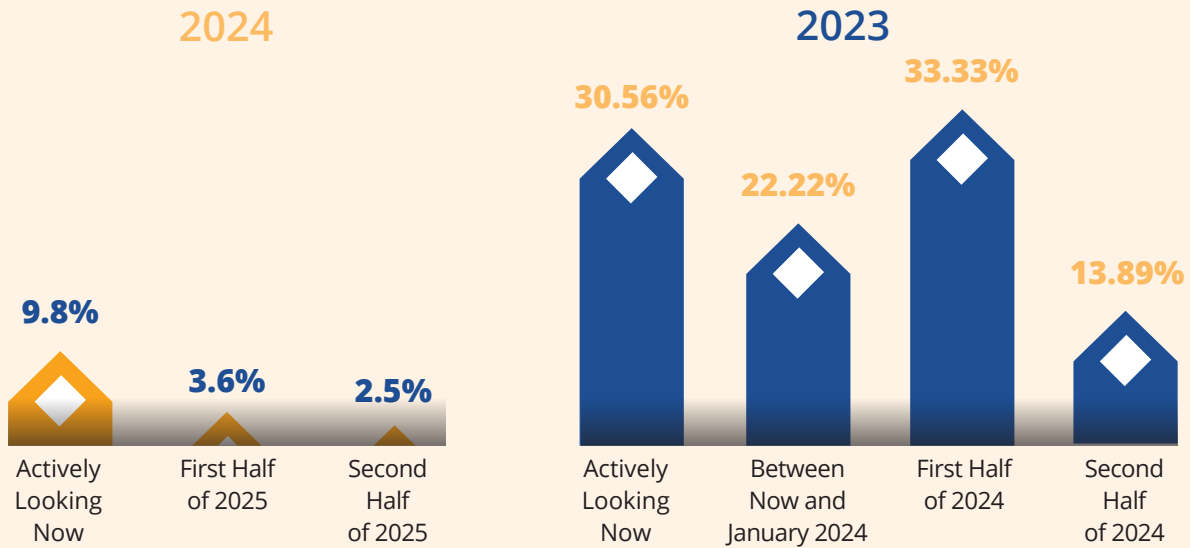
More than a third (**37.5%**) of responding practice managers are planning or actively pursuing a job change within the next few years; 32.6% plan to do so before 2026.

53



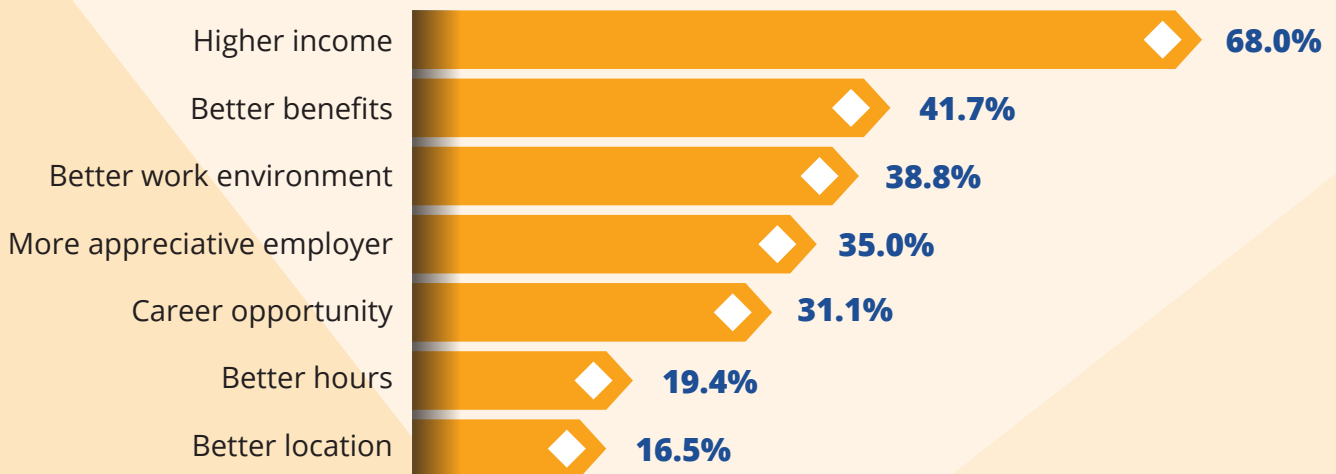
When Job Searchers Plan to Apply to New Jobs

26.2% of respondents on the hunt for new roles were actively looking at the time of the survey, similar to the 30.6% in this position in 2023.



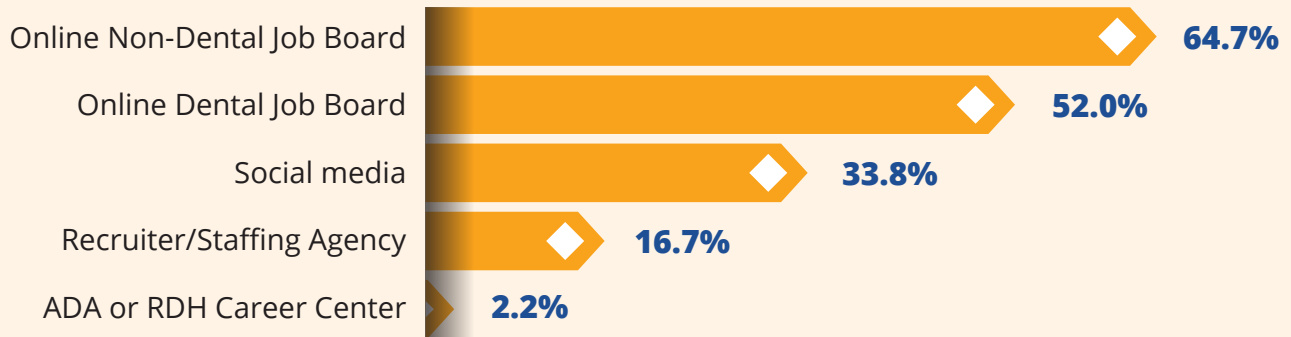
Motivations for Changing Jobs in the Years Ahead

Higher income, better benefits, and a better work environment were the top drivers of responding practice managers exploring or pursuing a job change.



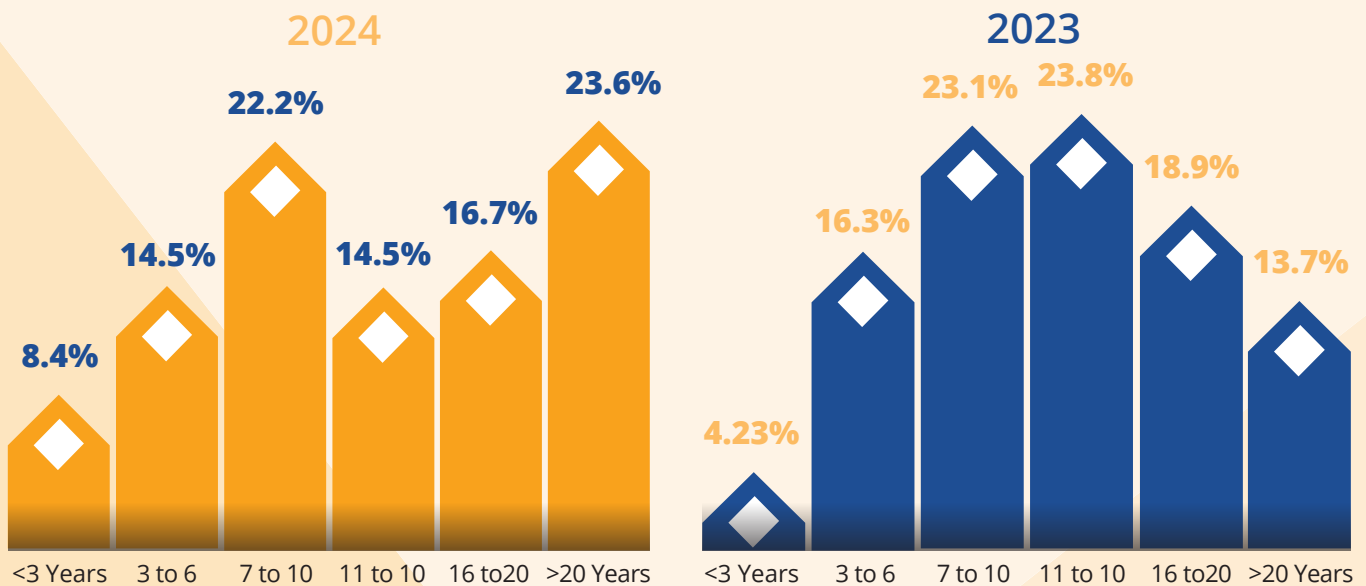
Where Practice Managers Look for New Jobs

Responding practice managers primarily search for job opportunities on online job boards, both general and industry-specific (e.g., DentalPost).



