



# 2025 DENTIST

Salary Survey Report

HIRING

WAGES

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# Dentist Report

## SUMMARY & HIGHLIGHTS

Between October and November 2024, DentalPost conducted its annual *Dental Industry Salary Report*, drawing participation from 472 dentists. Three-quarters of responding dentists are owners and partners; the remaining quarter are associates.

### Key Highlights & Takeaways

- In 2024, the average full-time income of general dentists who are practice owners or partners is **\$320,316**, compared to **\$300,273** in 2023. The average full-time income of general dentists who are employed associates is **\$225,929**, compared to **\$217,867** in the previous reporting period.
- The average incomes of dentists-owners and associate dentists increased in 2024. Compared with DentalPost's 2023 metrics, the income of dentist-owners rose by **9.92%** and the income of associates rose by **8.54%**.
- Compensation sentiment continues to flag**, with 57.3% dentist-owners and 44.9% of associate dentists reporting they were satisfied or very satisfied with their total package (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits) in 2024, compared to 58% of owners and 45.6% associates in 2023.
- In the previous 12 months, **28.8% of responding associates changed jobs**, a nearly identical proportion to those in this position the previous reporting period (28.2%). The top motivations for such moves in 2024 were a better work environment, higher pay, and better hours.

## Key Highlights & Takeaways (Continued)

- Nearly half (46.6%) of responding associates are **considering or actively seeking a job move within the year**, driven primarily by the search for higher income, a better work environment, better benefits, and more career opportunities.
- Like last year, roughly one-third (34.2%) of responding **dentist-owners plan to retire within six years**.

**"Work-life balance is difficult to achieve, and I am currently filling two roles in the academic setting. This is leading to stress and burnout."**

**"I am at the point in my career when I am practicing because I still love dentistry. I enjoy the interactions I have with most of my patients. I enjoy the clinical aspect of providing dentistry and I enjoy learning new procedures while I perfect and modify the treatment I have always provided."**

## General Dentists Who Are Practice Owners/Partners

204 full-time general dentists who are practice owners or partners reported total primary income from their dental practice ranging from \$100,000 to \$1,800,000.

- ◆ 91.2% of respondents are owners or partners in private practice, and 3.4% are owners or partners in a corporate DSO; the rest are split across university or hospital, military, public health, and multiple or other settings.
- ◆ The mean annual income of full-time general-dentistry owners and partners was \$320,615.00, up 6.77% from \$300,273 in 2023.
- ◆ In 2024, 31.96% of the respondents were practicing in the southern region of the U.S., 25.09% in the midwestern region, 25.77% in the western region, and 17.81% in the northeastern region.

## Associate General Dentists

71 associate general dentists reported their hourly wage and total primary income from dental practice. 57.7% were employed by a private practice, 16.9% by a corporate DSO, and 19.7% in public health; the rest spanned military, university or hospital, and multiple or other settings.

### Mean & Median Hourly Wage

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Associate general dentists reported an hourly wage ranging from \$40 to \$336.

- ◆ The mean hourly wage of associate general dentists was \$113.18.
- ◆ The median hourly wage was \$100.00.

### Mean & Median Full-Time Income

Associate general dentists working full-time reported income ranging from \$100,000.00 to \$1,500,000.00.

- ◆ The mean income of the associate general dentists was \$225,929.58 in 2024, a 3.7% increase from \$217,867.00 in 2023.
- ◆ In 2024, 30.43% of the respondents were practicing in the southern region of the U.S., 31.51% in the western region, 11.96% in the northeastern region, and 26.09% in the midwestern region.

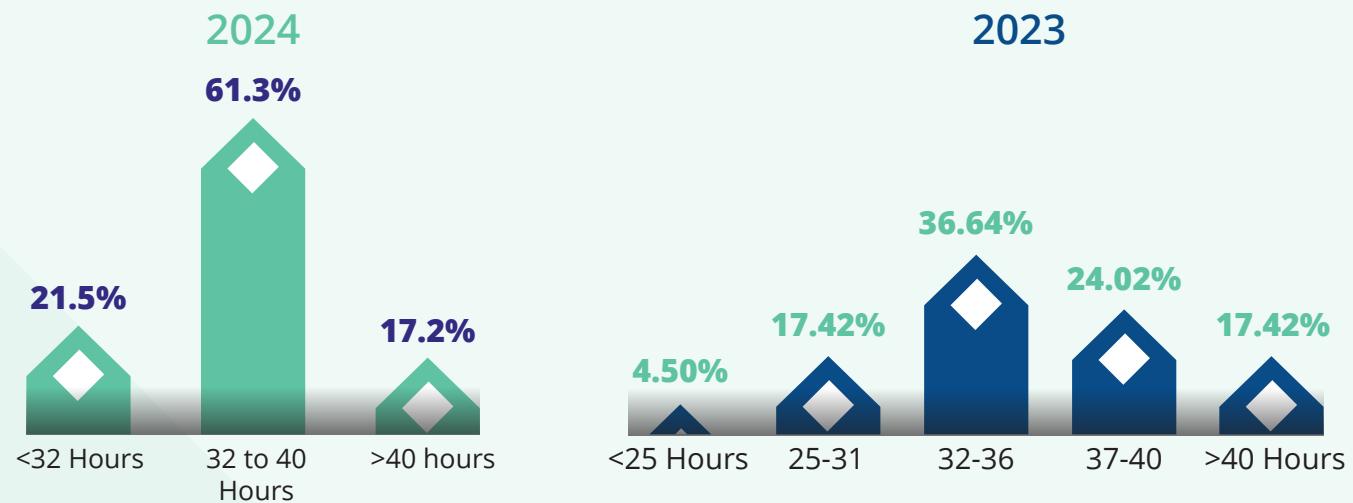
## Specialists (Owners & Associates Combined)

10 specialists reported total primary income from dental practice in 2024 ranging from **\$110,000** to **\$700,000**.

## Average Workweek Hours

### Dentist-Owners

**78.5%** of responding dentist-owners were working full-time (32 or more hours per week on average), and 17.2% reported they were working more than 40 hours per week in 2024 — rates very similar to 2023's results.

