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Illinois Department of
Financial and Professional Regulation

Illinois State Dental Society



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Illinois State Dental Society and Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations Launch Campaign to Fight Unlicensed Dental Care

‘Fake Dentist, Real Risk’ Campaign Warning Illinois Residents About Serious Dangers Posed by Unlicensed Dentistry

Springfield, IL – In response to a troubling rise in reported unlicensed dental practices across the state, the Illinois State Dental Society (ISDS) and the Illinois Department of Financial and Professional Regulations (IDFPR) have joined forces to launch a collaborative campaign urging the public to seek dental care only from licensed dentists.

The campaign ‘Fake Dentist, Real Risk – Verify Before You Trust’ aims to educate Illinois residents about the serious dangers posed by unlicensed dentists. It promotes verifying dental licenses and provides easy-to-use tools and resources for reporting unlicensed activities. This initiative comes in response to multiple reports of unlawful dental practices by unlicensed practitioners, which have resulted in harm to patients – from fake braces and chipped teeth to permanent damage and infections.

“Unlicensed dental treatments can be very dangerous. They often lead to infections, bad procedures, and permanent damage to your teeth and gums. Licensed dentists have extensive training to provide safe and effective care. Our work with IDFPR highlights the importance of seeing licensed dentists. It's not just about the law—it's about keeping you safe and healthy,” said **ISDS Executive Director Eric Larson**.

“Our mission at IDFPR is to protect the residents of Illinois and ensure that only qualified professionals provide services,” said **IDFPR Secretary Mario Treto, Jr.** “This campaign with the Illinois State Dental Society is a perfect example of that commitment. By working together, we are helping residents make informed choices about their dental care and safeguarding public health.”

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The campaign goals include three key steps:

1. **Only choose a licensed dentist for your dental care.** Fake dentists often operate in unsafe conditions, lack proper training, and neglect knowledge on proper care and treatment, leading to severe health risks like infections, irreversible damage, and financial scams. You can check if a dentist is licensed with IDFPR by using the Department's online License Lookup Tool at <https://online-dfpr.micropact.com/lookup/licenselookup.aspx>.
2. **Know how and where to verify your dentist's license.** Spotting a real or fake dentist involves paying attention to their licensing, office environment, professionalism, communication, payment practices, and use of quality dental instruments.
3. **Report suspected unlicensed activities.** Don't wait. Report any suspicious or unlicensed dental activities immediately to ensure quick identification and patient protection. Unlicensed activity may be reported to IDFPR by filing a complaint at <https://idfpr.illinois.gov/admin/dpr/dprcomplaint.html>.

For more information and resources on the campaign, visit the campaign's website idfpr.illinois.gov/realdentist.