Planned Years to Retirement

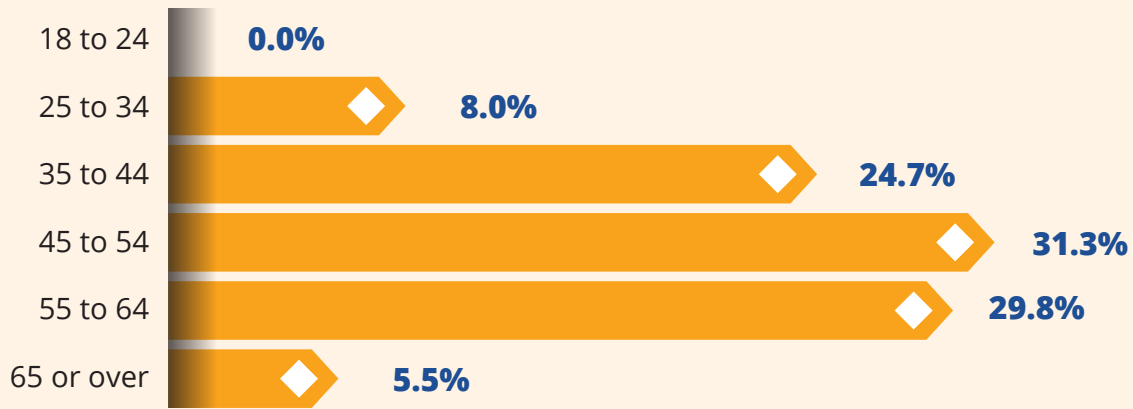
22.9% of responding practice managers plan to retire within six years, a slight uptick compared to the 20.5% with such plans in the previous reporting period.



Age & Experience

Age

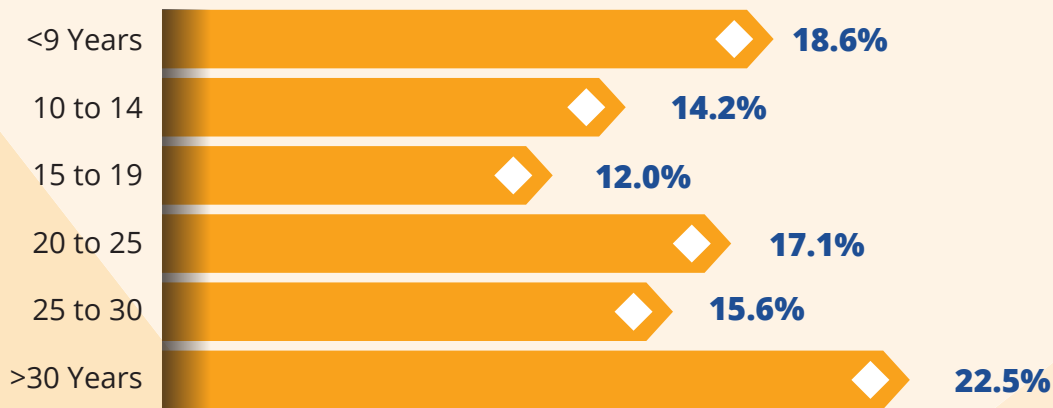
Three in five (**61.1%**) responding practice managers are between the ages of 45 and 64; another quarter (24.7%) are between 35 and 44.



Years of Experience as a Practice Manager

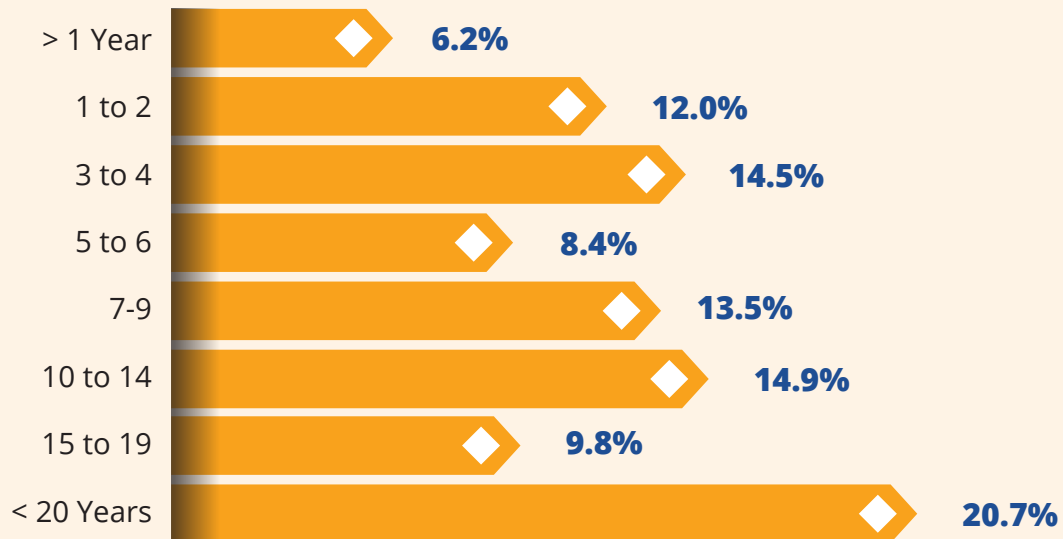
The lion's share (**81.1%**) of respondents have at least a decade of experience in the field; nearly a quarter (22.5%) have more than three decades.

56



Longevity with Current Employer

41.1% of managers have been with their current employer for six or fewer years, an uptick compared to the 35.72% with this tenure in 2023.



Front-Office Associates

REPORT SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Between October and November 2024, DentalPost conducted its *2025 Dental Industry Salary Report*, drawing participation from 26 billing specialists and 64 associates who work in other front-office roles, such as receptionist. In light of this response rate, which represents a decrease from the 81 billing specialists and 87 front-office associates who participated in the previous reporting period, we've considered both roles together in the following statistics rather than reporting on them separately.

Total Annual Income

53 full-time front-office associates reported total income from dental practice in 2024 ranging from \$24,000 to \$75,000.

- ◆ Their mean (average) annual income was **\$46,616.13**.
- ◆ Their median income was **\$45,000**.
- ◆ **52.8%** were earning **\$45,000.00** or more.

58

Hourly Wage

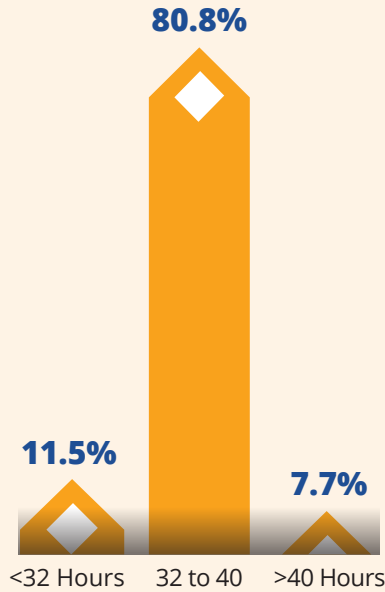
58 front-office associates reported an hourly wage in 2024 ranging from \$18.00 to \$40.00.

- ◆ Their mean (average) hourly wage was **\$25.43**.
- ◆ Their median hourly wage was **\$25**.

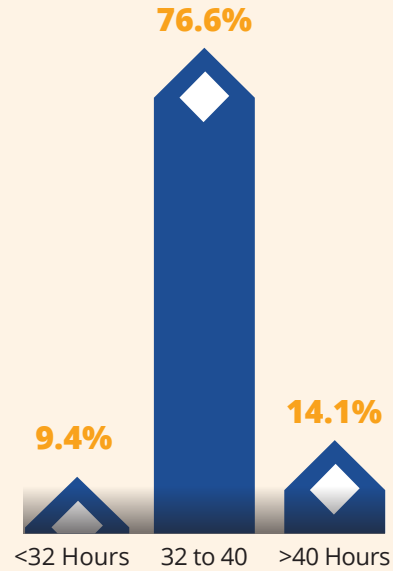
Average Workweek Hours

In 2024, nine in ten (**89.8%**) of responding front-office associates worked at least 32 hours in the average week; 12.5% worked more than 40 hours.