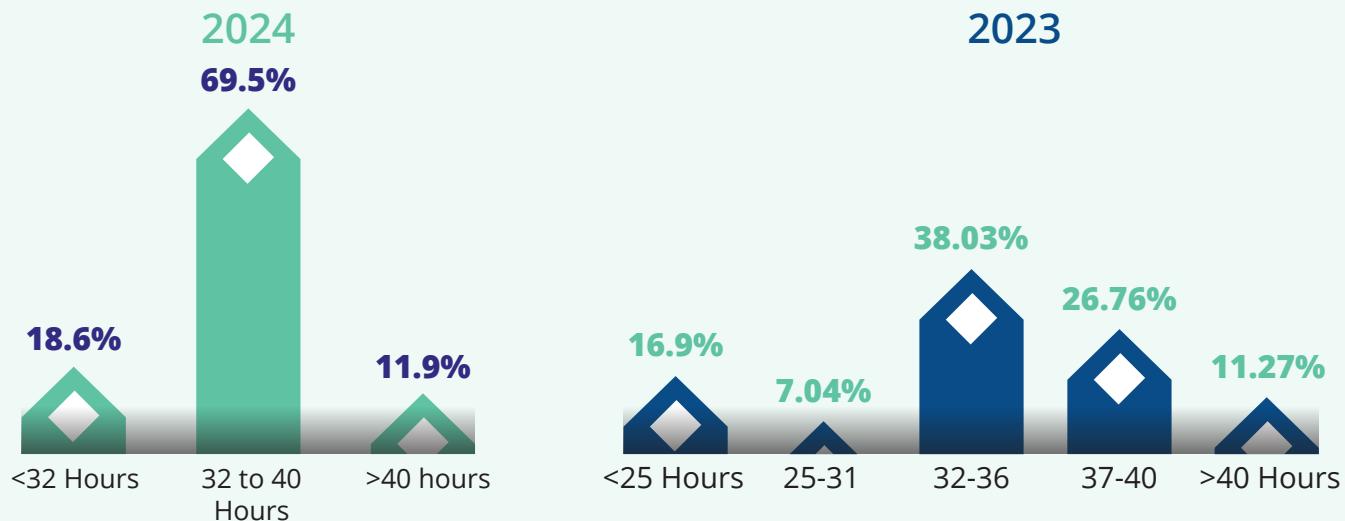


**70.3%** work fewer than five days in the average week; four-day schedules are especially popular, with more than half (55.6%) of owners opting for them.



## Associate General Dentists

**81.40%** of responding associate general dentists were working full-time (32 or more hours per week on average), and **11.9%** were working more than 40 hours per week in 2024. In 2023, 76.0% were working full-time, and 11.3% were working more than 40 hours per week on average.



**Nearly two-thirds (62.7%)** of associate general dentists work fewer than five days in the average week; nearly half (45.8%) of responding associates have four-day schedules.



Dentists of all stripes consider 4-day workweeks a big win

**“Helping others is #1, but I actually enjoy practicing dentistry and having a diverse workload day to day. I like talking to patients and coworkers day to day. I do also love having 3 day weekends.”**

# Benefits

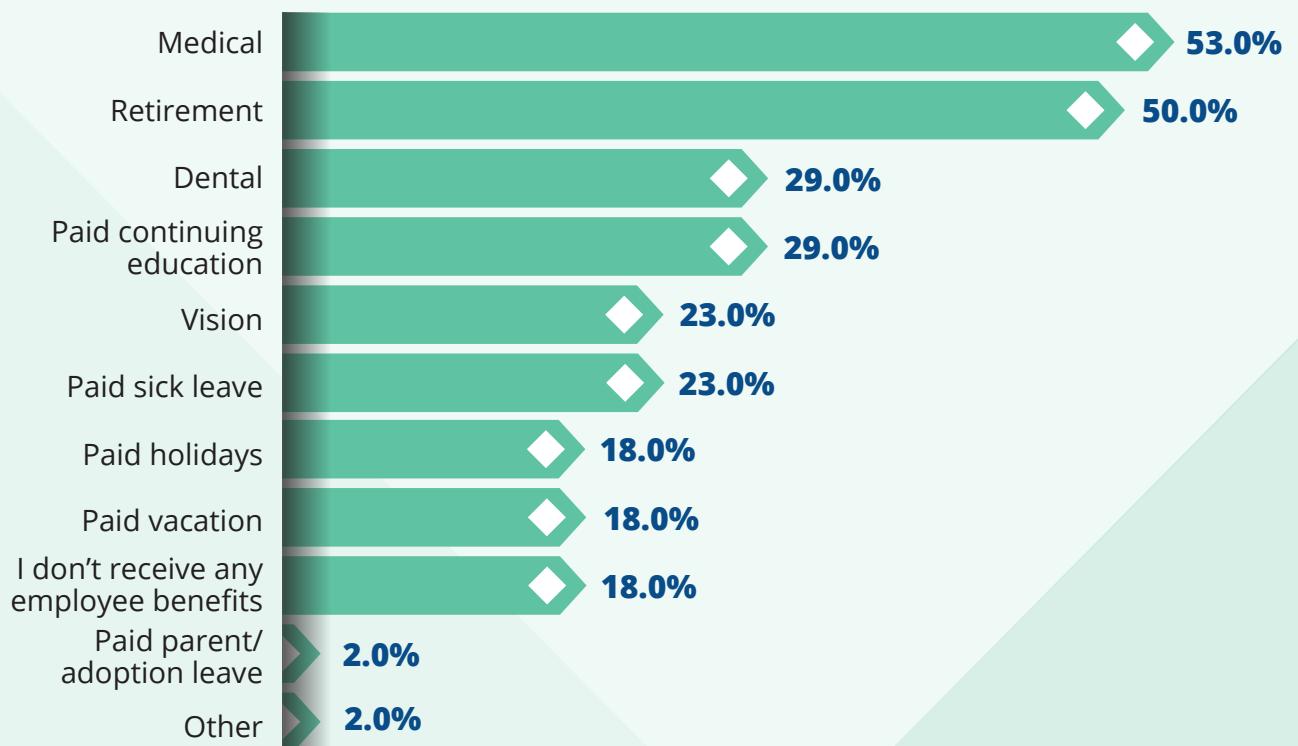
## Associate Dentists in Private Practices

78% of responding associates in private practices received benefits in 2024, compared to 60.6% in 2023.

Among the responding associates working full-time in private practices, the most common benefits received in 2024 were Medical, Retirement, Dental, Paid Continuing Education, and Vision. (In 2023, they were medical/health, retirement/401k, dental, paid continuing education, and vision.)

