

MIDWESTERN SOCIETY OF ORTHODONTISTS

Component Report MSO Board of Directors October 15, 2026 Meeting

Component Name: Minnesota

Submitted By (Director Name): Heather Horton

Component Officers/Trustees: Molly McMahon - President, Allison Van Vooren - President Elect, Becky Maher - Past President, Deb Lien - Legislative and Regulatory Affairs, Abby Syverson – Secretary/Treasurer, Rachel Thorstenson – Dental Plans Committee, Zachary Slama – Constitution and Bylaws Committee, Adam Sperl – Membership Committee, Sharmila Arjunan – Education Committee, Brooke Brown Public and Professional Relations Committee

Date of Report: 9/24/2023

Ongoing Initiatives: N/A

Legislative Efforts: see below

New Initiatives: In Minnesota, licensed orthodontic assistants need to have an associate's degree to become license and therefore do most duties. The list of duties that an unlicensed assistant can do is quite narrow – limited to things such as suctioning, handing instruments, etc., as well as taking intraoral/extraoral photographs and digital impressions. There is often a shortage of licensed assistants, which impacts patient care. The MAO board is exploring options to work with the state to either: 1. Add unlicensed duties and/or 2. Add a designation of Orthodontic Qualified Assistant where there would be alternative routes to being allowed to perform certain orthodontic assisting duties (such as removing/replacing ties/wires. The MAO recently sent a survey to its members asking them which option/options they would support. That data is being compiled now, and then we will bring it to the MDA and will work with them to craft a potential plan.

Upcoming Meetings/Events (with dates): MAO State Meeting – January 8, 2027. Speakers will be Dr. Chris Teeters (Efficiency in Alignment: Boosting Smile and Productivity), Dr. Farah Kar (Be a Unicorn), and Dr. Roxanna Esguerra (Choose Your Adventure: The \$5k Prevention...or the \$65K Reconstruction?)

Other: N/A

Do You Need the MSO Board of Directors to act on any Component-related business at this time? Yes/No (if yes, state below and it will be addressed at the next Board meeting): Yes, we would like input if other states have tried to make changes to their assisting duties similar to what Minnesota is exploring now.