Billing Specialist

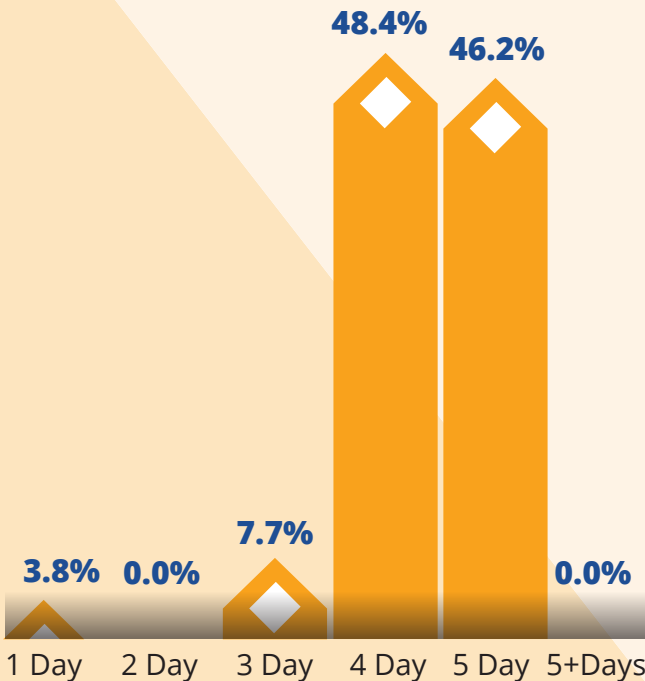


Front Office Associate

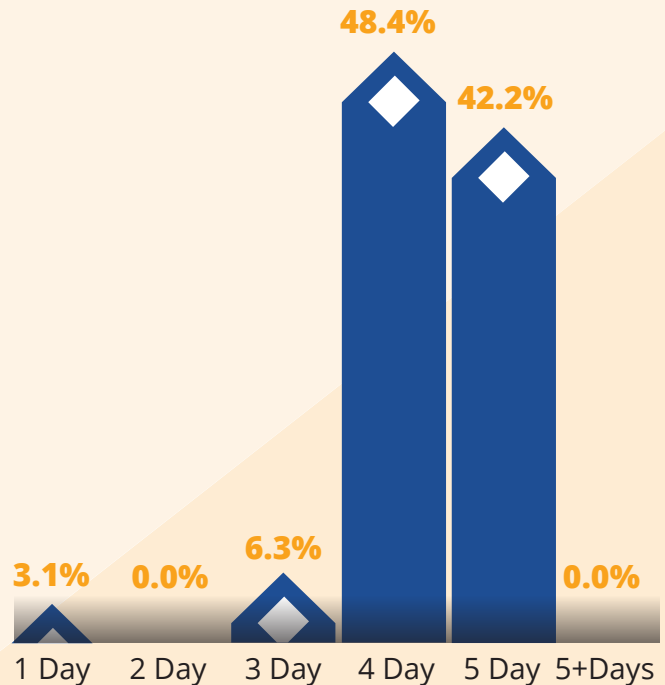


More than half (**56.8%**) of front-office associates work four or fewer days in the average week.

Billing Specialist



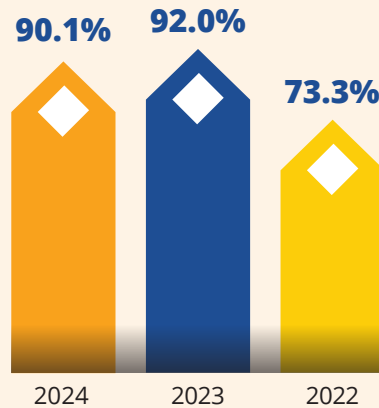
Front Office Associate



Benefits

Year-Over-Year Comparison of the % Who Receive Benefits

90.9% of responding front-office associates received benefits in 2024.

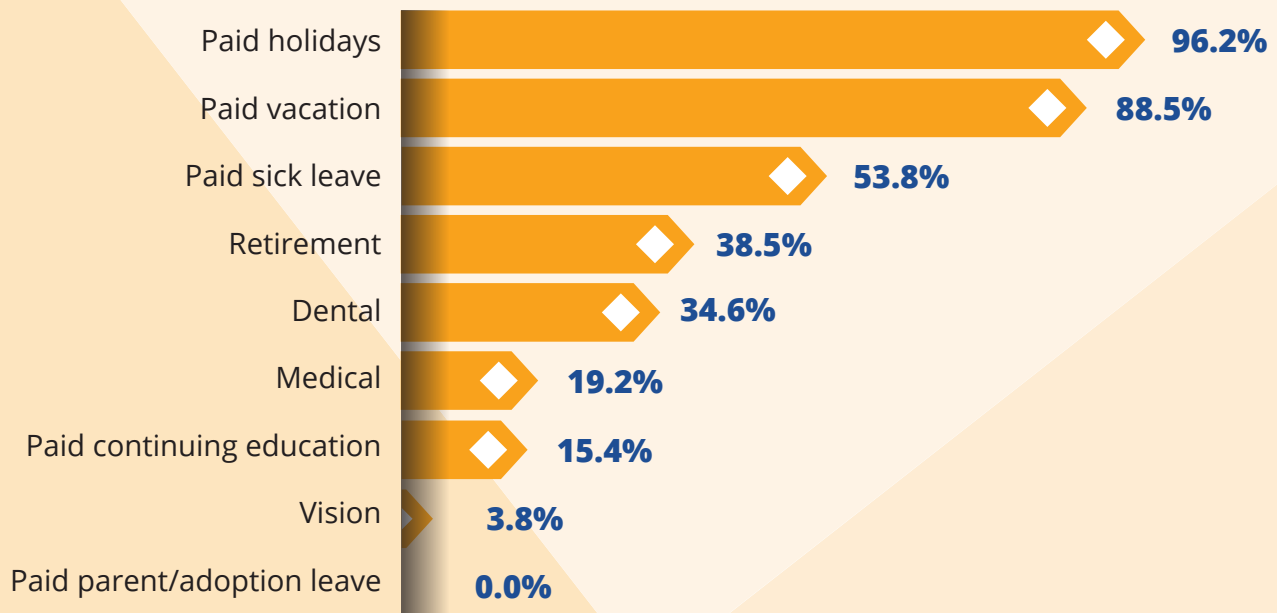


The Benefits Front-Office Associates Receive

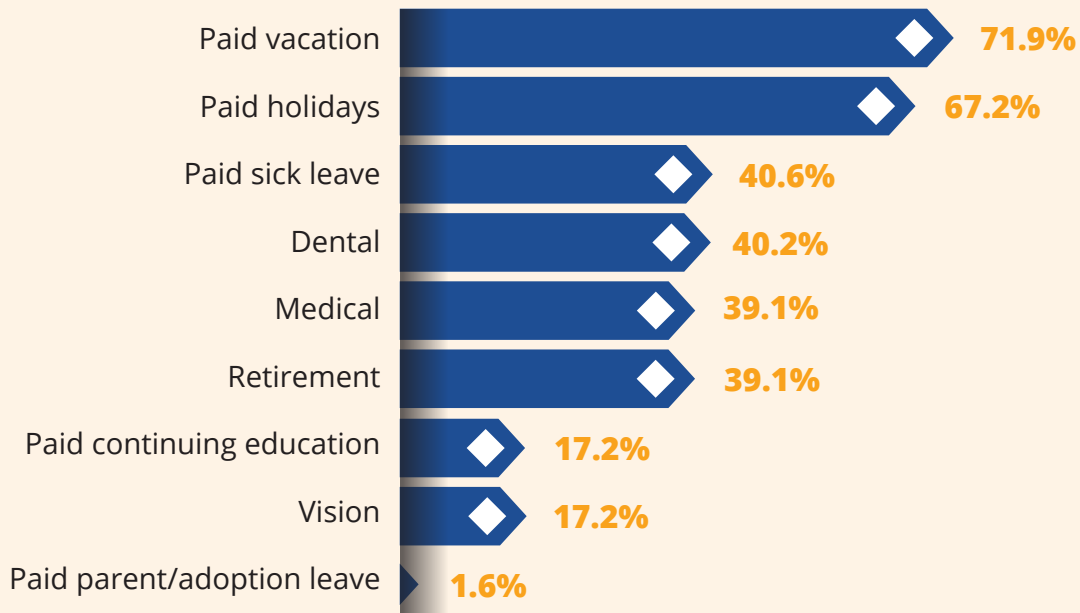
The top five benefits these associates reported receiving in 2024 were paid vacation, paid holidays, paid sick leave, dental, and retirement. Medical coverage is the benefit most desired among those who don't already have it.

60

Billing Specialist



Front Office Associate

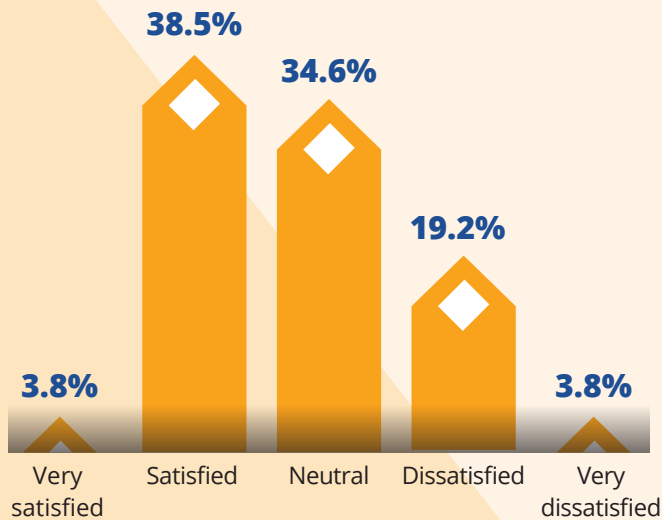


Satisfaction with Benefits

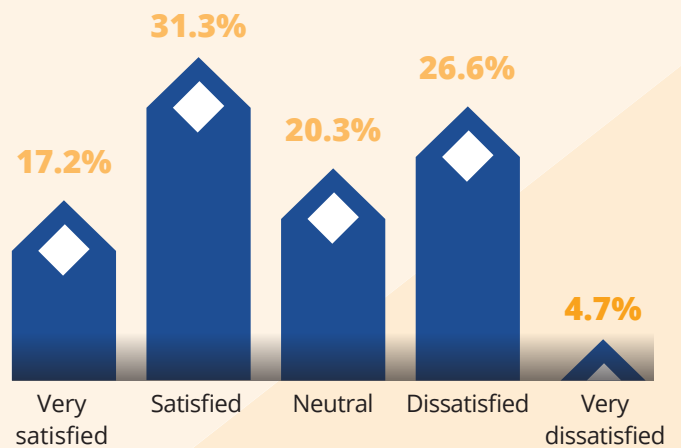
46.6% of front-office associates were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits in 2024.