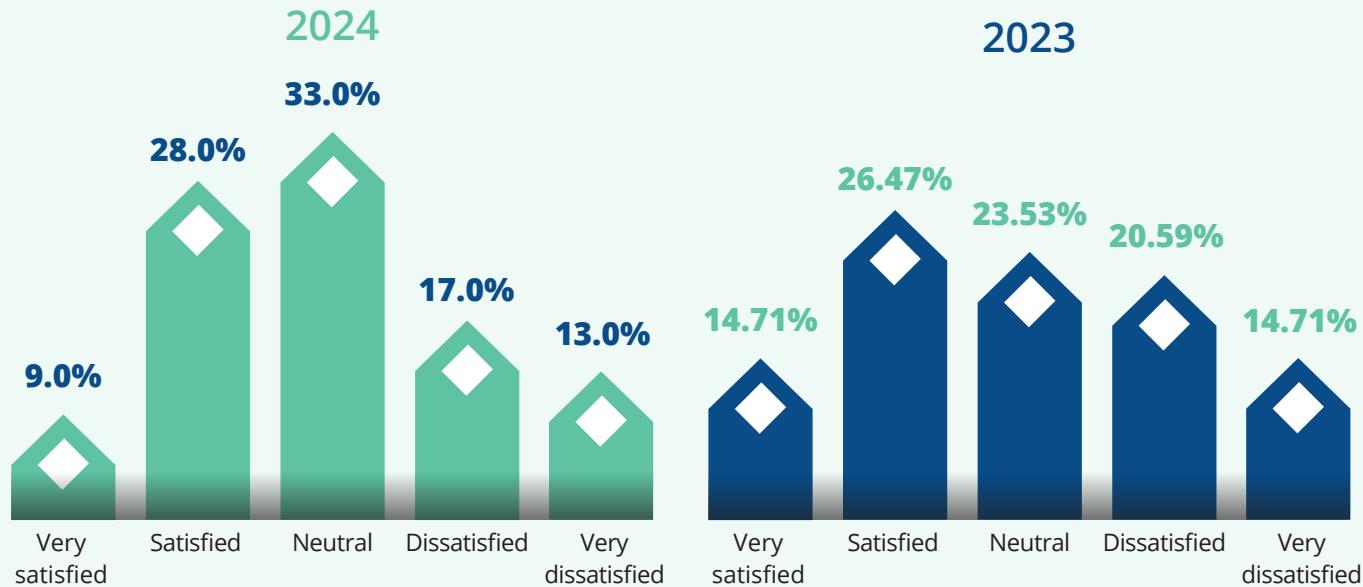
- ◆ 18% received paid vacations or holidays.
- ◆ 18% did not receive any benefits, compared to 39.4% in 2023.
- ◆ The benefit they wanted most if they did not have it was Medical.

## The Benefits They Received



## Satisfaction with Benefits

37% of associate dentists in private practices were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits.



**"I am at the point in my career when I am practicing because I still love dentistry. I enjoy the interactions I have with most of my patients. I enjoy the clinical aspect of providing dentistry and I enjoy learning new procedures while I perfect and modify the treatment I have always provided."**

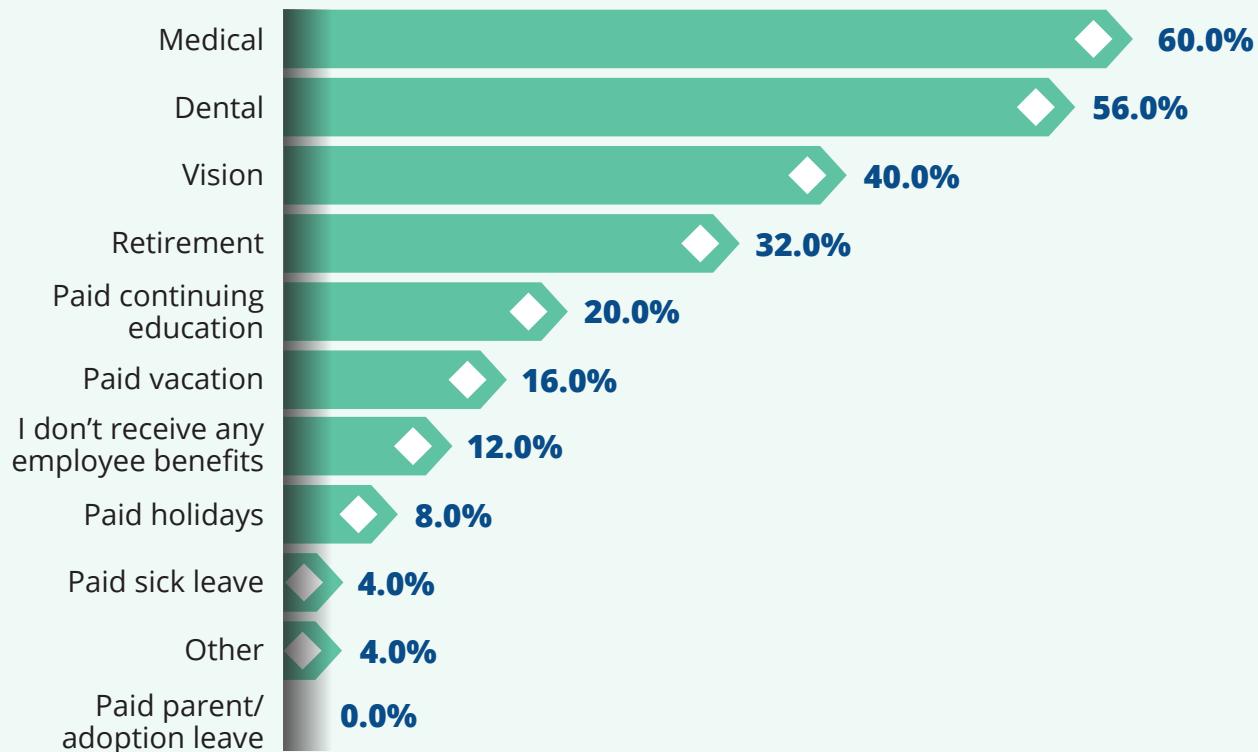
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## Associate Dentists in DSO Practices

### The Benefits They Received

In 2024, responding associates who work in DSO practices were likeliest to receive Medical (60%), Dental, Vision, Retirement, and Paid Continuing Education. (In 2023, 76% of responding associates, who work in DSO practices, received medical benefits, and over 60% received retirement, dental, and vision benefits. Over 50% received paid continuing education.)

- ◆ 12% didn't receive any benefits, compared to 9.5% in 2023 and 16.4% in 2022.
- ◆ The benefit they wanted most if they did not have it was Paid Vacation.



