

PROPOSED SPOUSAL EXCEPTION REGULATION
College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario

This proposed regulation is new. The following chart breaks out each section of the regulation and provides a rationale for its inclusion in the proposed regulation.

Reg. Section	Proposed Clause	Rationale
S. 1.	<p><i>Spousal exception</i></p> <p>1. <i>The spousal exception in subsection 1 (5) of the Health Professions Procedural Code applies in respect of the College.</i></p>	<p>The purpose of this regulation would be to permit dental hygienists to treat pre-existing spouses. Historically, treating spouses was an established and accepted practice in the dental hygiene profession. The power imbalance and vulnerability that accompanies other health relationships (e.g. physician and patient, psychologist and client) is less pronounced in the dental hygienist and client relationship, at least where there is a well-established spousal relationship that pre-exists the professional relationship.</p> <p>This amendment deals with the narrow circumstance of where the dental hygienist and client have a pre-existing and well-established spousal relationship and where the personal relationship is kept entirely out of the office setting. While treating a spouse, the dental hygienist must follow all of the professional formalities and maintain the professional distance that the dental hygienist would for any other patient. Similarly, when the dental hygienist is out of the office (e.g. at home), the professional relationship must not be allowed to intrude on the personal relationship.</p>