

Utah 2026 Legislative Session: Dental Spotlight

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by Troy M. Keller

Was it only twelve months ago? Last year, dental health featured prominently in Utah's 2025 legislative session, with the passage of a state-wide ban on the addition of fluoride in Utah's drinking water. This decision garnered national attention and sparked some entertaining debates.

The 2026 session probably won't bring as much attention to Utah's dental sector. However, there are already some initiatives to pay attention to.

The Big One: HB 270

The most significant so far is HB 270 Healthcare Worker Post Employment Amendments. This bill proposes to ban non-competes and non-solicits on licensed healthcare workers, including dentists.

Note: The definition of "healthcare worker" in the current text specifically includes dentists, but notably, dental hygienists are not currently listed.

While the bill targets the healthcare industry broadly, the dental industry will want to monitor it closely. Most practices, whether independent or those affiliated with Dental Support Organizations (DSOs) and Dental Partnership Organizations (DPOs), rely on non-competes and non-solicits. These restrictions are often the primary tool used to protect the practice's goodwill against an associate leaving and taking the patient base they built up to a practice across the street.

The non-solicit ban is a strict one. Here is the core part:

(1) On or after May 6, 2026, a person and a healthcare worker may not enter into nonsolicitation agreement that prevents a healthcare worker from informing a former patient of any of the following:

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- (a) the healthcare worker's current place of employment; or
 - (b) the healthcare worker's future place of employment.
- (2) A nonsolicitation agreement that violates Subsection (1) is void.

The bill does provide exceptions in the cases of a severance agreement that is reached with a dentist and/or in connection with a sale of a business.

Pediatric Initiative?

While no bill file has been opened as of yet, at the Utah Chamber's legislative preview last week, it was mentioned that legislative leadership is looking at measures to address oral health in children. We wonder if that might come in the form of additional fluoride resources or expanded Medicaid coverage or some other policy. We will update this post if we see a specific proposal.