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## Satisfaction with Benefits

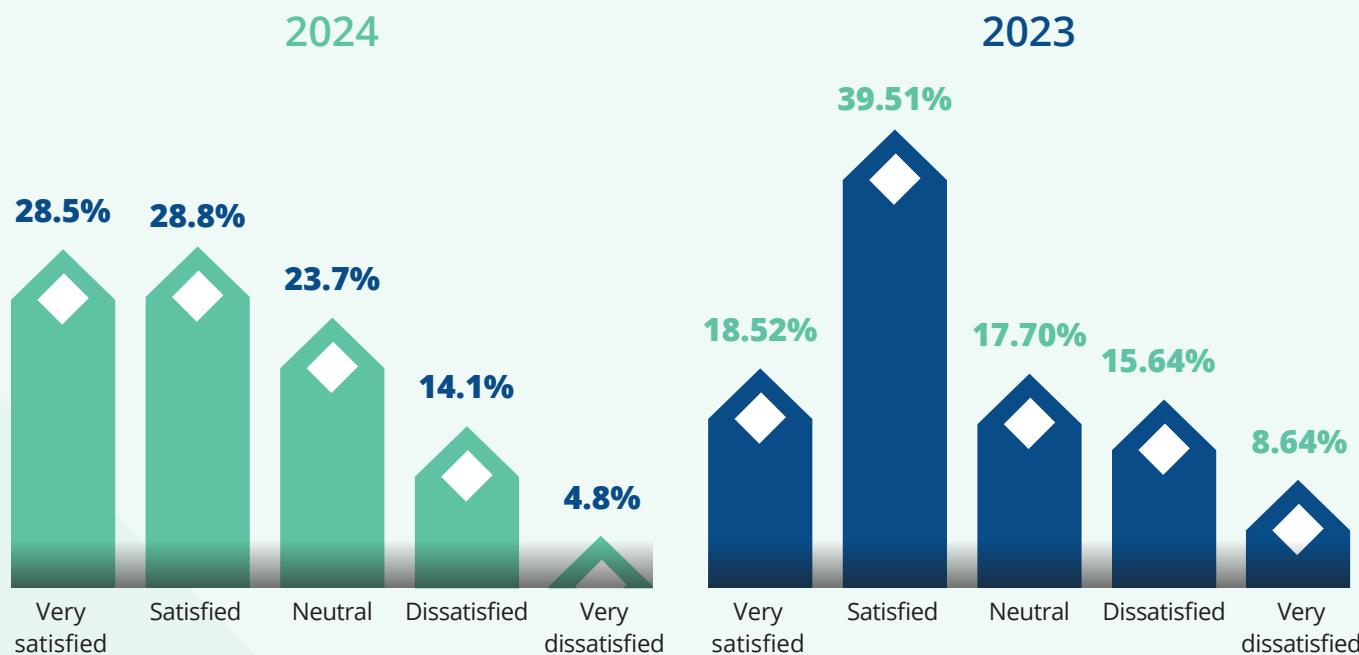
37% of associate dentists who work full-time in DSO practices were satisfied or very satisfied with their benefits in 2024.



# Satisfaction with Total Compensation

## Dentist-Owners

Satisfaction with overall compensation appears to be leveling out after a nosedive between 2022 and 2023: **57.3%** of the responding dentist-owners were satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits) in 2024 — a rate just shy of 2023's 58.0% and far below 2022's 80.0%.

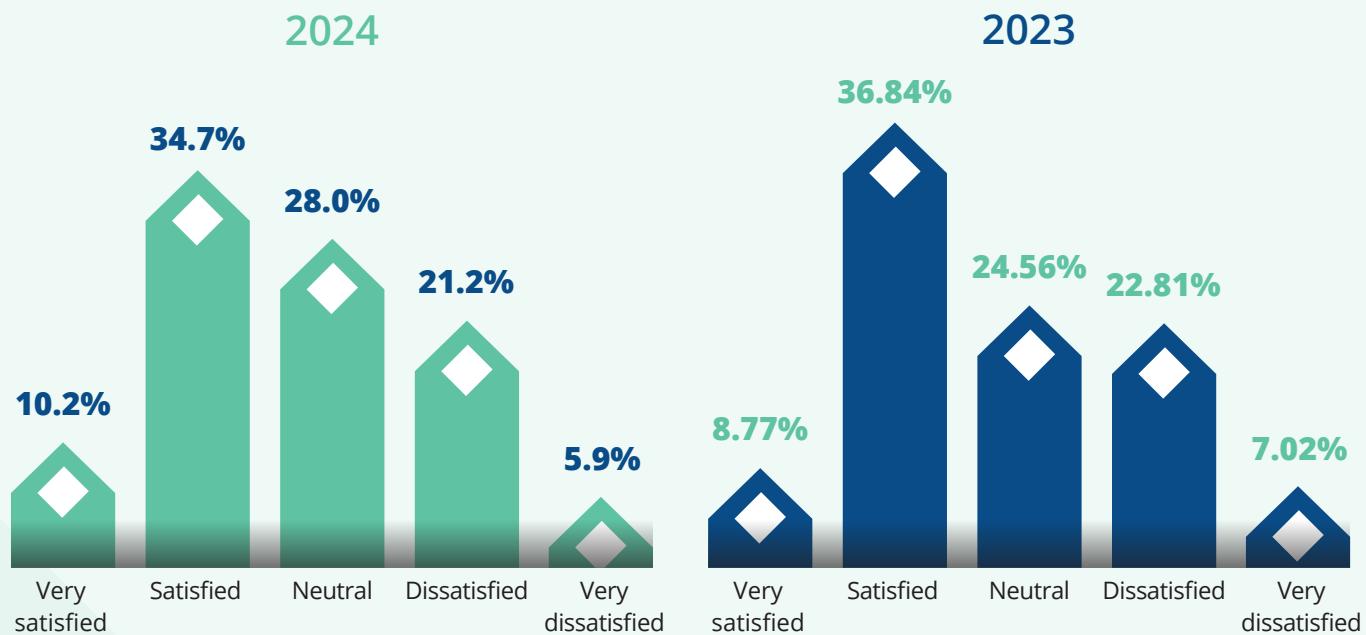


## THE HIGHER COST OF DOING BUSINESS CAN BE A BIG DRIVER OF DISTRESS FOR DENTIST-OWNERS

**“I’m a practice owner. With added costs, inflation, lack of a stable workforce, lack of qualified individuals, consistent turnover, I’m burned out. It makes enjoying my job nearly impossible.”**

## Associate Dentists

Satisfaction has been steadier, albeit on a marginal decline, for associate dentists over the past few years: **44.9%** of the responding associates were satisfied or very satisfied with their total compensation (including primary wages/salary, bonuses, commissions, and benefits), compared to 45.6% in 2023 and 53.1% in 2022.



