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ADSO Applauds Colorado Dental Board's Decision to Stay Rule 1.7

New Regulations Threaten Patient Access, Place Undue Compliance Burdens on Dentists. Pause Follows ADSO's Legal Challenge of Rule in Colorado Court of Appeals.

DENVER, Colo. (August 25, 2026) — The Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO) applauded the Colorado Dental Board's vote last night to temporarily block enforcement of Rule 1.7, which imposes sweeping new restrictions on how dentists and dental support organizations (DSOs) can work together. DSOs provide business support such as billing, compliance and facilities management to dental practices, allowing supported dentists to dedicate more time to patient care. The rule creates significant compliance uncertainty for supported practices and dentists, threatening patient access to care in a state where 1.2 million residents already live in dental health professional shortage areas.

The stay comes after the ADSO filed a legal challenge last month, arguing the Board overstepped its authority in the rulemaking and asking the Colorado Court of Appeals to set aside the changes. The rule was adopted earlier this year under the Board's rulemaking authority following the 2025 Dental Practice Act Sunset Bill (SB25-194), legislation that does not mention DSOs anywhere in its text. While it doesn't prohibit DSOs outright, Rule 1.7 bars DSOs from leasing office space or equipment to the practices they support, requires disclosure of financial and business records with no limit on scope, notice, or frequency, and exposes dentists and hygienists to potential Board discipline simply for practicing in a DSO-supported setting.

"We applaud the Dental Board's decision to stay Rule 1.7. This much-needed pause will allow the courts to consider the rule's validity and give the Board time to work with Colorado dentists and patients to ensure any final rule protects access to care without imposing undue compliance burdens on the practices working to provide it," **said ADSO CEO Andrew Smith**. "We believe this is a reasonable, practical step that serves both the Board's regulatory objectives and continuity of care for Colorado patients."

Most DSO-supported practices operate under existing commercial leases and equipment financing agreements that predate this rulemaking. Unwinding or restructuring those arrangements on short notice, particularly multi-year leases and equipment agreements tied to specific locations, risks irreparable financial and legal exposure for the practices and dentists involved.

Importantly, the Board did not appear to establish a record of patient harm that would justify these restrictions. Instead, the rule risks reducing the very access to care they claim to protect — particularly for Medicaid patients, since DSO-supported practices accept Medicaid at higher rates than solo practices (53% vs. 40%), including in pediatric dentistry, where provider shortages are especially severe.

DSO-supported offices have been closing gaps in access across Colorado, expanding into areas with limited dental providers and communities where independent practices often struggle to survive. They're also more likely to be located in lower-income counties and to offer the latest dental technology, improving quality of care and treatment outcomes.

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About the ADSO

The Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO) is a non-profit international trade association whose members support more than 15,000 dentists. ADSO supports its members through research, education and advocacy; enabling them to foster innovation, collaboration and a vibrant market where DSO-supported dentists can provide quality oral health care.
Visit www.theadso.org to learn more, and follow ADSO on LinkedIn, Instagram and Twitter.

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