61

Billing Specialist

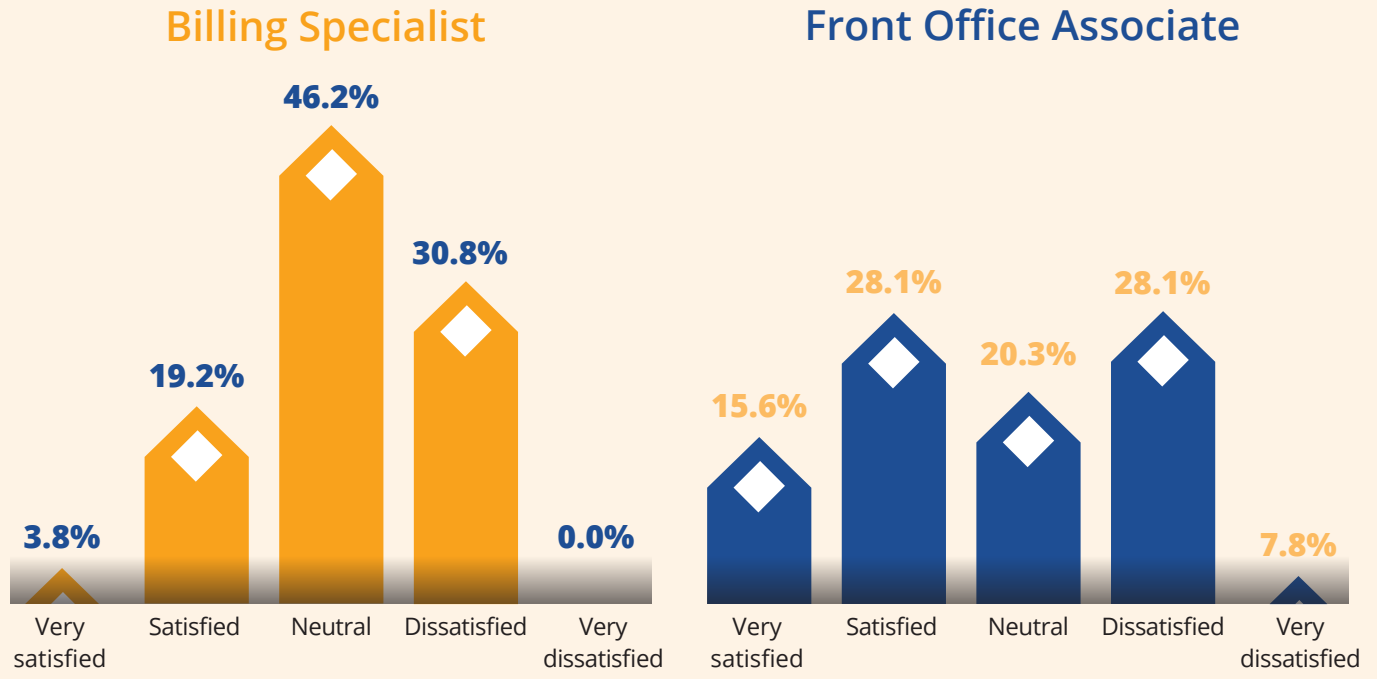


Front Office Associate

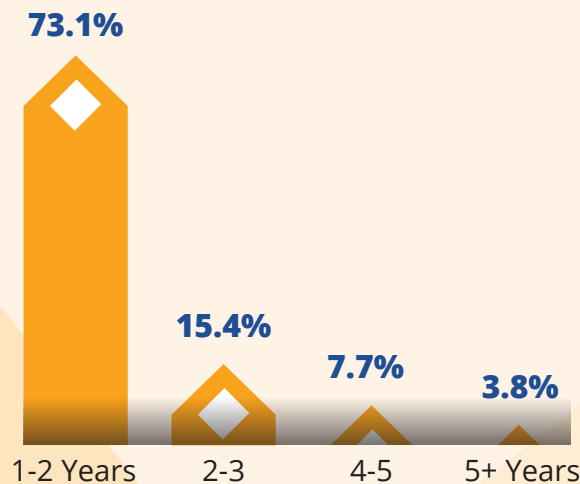


Satisfaction with Total Compensation

37.5% of responding front-office associates were satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits) in 2024.



Nearly one in three (**28.4%**) front-office associates haven't received a pay raise in the past two years.

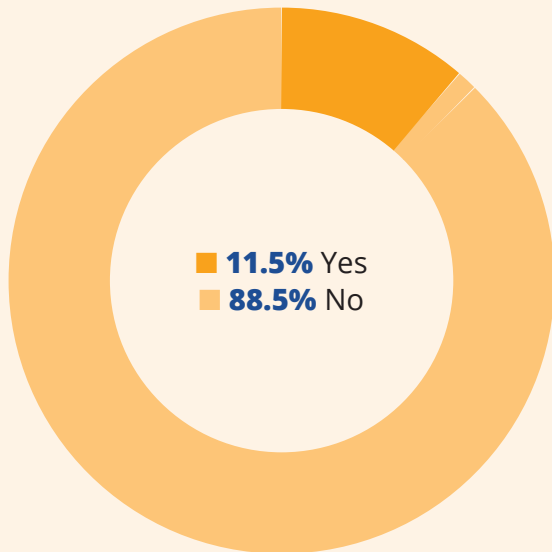


Job Turnover

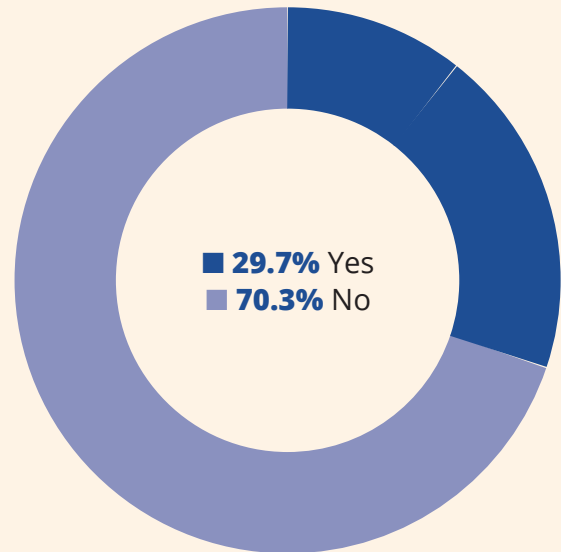
Changed Employers in the Previous 12 Months

22.7% of responding front-office associates changed employment within the past year.