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## Associate Dentists: Job Turnover

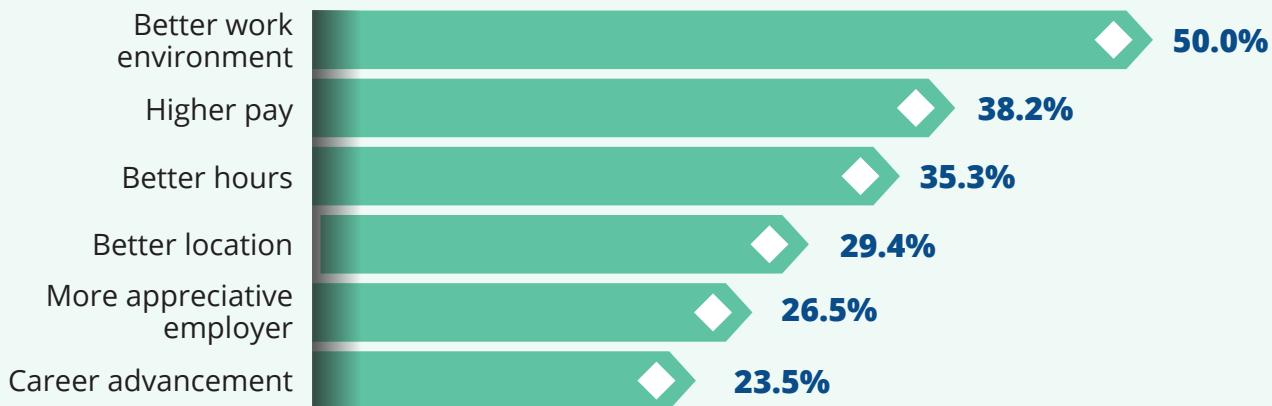
### Changed Employers in the Previous 12 Months

Like last year, more than a quarter (**28.8%**) of associates changed employers within the previous 12 months.



## Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2024

Those who changed employment were motivated to make the change primarily for a better work environment, higher pay, and better hours.



More than three-quarters (76.5%) of those who made the leap achieved their goals in doing so.

## Plan to Apply to New Jobs Before 2025

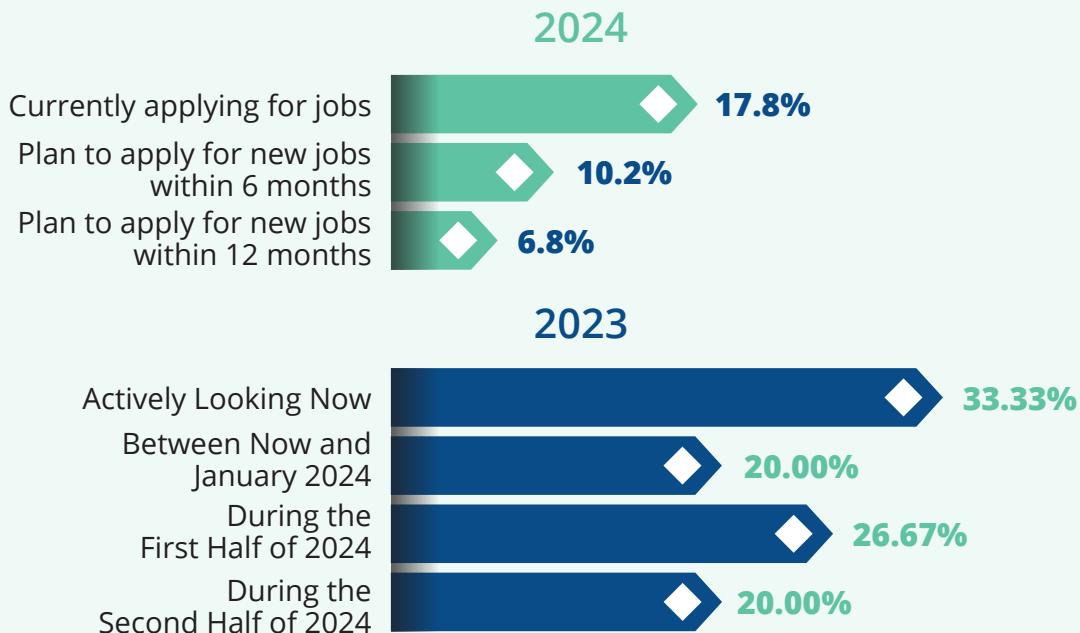
Nearly half (46.6%) of responding associates are considering or actively seeking a job move within the year. Nearly as large a proportion (42.3%) have no plans to pursue new employment, almost identical to last year's 42.9% staying the course.

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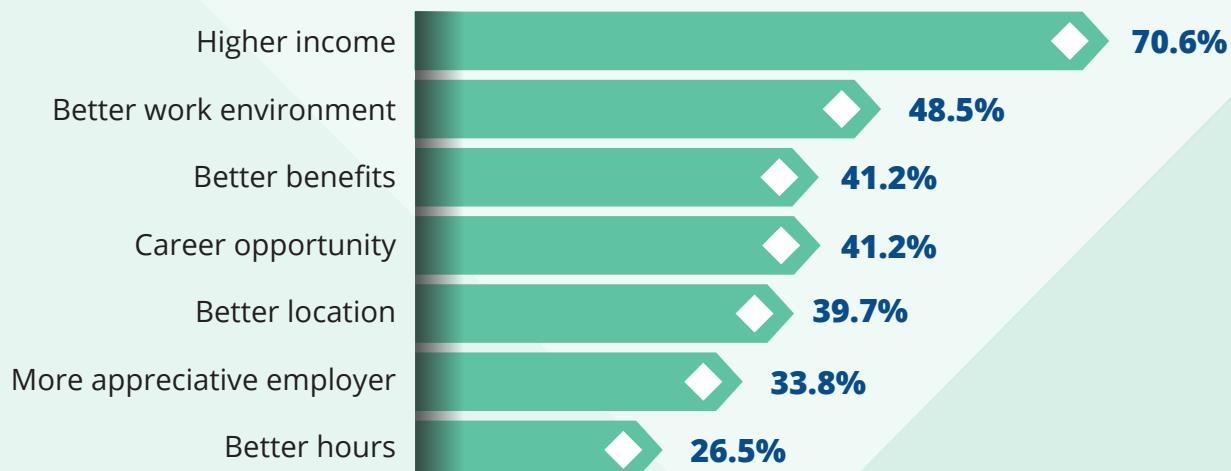
## When They Plan to Apply to New Jobs

**17.8%** of respondents who are planning to apply elsewhere were actively looking for new opportunities at the time of the survey.



## Motivations for Changing Jobs in 2025

Among those mulling or actively seeking a job change, top motivations are higher income, a better work environment, better benefits, and more career opportunities.

