



Considerations on Becoming a Dental Associate

So, you are thinking about joining a practice and signing a contract? That's great! But, before you sign on the dotted line (ok, it's not actually dotted anymore), you should carefully review the contract and consider getting legal help. The cost for review of the contract can be as low as a few hundred dollars and may save you from considerable heartache.

Here are a few of the major items to consider:



Schedule: What kind of work schedule will you keep? Will you be working for multiple practices at one time? If so, are there restrictive covenants (i.e., a non-compete) that would prevent you from working at the other practice?



Compensation: What's your compensation? Do you have a base salary? If so, how long? Are you paid on production or receipts? If you have receipts-based compensation, do you get any trailing accounts receivable? In the Pacific Northwest, a typical compensation package for a general dentist would include a daily rate of \$600/day with pay on a production basis around 27-30%.



Buy-In: Are you expecting to buy or buy into the practice? What are the terms? Are there any guarantees (i.e., an option to purchase or right of first refusal)?



Benefits: What benefits are you being offered? Group health? Continuing education credit? License fees? Malpractice coverage?



Noncompete: Do you have a non-compete or non-solicitation? How long is it? Has the practice followed all legal formalities? Do you want to continue practicing in the area? If so, be very careful!



Termination: How much notice must you or the practice give before termination? Who will pay for tail coverage? Are you going to receive any compensation or paid leave at or after termination?



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These are just some of the issues that you will want to make sure you look at and get finalized before you sign any agreement. Of course, if you need help on your agreement, we encourage you to contact the Saalfeld Griggs Dental Team.

