

Radiation use and management in dental practice - Victoria



Purpose: To assist ADA Victorian Branch members in their understanding of the process of licensing and management of radiation sources in dental practice and to answer the most frequently asked questions.

Scope: Those who are qualified and use and/or those responsible for managing a radiation source in **Victorian** dental practices.

Users of radiation sources are reminded they should not rely on this document alone, which has been adapted from the Department of Health Victoria's website www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/radiation

Key points

- All sources of radiation must be covered by a **radiation management licence**.
- Users of a radiation source must have a **use licence** and be registered on the Department of Health [DoH] portal.
- **Notification of licence renewals is via email only. Please ensure your details registered with the Department of Health Radiation remain current.**
- A lapse in a use licence or not seeking a variation to a management licence may have implications including penalties.
- Your current use licence status is open to the public. [Public search of the register](#)
- An individual may be both the user and owner hence they are responsible for both use and management licences.
- Both licences must be applied for, varied, assessed, and **approved** before equipment is installed, relocated, transferred, sold, disposed of, or used.
- Units should be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for use.
- **Monitoring** is required in facilities when extra oral units are installed – the duration of monitoring will be determined by the Department of Health [DoH] Radiation.
- **Dental units are exempt from certification of compliance.**
 - An approved tester is required if testing is required.
- In dentistry, X-ray doses are so low and well controlled that lead aprons are not usually (or routinely) required.

Radiation practice includes those who wish to use, possess, repair, or maintain, transport, dispose or sell sources of radiation or any activity that may result in the exposure of a person or the environment to radiation. A licence must be obtained prior to any of these activities.

The Radiation Act 2005 establishes a system of licensing users of radiation equipment and managers of radiation practices. Radiation licences are issued by the Department of Health Victoria.

What type of licence is typically required?

- Use licence - is for the individual who uses the radiation source.
- Management licence - pertains to the owner or entity responsible for the equipment and facility/practice. This licence requires the completion of a Radiation Management Plan; these are outlined later in this document.

Use Licence

Users of radiation sources are required to be licensed. A use licence authorises the holder to use specified radiation sources for a defined purpose. Supporting documentation is required when applying. There are exemptions however, these relate to but may not be limited to specific teaching facilities, their students and equipment. [Check if you are exempt.](#)

Periods

The licences are issued for periods of one, two or three years. The choice is yours. Licence fees vary depending on the type and duration of the licence.

Portal

The licensing portal is designed to manage licensing and registration functions. All licensed users should be registered on this portal. It allows users to apply for, renew or vary an existing licence. You can also download a copy of your licence and change your contact details using the portal.

[Portal log in](#)



The portal can only be used for use licences currently - June 2023.

It is anticipated that the function of the portal will expand to include all management licence holders in 2023. [FAQ](#) about the licensing portal for radiation.

Management Licence

The radiation practice/equipment owner, e.g. practice owners whether individuals, companies or business entities, must maintain a management licence. This licence will identify and list the types and details of radiation sources that can be possessed at the site. Supporting documents are required for dental practice applications. In addition, a radiation management plan [RMP] must be submitted with new applications and variations to existing and before the transfer of ownership of an existing source.

Radiation Plan Management [RMP] as noted above.

An RMP is developed to orientate those using or working around the radiation sources in practice. It outlines procedures that are in place to ensure safe and secure practise and minimises any risk of harm to people and the environment. Details on the minimum requirements for RMPs can be found [here](#). Guidance on completing a RMP can be found on our website, [ADAVB Radiation Management Plan example](#).

Monitoring is required for extra-oral X-ray units only. Prior to installation the facility management licence holder is required to list the name of the personal radiation monitoring service (PRMS) provider that will be used, and the centre number assigned to the holder by the provider in the RMP. This will have been reviewed by the department at the time of application or variation to an existing management licence. The period of monitoring may vary depending on the results.

Periods

Management licences are issued for one, two or three years. The applicant can choose which licence period they wish to apply for. Licence fees vary depending on the type and duration of the licence.

Fees are not requested or processed at lodgement, but fees will be emailed when the application is assessed, and payment may be made electronically. Therefore, some variations may exist; details can be found [here](#).

Variations to existing licences

Examples of circumstances that require a variation to your current use or management licence:

- You wish to dispose of, sell, transfer, relocate, or purchase and install new equipment.
e.g. If you have a management licence for intraoral equipment only and wish to replace this unit or wish to install panoramic, cephalometric, cone beam CT equipment.
Any change or variation must be **assessed and approved** by the DoH Radiation team **before the activity occurs**. You must provide a range of evidence to support your application to vary your scope of equipment.
- If you wish to change the scope of your current use licence.
e.g. You are qualified and currently licenced in intra oral radiography and have completed an approved training program in extra oral radiography (panoramic, cephalometric, cone beam CT) and plan use these radiation sources.
If you do not have extra oral (panoramic, cephalometric, cone beam CT) noted on your current use licence but are a qualified user of these sources of radiation.
- If you are already licensed for panoramic, cephalometric, cone beam CT there is no requirement to demonstrate competencies again upon renewal of a use licence.

NB. The department must authorise the variation to the licence before the proposed changes to the radiation practice take effect.

Variations and applications, along with any required documentation may be submitted electronically. Access application forms to vary or transfer a management licence [here](#). There are no fees associated with variation to an existing licence or approval.

Fees where applicable are not requested or processed at the time of lodgement. Where applicable, fees will be emailed when the application is assessed, and payment maybe made electronically.

Notification of renewal

Two months prior to the expiry of your licence you will be emailed a request for payment of the prescribed licence fee. Your email contact details are therefore very important. Make sure you keep your details up to date.

Qualification and training [Dental Sector specific](#)

The Department of Health Victoria – Radiation **Sector specific** webpages outline the prerequisites and evidence required to support an application for a use licence and for variations to existing licences. Ahpra registration alone should not be assumed sufficient. Recognised tertiary education establishments and training courses are listed and guidance on undertakings where the criteria is not met, i.e. the department does not recognise the tertiary education establishment.

Automatic mutual recognition [AMR]

The Australian Government and state and territory governments have introduced a uniform scheme of automatic mutual recognition (AMR). Licensed workers may be able to perform the activities they are licensed to perform in another state or territory without further application or additional fees.

AMR is new and prior to working in Victoria you should contact the Radiation Team to confirm your eligibility, then you are required to notify the Radiation Team by completing the [online form](#). Please note that Ahpra registration alone is not sufficient to satisfy the new AMR arrangements.

Maintenance and testing

All radiation sources should be used, maintained and serviced as per the manufacturer's recommendations and the regulatory requirements.

Dental units are exempt from certification of compliance testing that applies to medical prescribed sources.

Approved Testers

If testing is required, the dental supply company may assist in directing you to an approved tester. A list of approved testers can also be accessed [here](#).

Further information [Dental specific](#)

[Understanding your mandatory radiation safety requirements for use licence holders.](#)

Department of Health Victoria

Radiation Safety

Ph: 1300 767 469 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 12pm)

Email: radiation.safety@dhhs.vic.gov.au