

Joint Committee on Health Care Financing 2025-2026 (194th) Bill Summary

<u>Bill Number:</u>	House, No. 3987
<u>Title:</u>	AN ACT RELATIVE TO ENSURING ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE FOR MASSHEALTH RECIPIENTS
<u>Sponsor:</u>	Representative Kip A. Diggs (Osterville)
<u>Hearing Date:</u>	July 15, 2025
<u>Reporting Deadline:</u>	September 13, 2025
<u>Prior History:</u>	New Bill

Current Law:

M.G.L. Chapter 112 governs the licensing and registration of health care professionals, the operation of the boards of registration with oversight over those professions and provides the statutory basis for the professional scope of practice for licensed health professionals.

M.G.L. Chapter 112 §§ 43 through 53, inclusive, governs the registration and licensing requirements for dentists, dental hygienists and dental assistants.

Similar Matters: N/A

Summary:

This legislation amends chapter 112 by adding section 52H, which establishes new requirements for dental licensure in Massachusetts. Under the law, dentists seeking licensure must agree to accept a minimum percentage of MassHealth patients, as determined by the department of public health based on regional needs and provider capacity. The required participation rate cannot be less than 5% of a provider's total patient caseload, and dentists must submit annual documentation to verify compliance. The department, in consultation with the executive office of health and human services (EOHHS), will oversee compliance and may grant hardship exemptions. Noncompliant dentists may face license suspension or administrative penalties.

EOHHS is tasked with creating an online portal for MassHealth recipients to find participating dental providers and view service availability. To incentivize participation, the state may offer student loan forgiveness and increased reimbursement rates. In emergency situations, all licensed dentists may treat MassHealth patients, regardless of participation status, and receive a 10% bonus on standard rates if services are rendered within 60 days. The executive office must also issue annual reports detailing provider participation, regional service levels, and recommendations for improving access.