

RCW 18.32.683 Patient abandonment. (1) The attending dentist, without reasonable cause, must not neglect, ignore, abandon, or refuse to complete the current procedure for a patient. If the dentist chooses to withdraw responsibility for a patient of record, the dentist shall:

(a) Advise the patient that termination of treatment is contemplated and that another dentist should be sought to complete the current procedure and for future care; and

(b) Advise the patient that the dentist will remain reasonably available under the circumstances for up to fifteen days from the date of such notice to render emergency care related to that current procedure.

(2) If a dentist provides dental services as an employee or contractor of another dentist or an entity authorized to render dental services pursuant to chapter 18.100, 25.05, or 25.15 RCW or to operate a dental office pursuant to RCW 18.32.675(1), the other dentist or entity shall be responsible for the continuing treatment of patients and a dentist who ceases to be an employee or contractor of such other dentist or entity is not deemed to have abandoned any patient, and is not obligated to advise any patient as provided in this section, with respect to which the continuing treatment responsibility is retained by the other dentist or entity. If an entity is responsible for the continuing treatment of patients, any licensed dentist who is the owner of the entity is considered the attending dentist responsible for ensuring compliance by the entity with this section.

(3) A dental practice owner who is discontinuing a dental practice or moving a dental practice to a new location must comply with the requirements of subsection (1) of this section, or must make reasonable arrangements for the transfer of the patient records of active patients of the dental practice, or copies of the records, to a licensed dentist or professional entity, or at the written request of any patient, transfer of the patient's records, or copies of the records, to the patient. An unlicensed person or entity shall not intentionally prevent a dental practice owner from complying with this subsection. [2017 c 320 § 4.]

Finding—Intent—2017 c 320: See note following RCW 18.32.677.