

NOTICE REGARDING THE USE OF LEAD APRONS

March 25, 2024

The Board of Dentistry ("Board") is aware of the February 1, 2024 announcement* by the American Dental Association ("ADA") that the use of thyroid collars during radiographic exams is no longer recommended by ADA.

However, the Board reminds all Hawaii licensees that the ADA guidance does **not** change the existing requirements of Hawaii Revised Statutes ("HRS") §448-1.5 and Hawaii Administrative Rules (HAR) §16-79-7 **requiring** the use of lead aprons during x-rays/radiographic procedures.

HRS §448-1.5 Lead apron during x-ray; required. (a) A dentist shall cover a patient's torso from the neck to the pelvis including the genital area with a lead apron while conducting an x-ray procedure on the patient.
(b) The board of dentistry, by rule adopted pursuant to chapter 91, shall establish minimum specifications for the lead apron; provided that the lead apron shall protect the patient's body from unnecessary exposure to x-rays yet not unduly discomfort the patient.
(c) Any violation of this section shall be considered an improper conduct in the practice of dentistry for the purpose of section 448-17.

HAR §16-79-7 Approved apron. An apron, preferably with cervical collar, with .25 mm lead equivalent shall be the minimum shielding for dental radiographic procedures.

As noted in the ADA announcement: "There may be state laws or regulations mandating continued use of certain equipment. Dentists should abide by the laws and regulations where they practice."

*ADA Announcement: <https://adanews.ada.org/ada-news/2024/february/using-thyroid-collars-during-radiographic-exams-no-longer-recommended-by-ada/>