ClinicOps

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Fractional Dental Office Manager Scope Worksheet

Split the office manager job into what needs someone on site and what does not, then price full-time, part-time and fractional help with your own numbers.

Most dentists who look for a fractional office manager are really asking one question: which half of the job is missing? This worksheet splits the job into what needs someone on site and what can be done part time or remotely, then prices each way of filling it. Use it before you talk to any provider, us included.

$78,050
median pay, medical and health services managers in offices of dentists
BLS OEWS, May 2025

58.0%
of dentists recruiting administrative staff called it very or extremely challenging
ADA HPI, Q1 2026

38%
of dentists said they were not busy enough, up from 26% the quarter before
ADA HPI, Q3 2026

How to use it: tick the fit check below (5 minutes). Fill the duty inventory on page 2 with this week's real hours (20 minutes). Run the cost lines on page 3 with your own pay rates (15 minutes). Take page 4 to any provider call.

Fit check: tick what is true

- [ ] **Someone on site can run the day: phones, check-in, the schedule, the cash count.**
  Fractional help never covers the front desk. Without this person, hire on site first.
- [ ] **The dentist is pulled into office problems several times a week, or does manager work after hours.**
  That is the time a fractional manager gives back.
- [ ] **Most of the gap is systems: schedule templates, recare routine, hiring, SOPs, controls, numbers.**
  Systems can be built and run part time. Presence cannot.
- [ ] **You can hold a 30-minute huddle with the manager at the same time every week.**
  Without a fixed decision slot, nothing gets decided.
- [ ] **Your phones, schedule, task tool and shared drive are on accounts the practice owns.**
  Everything built must stay with the practice, whoever runs it.
- [ ] **The practice has one location.**
  Several locations usually need a full-time manager on site, with systems under them.

Five or six ticks: fractional fits. Three or four: fix the unticked items first, usually with one-time builds and a raise for your lead. Two or fewer: hire on site first.

The duty inventory: where the hours go

Fill in this week's real hours for each duty and who does it now (the dentist counts). The middle column is our guidance on what can move off site.

Duty	Rhythm	Can it move off site?	Hours a week now	Who does it now
Phones and new-patient calls	Daily	On site. Off site: scripts, answer window, missed-call review		
Check-in, check-out, payment at the visit	Daily	On site		
Cash count, deposit, reconciliation	Daily	On site, two people. Off site: the review		
Schedule templates and daily gaps	Daily, weekly	Off site: design. On site: fill gaps		
Recare and hygiene reappointment lists	Weekly	Off site: run the lists and report		
Morning huddle	Daily	On site lead runs it; manager joins weekly		
Staff schedules, time off, payroll inputs	Weekly	Off site: prepare. Dentist approves		
Hiring: posting, screening, offers, onboarding plan	As needed	Off site: run it. Dentist interviews		
SOPs, training and cross-training	Monthly	Off site: write. On site: train		
OSHA and infection control calendar, training records	Monthly, yearly	Off site: track. On site: training		
Supplies, vendors, equipment service	Weekly	Mixed: orders off site, receiving on site		
Patient complaints	As needed	On site first; manager finds the cause		
Monthly numbers report	Monthly	Off site		
Owner meeting and decisions	Weekly	Either		

Totals	On-site hours a week	Hours that can move off site	Hours the dentist does now
This week			

What your totals say

If	Then
On-site hours are under 10 and a lead can absorb them	A lead plus fractional help or one-time builds. A full-time hire would spend most of the week on work that could be written down.
On-site hours are 10 to 25	A part-time manager on site, or a raise and protected hours for your lead, with the off-site hours built into written routines.
On-site hours are over 25, or there is more than one location	A full-time manager on site. Use page 3 to price it honestly.
The dentist's hours are more than 3 a week	Whatever you choose, move those first. Dentists averaged 5.1 hours a week in the office not treating patients in 2025 (ADA HPI).

What each option costs a year

Worked example, not a client: BLS medians for offices of dentists (May 2025), loaded with the BLS finding that wages were 70.0% of private employers' compensation cost (June 2026). Your column uses your own pay rates and quotes.

Line	How to work it out	Worked example	Your practice
A. Full-time manager pay	Your posted pay, or the BLS median	$78,050 (median); $66,560 to $105,930 middle half	
B. Full-time, with benefit costs	A / 0.70	$111,500	
C. Part-time manager on site	Hours a week x 52 x hourly pay ($37.53 BLS median)	20 hours: $39,031 wages	
D. Raise for your on-site lead	Raise an hour x 2,080 / 0.70	$3 an hour: $8,914	
E. Fractional or outside help	Monthly quote x 12, plus any one-time build fees	Your quotes	
F. Cost of the empty seat	Weeks open x dentist hours a week covering x value of a dentist hour	12 weeks x 6 hours x your number	
G. Option 1: full-time	B (plus F while you recruit)	$111,500 plus F	
H. Option 2: lead plus outside help	D + E	$8,914 plus your quotes	
I. Option 3: part-time plus lead	C + D	$47,945	

Read the result honestly

The cheapest line is not always the right one. A full-time manager is the only option with a manager on site all day. Options 2 and 3 work only if the off-site hours on page 2 are written down as routines someone else can run.