Billing Specialist



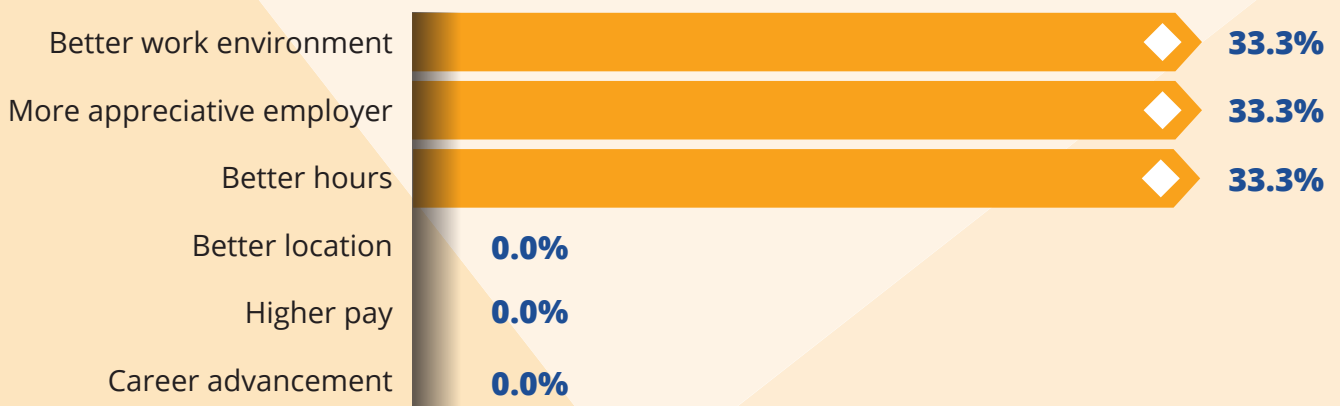
Front Office Associate



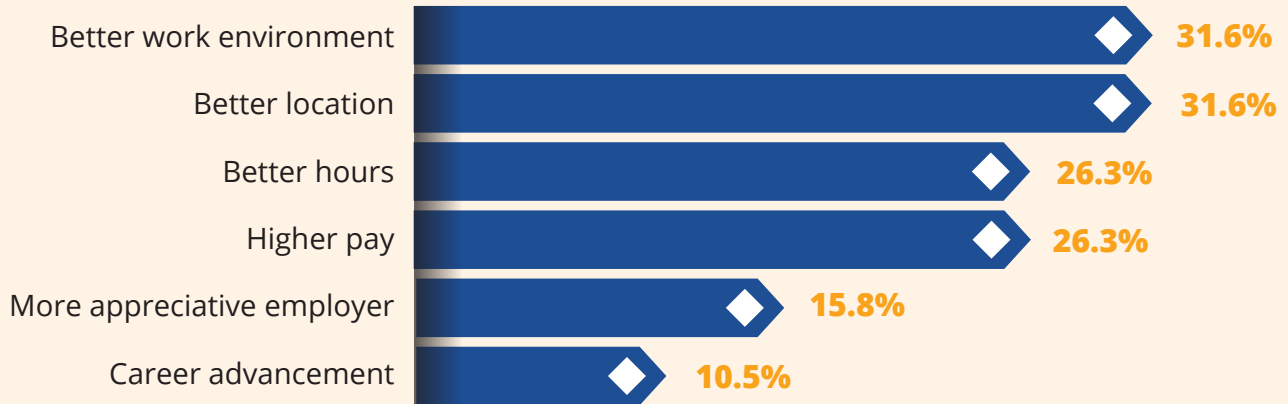
Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

The respondents who transitioned were primarily looking for a better work environment, better hours, a better location, or higher pay.

Billing Specialist



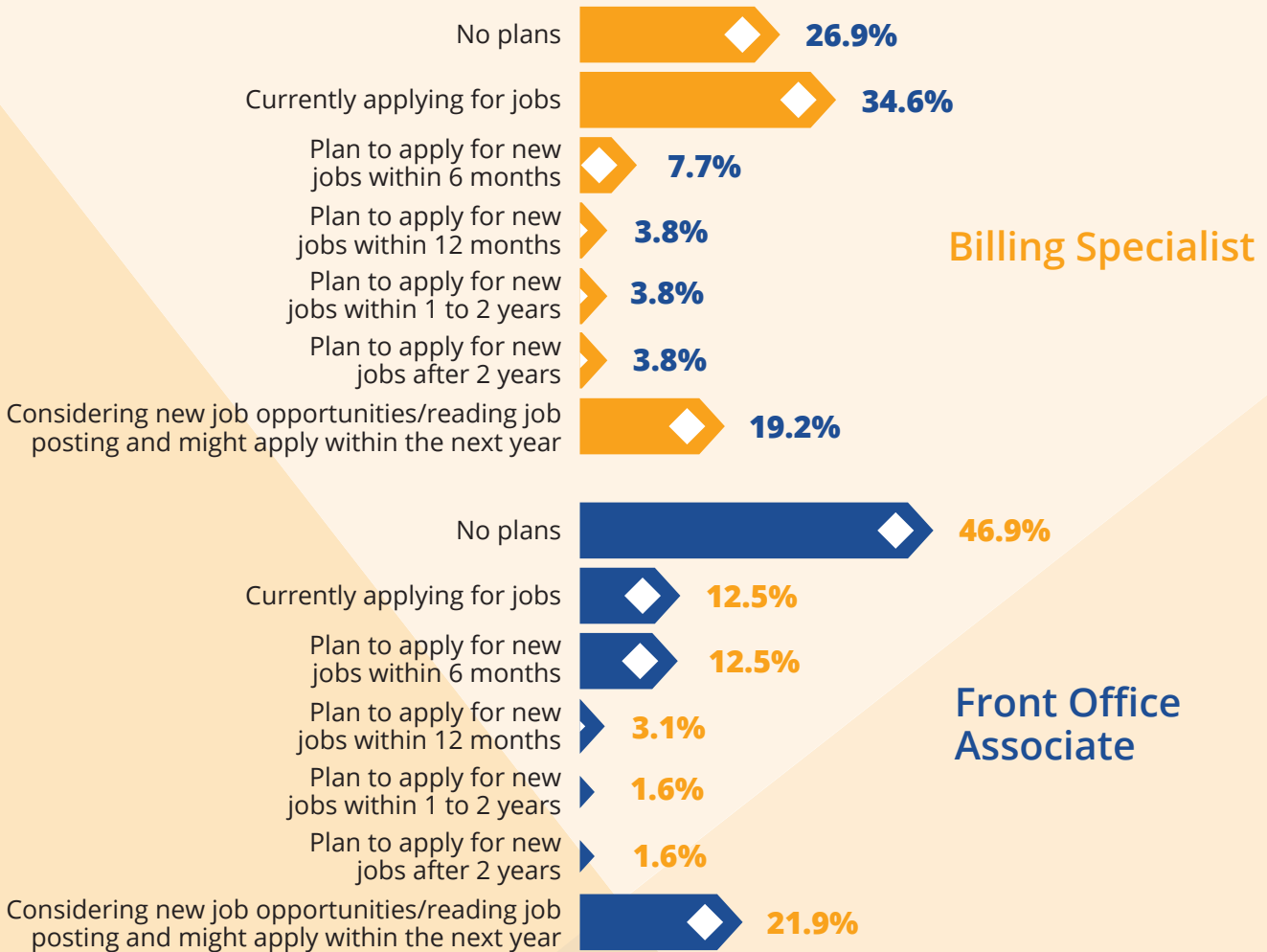
Front Office Associate



Of those who made the leap, three quarters (**75.0%**) were able to achieve their goals in doing so.

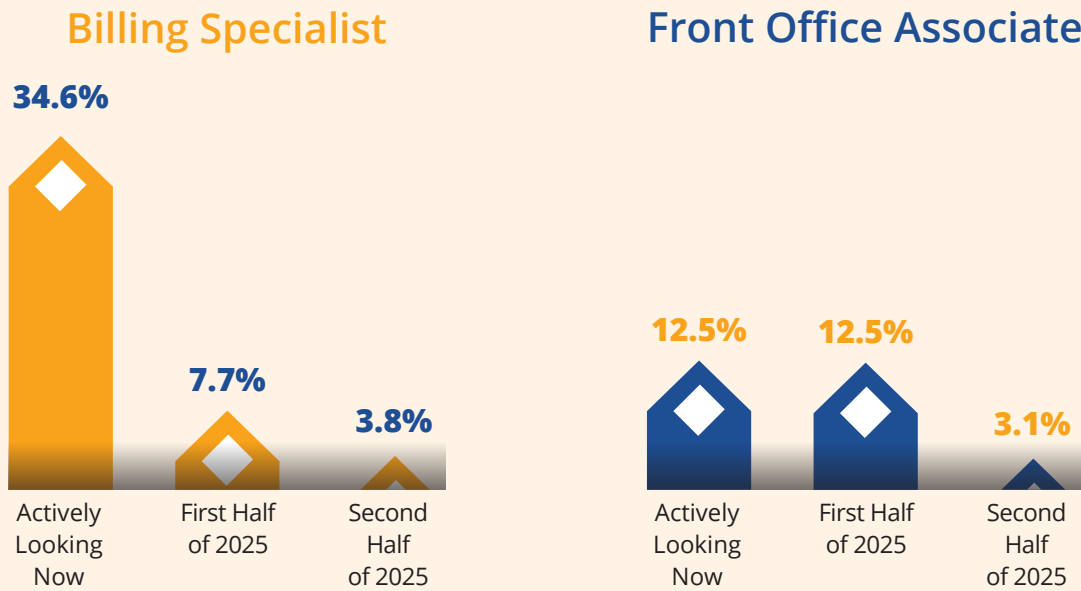
Plan to Apply for New Jobs

Three fifths (**59.1%**) of responding front-office associates are planning or actively pursuing a job change within the next few years; 46.1% of billing specialist and 28.1% of other front office associates plan to do so before 2026.