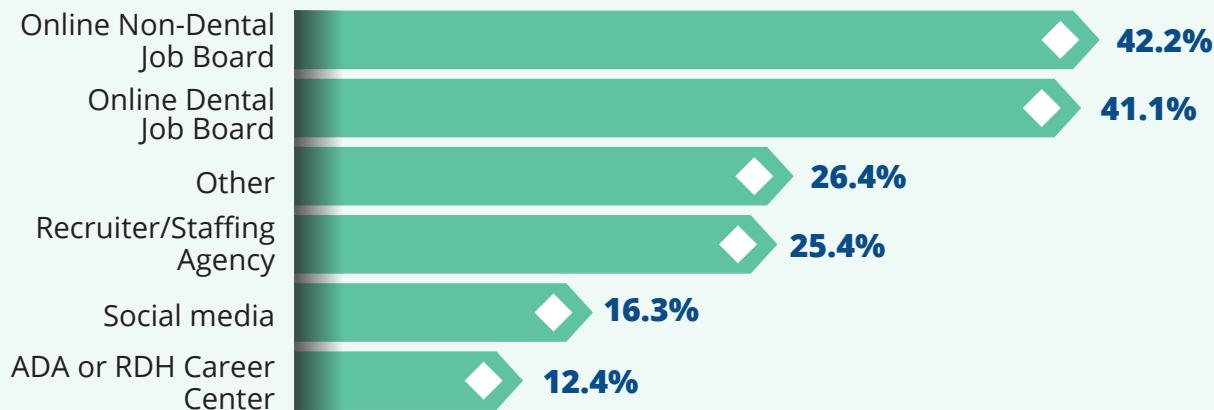


## POOR MANAGEMENT AND LIMITED CAREER MOBILITY AND CAN BE BIG STRESSORS FOR ASSOCIATE DENTISTS

**“Early working times, limited room for growth in other areas of dentistry like implants and ortho, micromanagement in all aspects, lack of trust, poor management.”**

## Where They Look for Jobs

Like last year, associate dentists reported they primarily look for new job opportunities on dental-specific online job boards like DentalPost, other online job boards, and via recruiters and staffing agencies.



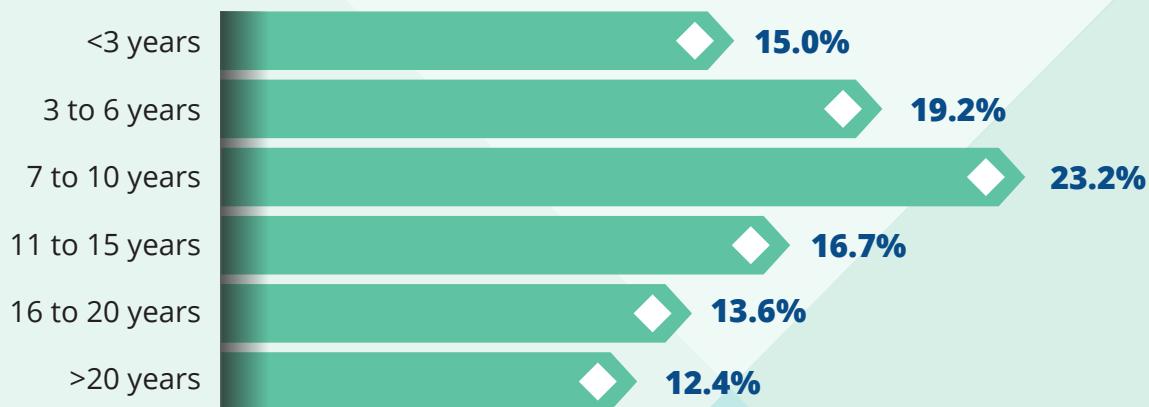
Both owners and associates mentioned through write-in responses that they also find new opportunities through colleagues, professional contacts, and friends, as well as dental communities like schools, societies, and associations.

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## Planned Years to Retirement

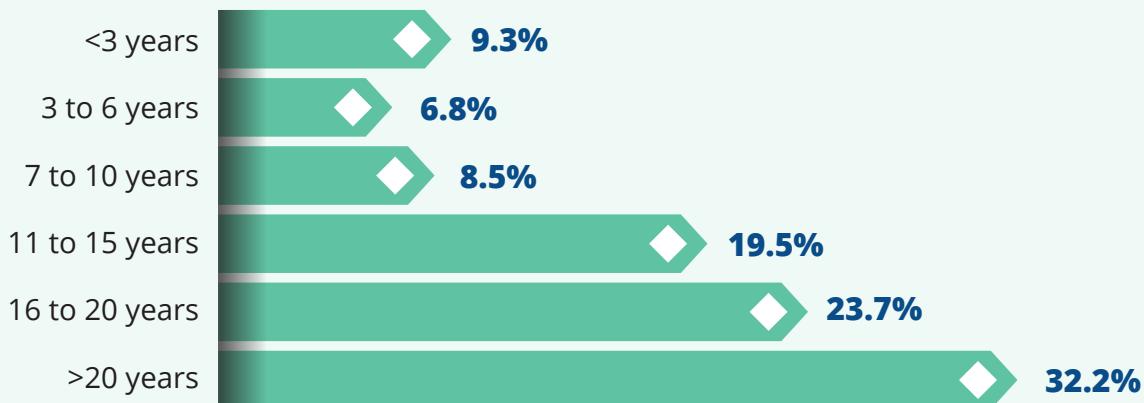
### Dentist-Owners

Like last year, roughly one-third (34.2%) of responding dentist-owners plan to retire within six years.



## Associate Dentists

Compared to their owner counterparts, associate dentists report longer career trajectories: Just **16.1%** of responding associates say they plan to retire within six years.