The scope any fractional manager should meet

When	Deliverable	Standard to ask for
Weekly	30-minute huddle with the dentist and the lead: numbers, the biggest issue, decisions	Same slot every week; written notes the same day
Weekly	Schedule and recare review: gaps, cancellations, reappointment	Before the huddle
Ongoing	Requests from the team through one channel	A stated response time on business days
Monthly	Numbers report: no-shows, cancellations, reappointment, new patients, collections at the visit	In writing, with one recommendation
Monthly	Compliance calendar check: training, plan reviews, license renewals	The next 90 days of dates, each with an owner
Quarterly	Build or rewrite one or two systems (an SOP set, onboarding, the cash close)	Written SOPs and a trained backup

Who does what

Work	Fractional manager	On-site lead	Dentist owner
Phones, check-in, check-out	Designs scripts and windows; reviews numbers	Does it every day	Sees the numbers weekly
Schedule and recare	Builds templates and routines	Runs them daily	Approves template changes
Hiring	Writes the role and onboarding plan	Trains the new hire	Interviews and decides
Cash and payments	Designs controls; reviews the reconciliation	Counts, deposits, reconciles with a second person	Reviews and signs
OSHA and infection control	Keeps the calendar and records	Completes training; runs sterilization	Signs the plan
Clinical decisions	None	Follows protocols	Decides

The first 30 days

Days	What happens	Done when
1 to 10	Access set up by named account, under a business associate agreement where HIPAA applies; the duty inventory on page 2 checked against a real week.	The dentist has a one-page map of who does what
11 to 20	The weekly huddle starts; the numbers report goes live; the three biggest gaps are priced in hours or dollars.	The first decision is made from a number
21 to 30	The first fix is installed with an SOP and an owner; the compliance calendar is complete.	The lead runs the fix without the manager

Questions to ask any provider before you sign

- [ ] **Who exactly does the work, and for how many hours or deliverables a month?**
- [ ] **What is the response time for a request, and through which channel?**
- [ ] **Will you see patient information? Will you sign a business associate agreement first? (45 CFR 160.103)**
- [ ] **Who owns the SOPs, trackers and templates you build? (It should be the practice.)**
- [ ] **What are the term, the notice period and the written handover when it ends?**

The yearly cost of each option, with published prices, is in the fractional dental office manager guide on clinicops.us.

When it goes wrong

If this happens	Do this
The on-site lead resigns too	The SOPs and backup list are the next hire's training plan. The manager posts the role the same week; the dentist interviews.
A patient complaint blows up at the desk	The on-site lead handles it first, using the escalation steps. The manager finds the cause within the week.
The cash count does not match	Two people recount and reconcile. The manager reviews the pattern. The person who collects never reconciles alone.
OSHA asks in writing for injury and illness records	Dental offices are partially exempt from routine injury logs unless asked in writing by OSHA or BLS (29 CFR 1904, Appendix A to Subpart B). Once asked, keep them.
You decide to hire full time after all	The fractional manager writes the role, hands over every system and stays through the new hire's first month.

Sources

Checked against the original source in November 2026. Rules and figures change: confirm anything time-sensitive on the source page.

1. BLS OEWS, offices of dentists (NAICS 621200): managers median $78,050, $37.53 an hour; supervisors $63,910 (May 2025 data). bls.gov/oes/2025/may/naics4_621200.htm

2. BLS, Employer Costs for Employee Compensation: wages 70.0% of private industry compensation cost (June 2026). bls.gov/news.release/ecec.nr0.htm

3. ADA HPI, State of the US Dental Economy, Q1 2026 (administrative staff) and Q3 2026 (busyness) (2026). ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/

4. ADA HPI, The US Dentist Workforce: 5.1 hours a week in the office not treating patients (2025) (Nov 2026). ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/

5. 29 CFR 1910.1030, 29 CFR 1904 Appendix A to Subpart B, 45 CFR 160.103 (eCFR, Nov 2026). ecfr.gov/current/title-29/section-1910.1030

Where this worksheet stops

It shows which half of the job is missing. Having that half run for you is the next step:

- **It cannot run the huddle or answer the team's questions.**
- **It cannot see which gap costs you the most until someone prices it with your numbers.**
- **It cannot keep the routines from sliding the month nobody is watching.**

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