When Job Searchers Plan to Apply to New Jobs

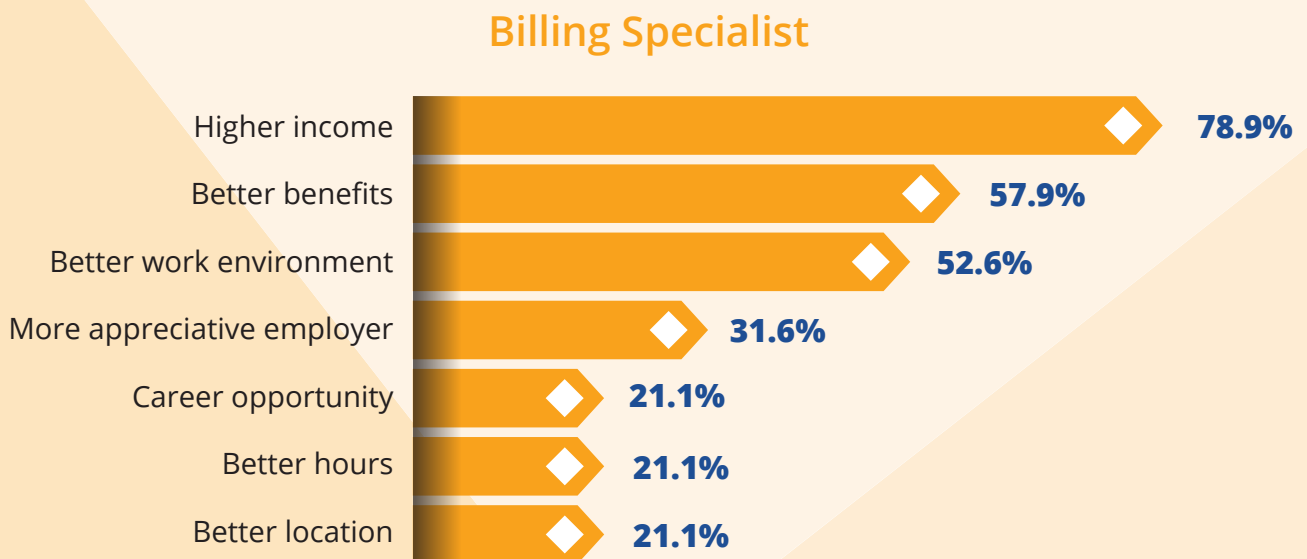
One third (**32.7%**) of respondents seeking a job change were actively looking at the time of the survey.



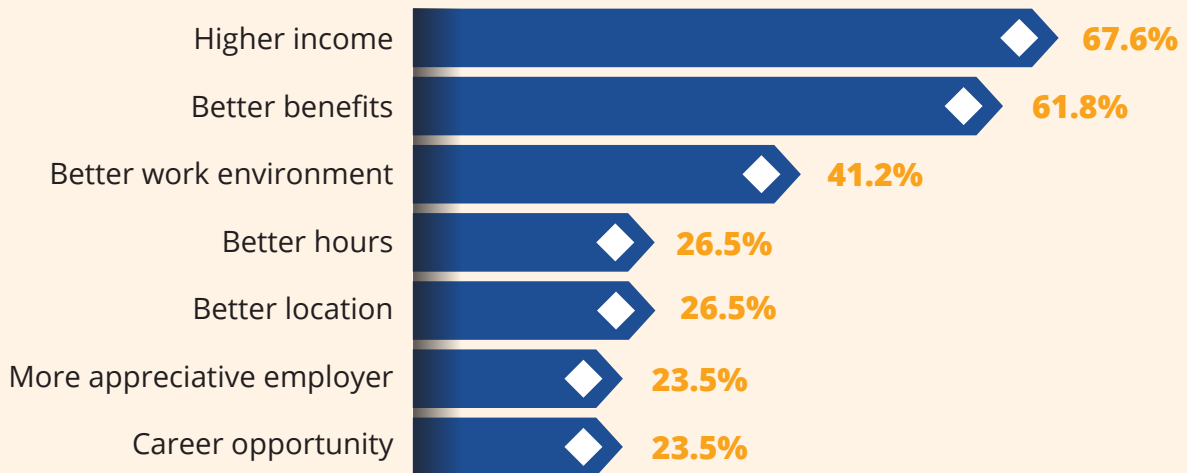
Motivations for Changing Jobs in the Years Ahead

65

Higher income, better benefits, and a better work environment topped the motivations of billers exploring or pursuing a job change.



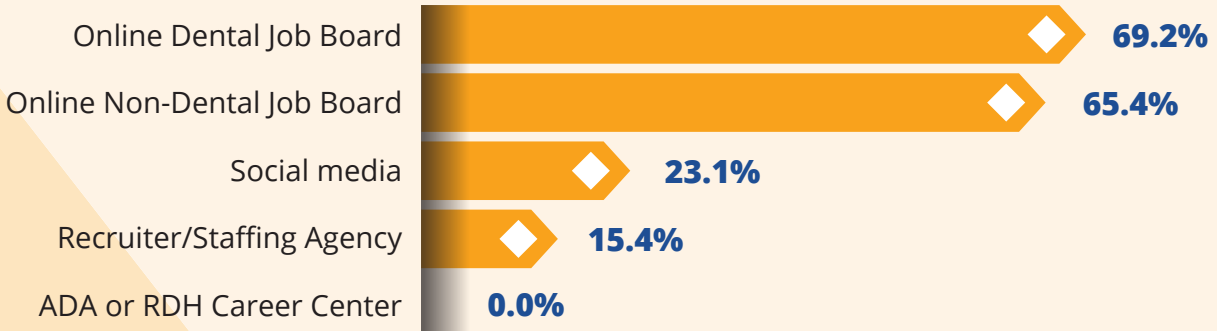
Front Office Associate



Where Front-Office Associates Look for New Jobs

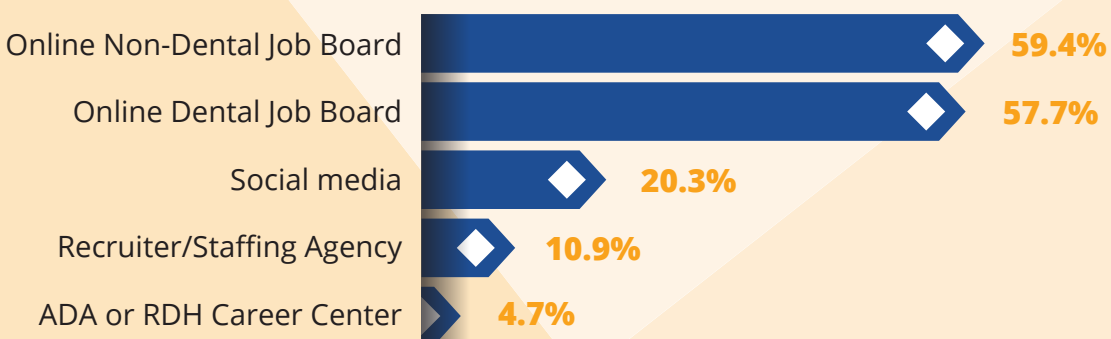
Respondents primarily search for job opportunities on online job boards, both general or industry-specific (e.g., DentalPost).

Billing Specialist



66

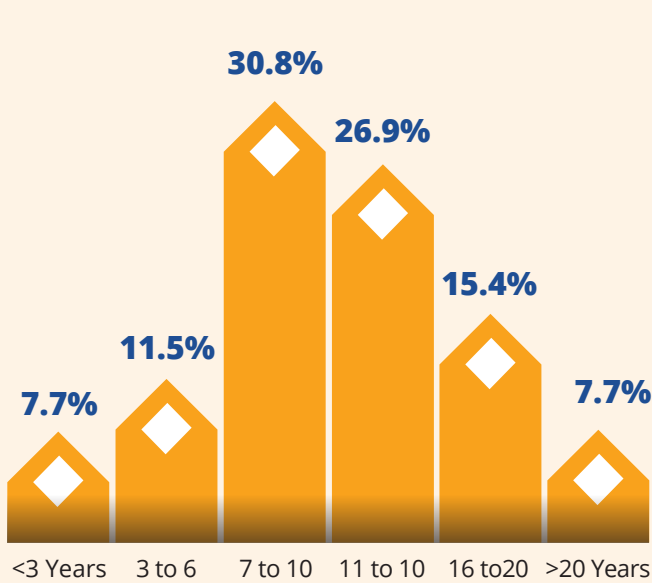
Front Office Associate



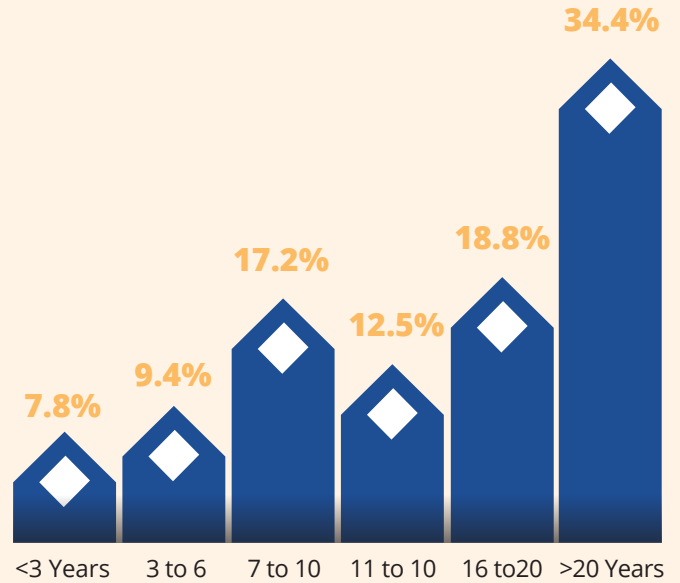
Planned Years to Retirement

18.2% of responding front-office associates plan to retire within six years.