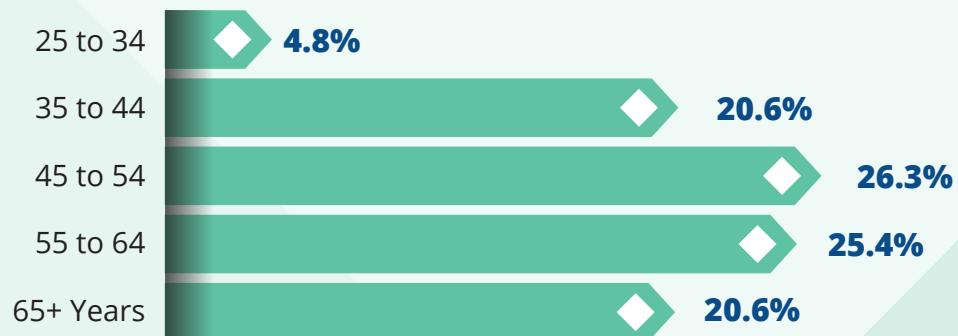


## Age & Experience

### Dentist-Owners

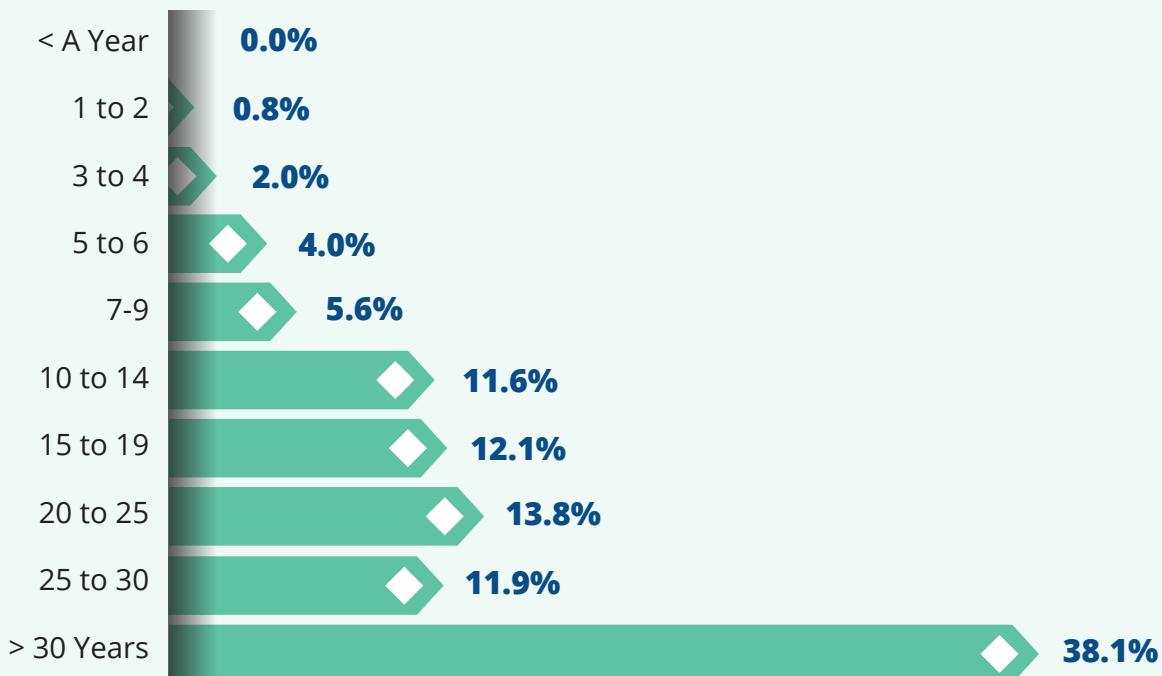
#### Age

One in two (**51.7%**) dentist-owners is between the ages of 45 and 64.



## Years of Experience

Nearly 9 in 10 dentist-owners (**86.4%**) have at least a decade of experience in the dental profession.

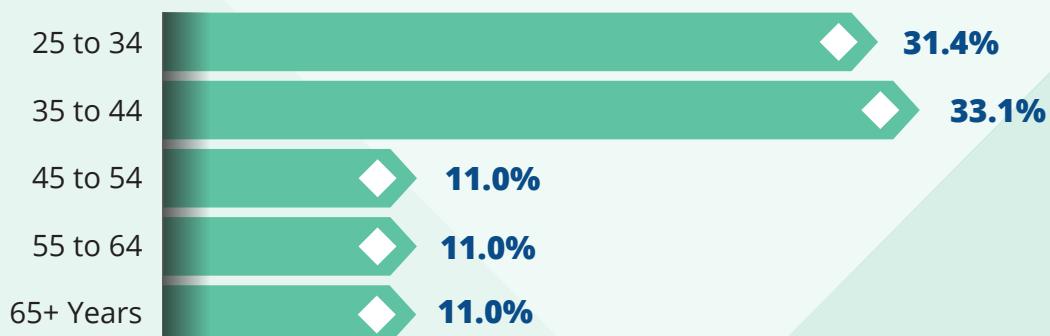


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## Associate Dentists

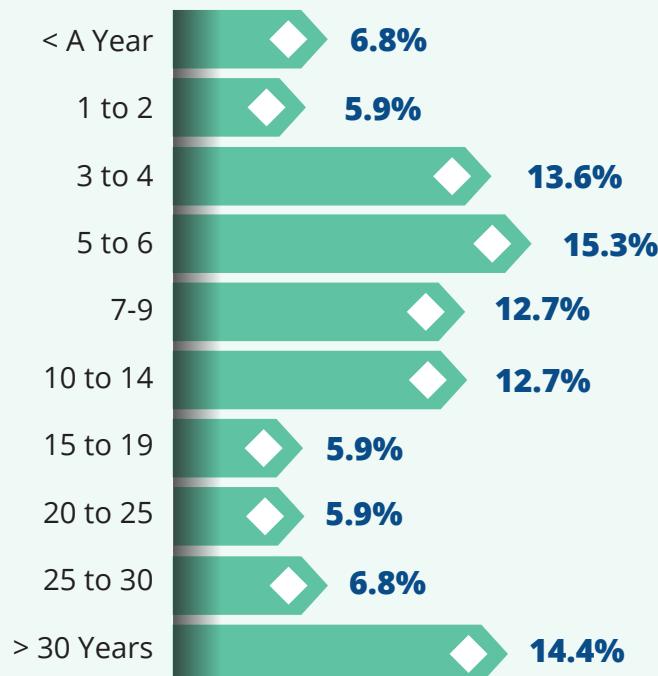
### Age

Two in three (**64.4%**) responding associates are younger than 45.



## Years of Experience

Compared to dentist-owners, associate dentists are far likelier to be newer to the profession: Less than half (45.8%) have a decade or more of experience.

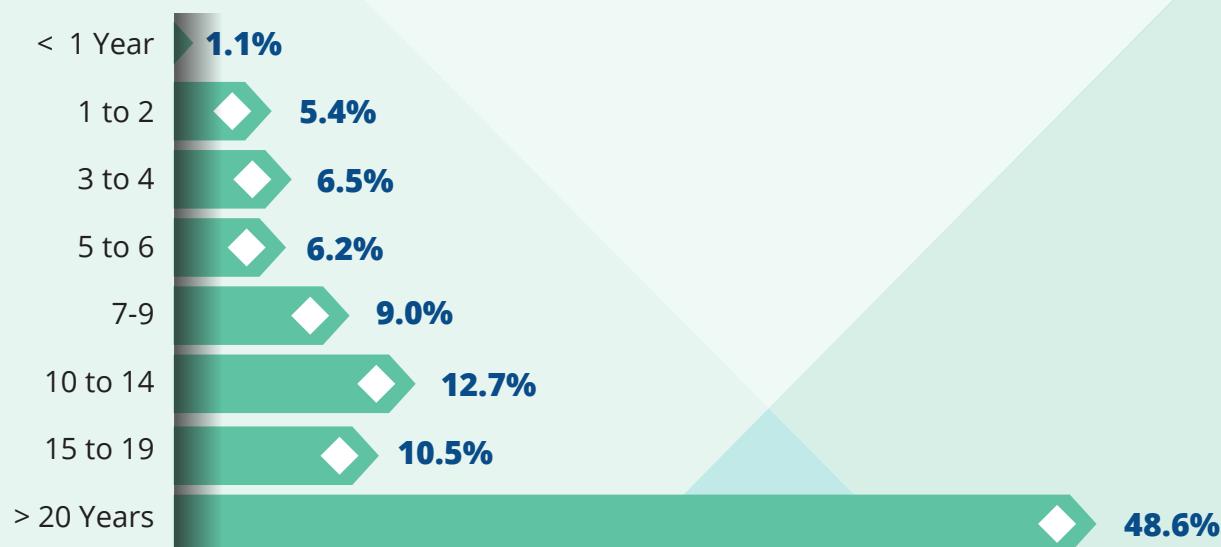


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## Longevity with Current Practice

### Dentist-Owners: Years as the Practice Owner/Partner

Like last year, nearly half (48.9%) of responding dentist-owners have led their practice for more than 20 years. Very few (13.0%) have had their practice under five years.



