



CRDTS EXPANDS NATIONAL FOOTPRINT AS ORGANIZATION BUILDS FOR THE FUTURE OF LICENSURE

More than 50 years after its founding, CRDTS continues to grow its reach, examination offerings and partnerships with dental boards, schools and candidates nationwide.

TOPEKA, Kan. - Central Regional Dental Testing Service (CRDTS) is entering its next chapter with an expanding national presence, a growing portfolio of examinations and a continued commitment to serving state dental boards, educational institutions and licensure candidates across the country.

CRDTS' legacy in dental licensure testing began in 1968, when representatives of the Kansas, Missouri and Oklahoma Dental Boards came together with a shared vision for a regional approach to dental licensure testing. Since that time, CRDTS has evolved into a nationally recognized testing organization. Today, CRDTS examinations provide pathways to licensure across most of the United States through initial licensure and credentialing, with the organization continuing to develop new relationships with boards and schools throughout the country.

That growth accelerated with the merger of CRDTS and the Southern Regional Testing Agency (SRTA), bringing together two organizations with more than a century of combined experience in dental and dental hygiene licensure testing. But CRDTS leaders say the organization's growth extends well beyond geography.

CRDTS now provides examinations in dental, dental hygiene, dental therapy, local anesthesia and restorative auxiliary functions. The organization has also expanded its use of independent testing facilities, providing additional opportunities for candidates to complete examinations outside of traditional school-based testing schedules.

"Far from simply maintaining a passive footprint in the dental testing landscape, CRDTS is aggressively investing in its future," said Richael "Sheli" Cobler, Executive Director of CRDTS. "The growth we've seen in the past five years is evidence of the importance of CRDTS in the dental and dental hygiene education and testing environment. We are actively listening, scaling our services and building a more accessible, stakeholder-driven future for competency and safety in dental licensure."

CRDTS has continued to evolve its examinations as dental education, technology and licensure itself change. That includes efforts to increase both the objectivity and dental fidelity of the dental examination. To that end, CRDTS is incorporating standardized measurement techniques designed to provide candidates and examiners with more objective methods of evaluating clinical procedures. Beginning with the class of 2028, CRDTS plans to implement bi-layer manikin teeth that simulate both enamel and dentin for prosthodontic preparations, building on an earlier pilot with a university partner.

The organization is also evaluating emerging assessment technologies. In a pilot study of computerized grading for prosthodontics, CRDTS found a 98% correlation in passing scores between computerized grading and three independent examiners.

"We want to continue improving the objectivity and fairness of the examination, which in turn improves the validity of the results," said Mark Edwards, DDS, Director of Dental Examinations for CRDTS. "We cannot become complacent and assume that today's examination is as good as it can be. Our responsibility is to continue looking for ways to improve the examination and increase the dental fidelity of simulated assessment."



At the same time, CRDTS has focused on the candidate and school experience. The organization offers same-exam retake opportunities at almost all dental examination sites, direct access to CRDTS staff by phone and email, detailed feedback for unsuccessful procedures and written examinations administered at the testing site, all designed to make the examination process as straightforward as possible for candidates and schools.

That approach has also helped CRDTS grow its presence among dental students. “Candidates tell us they appreciate being able to talk to an actual person when they call and get help right away, and schools have been extremely receptive to working with us,” said Shanee’ Askren, Exam Administration & Information Technology Manager for CRDTS. “Once we establish that relationship with a school, we tend to see it grow. We work hard to be self-sufficient on site, responsive to the schools and available to candidates throughout the process.”

The organization’s continued expansion remains grounded in the same mission that has guided CRDTS for more than five decades: helping licensing boards protect the health, safety and welfare of the public through valid, reliable and measurable assessments of clinical competency. CRDTS leadership believes that mission also requires the organization to continue looking beyond the traditional boundaries of a testing agency.

“CRDTS is no longer defined just by the exams we administer, but by the lifelong partnerships we build,” Cobler said. “We are honoring our deep roots in public safety through clinical licensure examination development and administration while investing in new technology, custom remediation and national mobility.”

For CRDTS, the next era is not simply about preserving more than 50 years of history. It is about building on that foundation.

With an expanding national footprint, broader examination portfolio, growing testing infrastructure and continued investment in examination innovation and candidate experience, CRDTS is positioning itself to continue serving boards, schools, candidates and the public for decades to come.

About CRDTS

Central Regional Dental Testing Service (CRDTS) develops and administers clinical competency examinations used as a pathway toward licensure in dentistry, dental hygiene and other oral health professions. Since 1968, CRDTS has worked with state dental boards, educational institutions, examiners and candidates throughout the United States. Its examinations provide pathways to licensure through initial licensure and credentialing across much of the country.

For more information, visit [CRDTS.org](https://www.crdts.org).