Billing Specialist



Front Office Associate

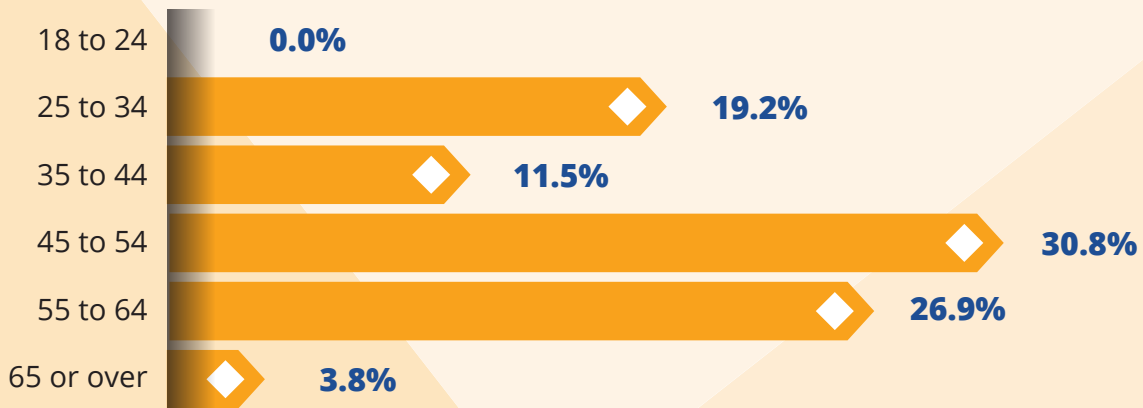


Age & Experience

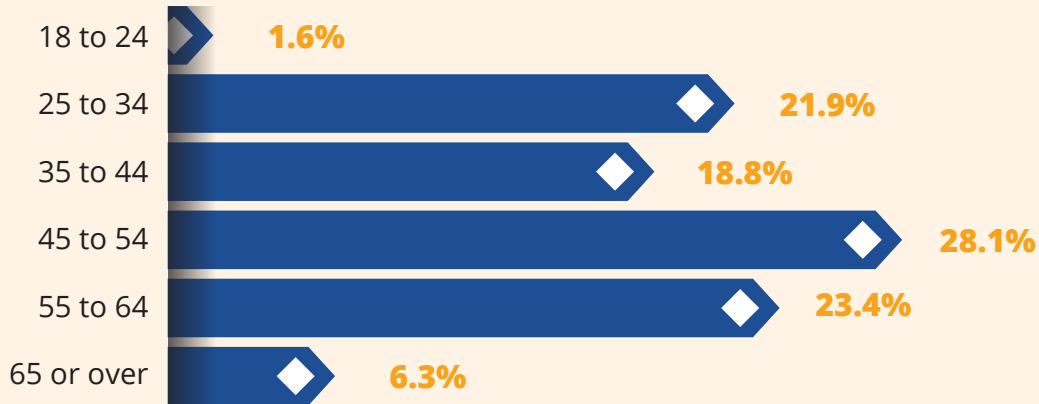
Age

More than half (52.3%) of responding front-office associates are between the ages of 45 and 64.

Billing Specialist



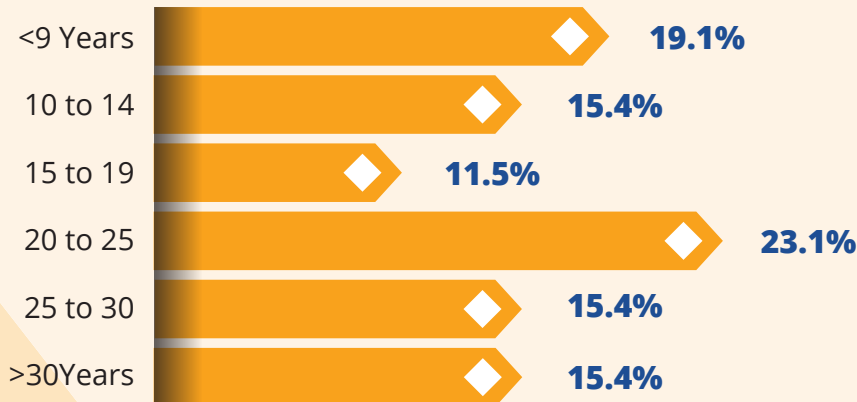
Front Office Associate



Years of Experience as a Front-Office Associate

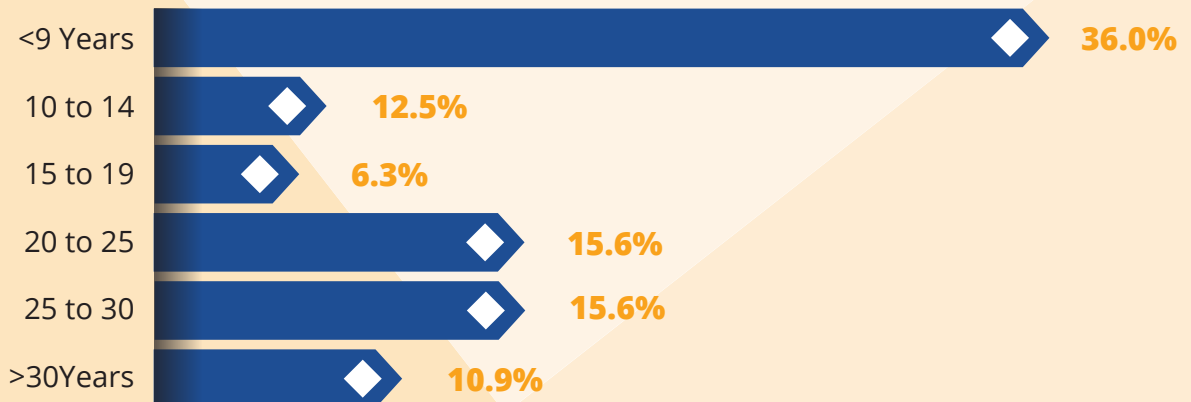
More than two in three (68.2%) respondents have at least a decade of experience in the field.

Billing Specialist



68

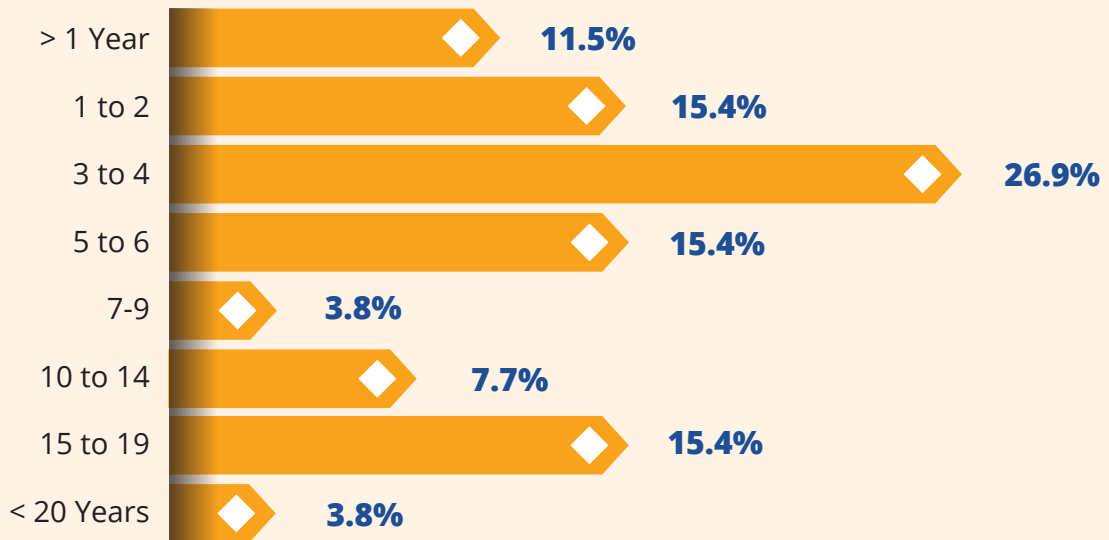
Front Office Associate



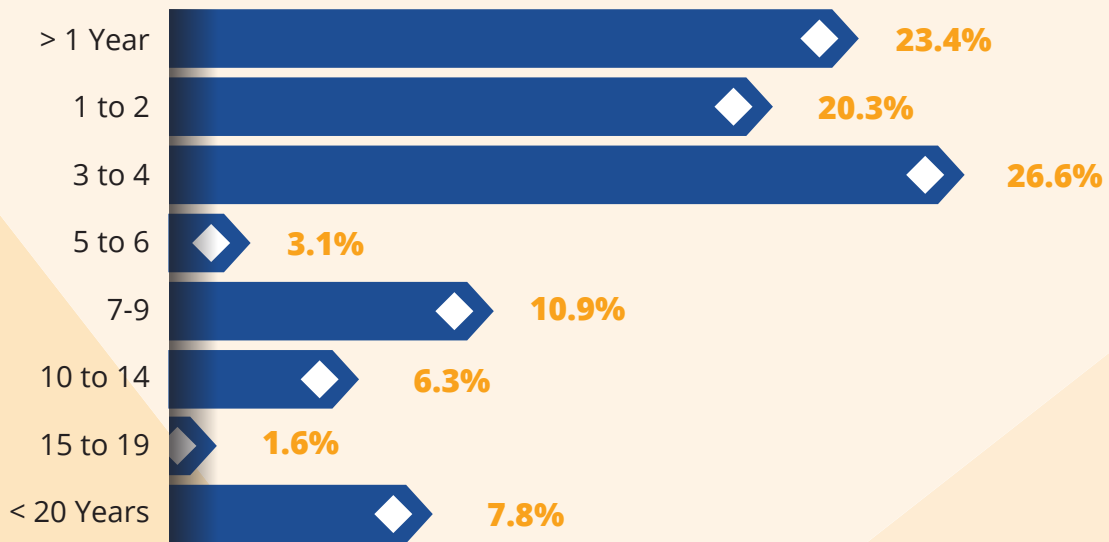
Longevity with Current Employer

71.6% of responding front-office associates have been with their current employer for six or fewer years.