## Associate Dentists: Years with Current Employer

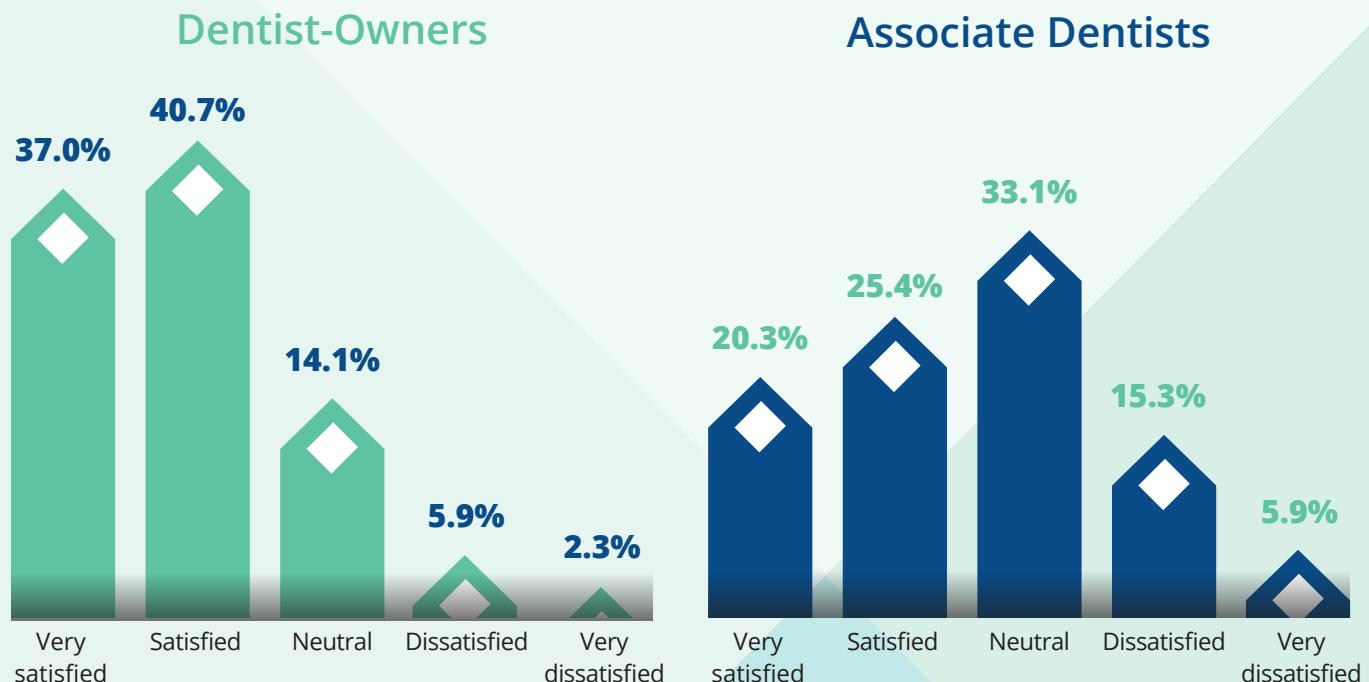
Also like last year, the lion's share (80.0%) of responding associates have been with their current employer for six or fewer years.



## Biggest Career Wins and Washes in 2024

Overall job satisfaction is (a very auspicious) 77.7% for dentist-owners and a more lukewarm 45.8% for associate dentists.

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Ahead are some top drivers of this uneven sentiment.

## Challenges

The biggest career challenges for dentists in 2024 were far and away financial, with many respondents citing struggles with insurance companies and plans (PPOs especially), as well as collections, compensation, overhead, and taxes.

The responsibilities of running a business were another leading cause for concern among dentist-owners, with stressors including regulations, bureaucracy, and paperwork; people management and patient satisfaction; and talent pipelines and turnover. For some, overwhelming schedules are leading to burnout, and the physical demands of the job have taken their toll.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

**“Corporate takeover with no consistency or patient-centered care concerns”**

**“Dealing with the stresses of the business.**

**Trying to be the best boss and business owner while also trying to be the best clinician as possible. Also trying to be the best husband and father on top of that.”**

**“I dislike the shortage of dental workers in our area.**

**It is a constant stress for me and my practice. We are unable to take new patients and that's stressful and awkward in the community as well. We need more hygienists.”**

**“HR, employment issues, rising costs on all sides without rising revenues.”**

**“I dislike working with insurances and navigating patient dissatisfaction that results from financial barriers.”**

**“Rarely patient interactions can be unpleasant. I also don't like dealing with insurance companies and the restrictions they place on treatment needed by their subscribers.”**

**“Stress of dealing with insurance companies not paying or denying treatment, our overhead increasing (staff wages and supplies), and wondering when it will be unsustainable to run a private independent practice. We want to deliver the best service with the best training and the best products and charge a reasonable price which is becoming increasingly difficult.”**

## Wins

Despite these challenges, dentists say there's a lot to celebrate in their profession.

Flexibility, freedom, and autonomy came up repeatedly as wins among dentists of all stripes, with circumstances like private-practice ownership and 4-day work weeks enabling control over clinical and administrative decisions, as well as work-life balance.

Many said their people — both patients and colleagues — are the best part of the job. They derive great meaning from using deft hands and hard-won skills to perform complex and varied procedures, help newer professionals progress in their careers, and restore smiles throughout their communities.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR JOB?

**“Mix of community health/FQHC and private clinic work. Get to treat people of all income types. Working with kids keeps me young and hopefully makes a positive impact on their lives for the future.”**

**“Changing people’s lives by improving their oral and overall health as well as their emotional health”**

**“Caring for people, and the relationships that have developed. Creating with my hands. Solving how best to treat. Dentistry is art and science.”**

**“I enjoy the opportunity to educate young people entering the dental profession and the opportunity to engage in research that pushes our profession forward.”**

**“I am in a leadership position and changing the face of this organization. Flexibility to be with my children.”**

**“I make a difference in people’s lives. Get to problem solve, and create tiny works of art that nobody notices, when I’ve done it well.”**

**“Challenging and always changing. I get the opportunity to help people and make money while doing so, and enjoy a decent family life too...what could be better?”**