Billing Specialist



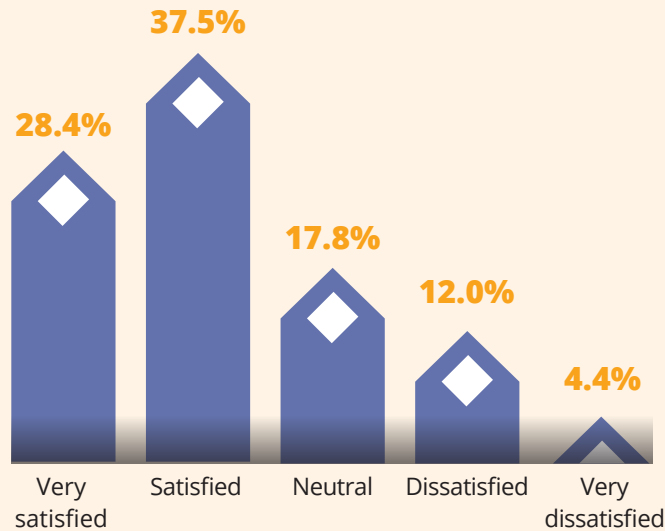
Front Office Associate



Top Career Wins and Washes for All Front-Office Professionals

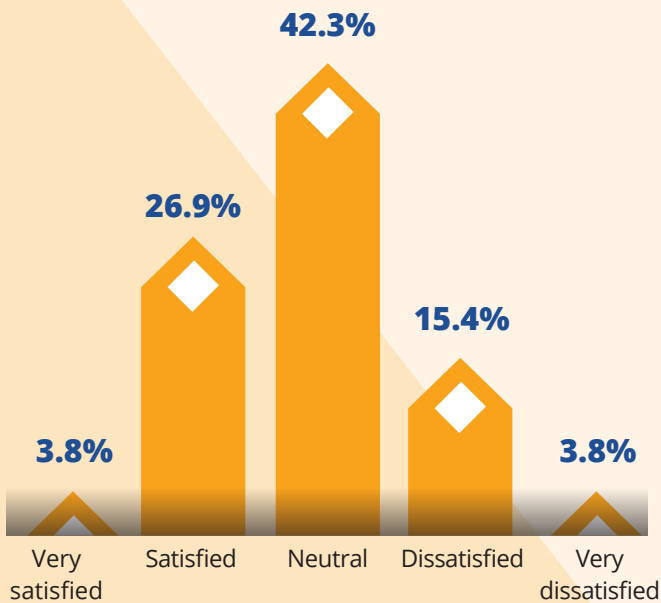
63.1% of dental front-office professionals are satisfied or very satisfied with their jobs, including **65.9%** of practice managers and **54.5%** of front-office associates.

Practice Manager

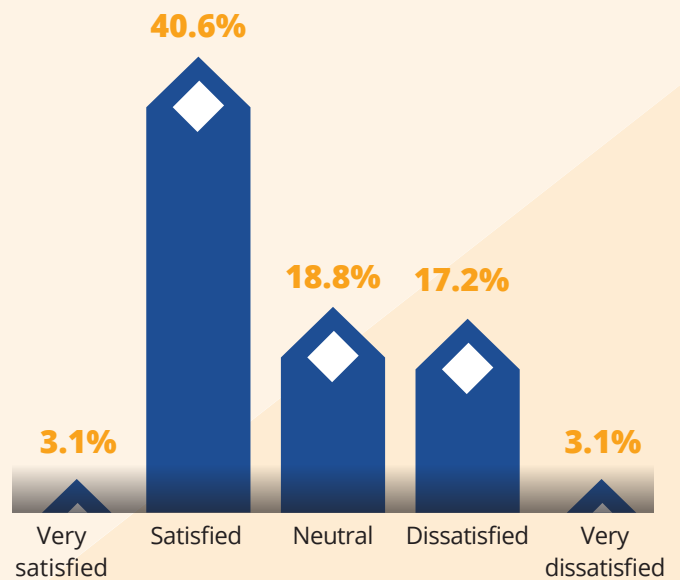


70

Billing Specialist



Front Office Associate



When asked to share their favorite part of the job, many front-office professionals — especially practice managers — cite autonomy, pointing to 4-day work weeks, role mobility, and variety as big wins. Respondents also enjoy the brisk pace of their practices, as well as the chance to foster a professional, caring office culture; work with respectful, skilled teams and managers; improve patient wellbeing, from clinical, financial, and logistical perspectives; and use creativity and critical thinking to create order from the chaos of evolving schedules, regulations, and red tape.

When it comes to what's keeping them up at night, front-office professionals echo others in the industry. Poor compensation, challenging patient interactions, and delicate office dynamics are among the top stressors. Many also feel underappreciated by their teams; worn down by physical demands, long days, and tough commutes; and stretched thin by the significant multitasking they do to keep their organizations running. Some — especially practice managers — say they're bogged down by job aspects both financial (e.g., collections and payer denials) and managerial (e.g., hiring, firing, contending with hygienist staffing shortages, and handling HR issues).

The following responses have been lightly edited for length and clarity.

Challenges

“As the only front desk staff at our office, I feel like I am overworked and under compensated. I do everything from confirming appointments to credentialing. Most of the time I can keep up with everything, but every once in a while, it all seems like too much to handle.” *-Front-Office Associate*

“Corporate structure can be challenging, sometimes policies and procedures make my job very difficult.” *-Practice Manager*

“The recent increase in insurance claim denials has taken up way too much of my time lately. My doctor does not over diagnose, so the denials are ridiculous.” *-Billing Specialist*

“Dealing with personnel issues and trying to find more hygienists as we are in a severe shortage.” *-Practice Manager*

“Insurance and the decrease in reimbursement and decrease in acceptance of pre-authorizations and downgrading, which in turn makes it so much harder for patients to be able to accept and afford their medically necessary treatment.” *-Practice Manager*

“The physical demands on your body from years of clinical dentistry and the stress from taking it personally when something in the office does not go as planned or being the person who handles all of the conflicts.”
-Practice Manager

“I am severely under compensated for the level of responsibility I have been assigned and do not get awarded appropriate resources to accomplish tasks in the most effective fashion. There is no reward and no room for growth.”
-Practice Manager

Wins

72

“I enjoy being a problem solver and a person that patients can rely on for support, knowledge, and empathy. I love helping people. I know life is difficult enough, and I like that I can subtract stress from patient’s lives by facilitating the best care when they frequent the office.” *-Front-Office Associate*

“The doctor I work for is the best boss I have had in my over 40 years in dentistry. She is a ‘zero tolerance for drama’ doctor, which I have found to be rare in the industry.”
-Billing Specialist

“I appreciate that having been a dental assistant for 25 years prior to accepting the Office Manager position, I can wear many hats in the office to assist wherever necessary. The variety of the business is exciting and rewarding even though the compensation does not reflect it.” *-Practice Manager*

“I have a great boss, nice coworkers, and I’ve known the patients for 35+ yrs. I like watching the families grow.”

–Front-Office Associate

“I like the mathematics required for my job. I also really love the organization required for my job. I’m a great organizer and multi-tasker, so I tend to thrive in the chaos that this job throws at you.” *–Practice Manager*

“I enjoy that dentistry is constantly changing. Codes are changing, software is constantly improving, and there are always innovative ideas when it comes to treatment and procedures.” *–Front-Office Associate*

“Managing & mentoring staff to elevate their skills. Not only their professional skills but also their mental, emotional, and financial intelligence.” *–Practice Manager*

“Private practice allows for more individualized patient care and specific roles within the company. I’m a billing specialist and prefer that to direct patient contact.” *–Billing Specialist*

“I like working with patients and making them comfortable, whether that is in the chair or financially confident before the procedure, and providing them an understanding of dentistry overall, since a lot of people are scared or perceive it in a bad light.” *–Practice Manager*

“The atmosphere is peaceful, and the doctor is highly respectful and generous to staff.” *–Billing Specialist*

“I have a great rapport with the owner. He trusts me to make quick decisions that benefit our patients, when necessary. Our staff all works together, and gets along, which is very difficult to achieve these days. We are in the relationship business, and one which also happens to keep our patients healthy. We don’t allow the bottom line to predict how our day will go. The goal is to care for our patients in the best way possible, as if they were family.” *–Practice Manager*