

# Dental Hygiene Industry Insights

## Dental Hygienists

Region  
South Dakota



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## Why We Do It.

Our goal is to simplify pay information and share data that leads to a more transparent workplace and more equitable world.

# Introduction

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This year has presented dental hygienists with a variety of challenges as the industry continues to grow and evolve. Workforce challenges influence a tight labor market and push wages into the spotlight.

South Dakota chose to be a leader in advancing the dental hygiene profession. Advocacy is one way to attract talent to our towns, cities, state, and industry. A tremendous thank you to all the advocates who believe in the work we do and the value this report provides.

Pay Insights strives to be a trusted resource for employers and employees to develop a relationship around trust and inspire a conversation about pay.

Pay has often been a contentious topic between employers and employees. Studies show all employees want to know if they're paid fairly when it comes to their wages. This report can bridge the gap.

Use this information to understand the market value for staff and collaborate effectively to reduce uncertainty about compensation. We believe people will do the right thing with the information to create an equitable workplace.

Real change begins when employees and employers are willing to have conversations about previously avoided topics to help one another succeed. We hope this information brings value to your business.

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**Thank you again to our partners and all the hygiene professionals who trusted Pay Insights to make this report possible.**

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# Survey Background

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Pay Insights conducted a dental hygiene salary survey in South Dakota from February 28, 2024 to April 5, 2024. Any licensed dental hygienist practicing in the state was eligible to participate. It's estimated a total of 809 hygienists were eligible to provide their information. Hygienists were identified utilizing the board of dentistry's license database.

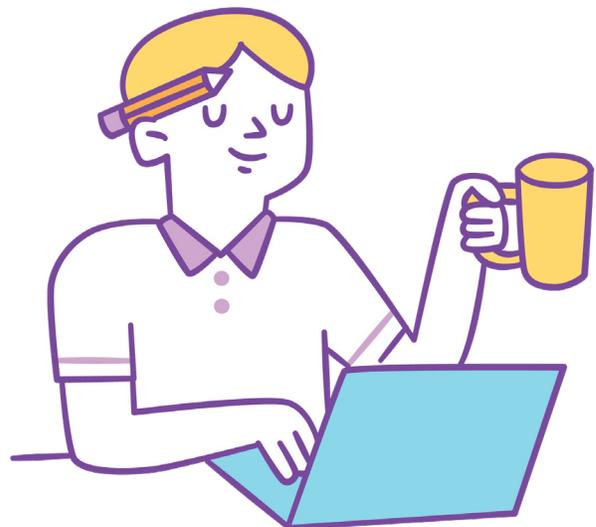
202 responses were received, representing 25% of the dental hygienists. A partnership with the South Dakota Dental Hygienists' Association helped make the response rate so successful. Direct mail, email, social media, and other outreach methods were used to collect responses.

Survey participants were able to enter multiple employers if employed at different offices. This increases the available data for comparison. Participants could share part-time or temporary wages in addition to their full-time role.

Data validation and anonymity is essential to collecting quality data. Personal information was collected to analyze anomalies and invalid submissions weren't included in the data sample. The focus of this survey was primarily clinical hygiene responsibilities. This reduces the amount of data calibration between job titles and responsibilities to ensure we are providing the most accurate data available.

## How We Do It.

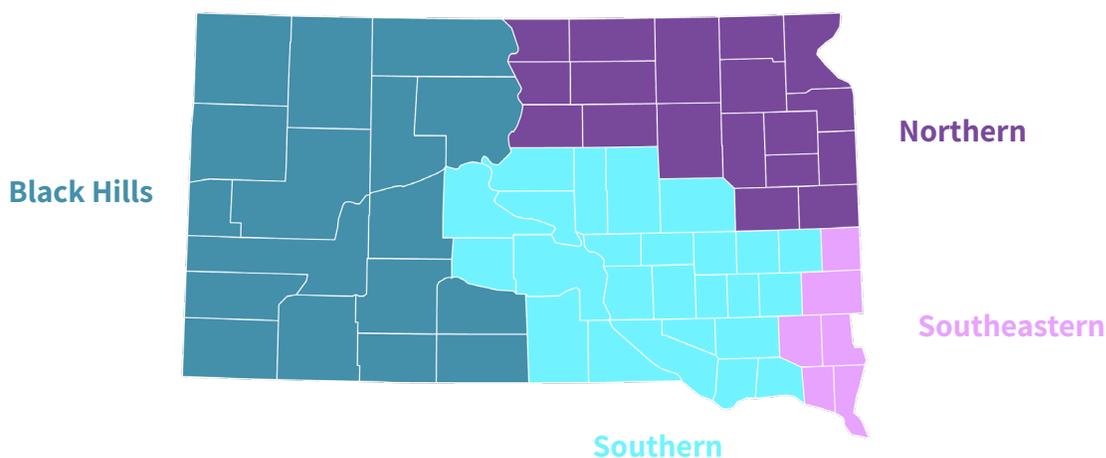
We collect, simplify, and deliver compensation insights and develop educational content that builds trust and transparency in work relationships.



# Survey Background Geography

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Geography and location often are a contributing factor to compensation. Available workforce, cost of living, and other community factors can impact wages for a profession. Pay Insights collected responses and asked respondents to share the region of the state where they worked. Regions are broken down at the county level and follow the South Dakota Dental Association districts.



## The regions are the following:

### Black Hills:

Perkins, Bennett, Butte, Corson, Custer, Dewey, Fall River, Haakon, Harding, Jackson, Lawrence, Mead, Mellette, Pennington, Shannon, Todd, Ziebach

### Northern:

Brookings, Brown, Campbell, Clark, Codington, Day, Deuel, Edmunds, Faulk, Grant, Hamlin, Kingsbury, Marshall, McPherson, Potter, Roberts, Spink, Walworth

### Southeastern:

Clay, Lincoln, Minnehaha, Moody, Turner, Union

### Southern:

Aurora, Bon Homme, Beadle, Buffalo, Brule, Charles Mix, Davison, Douglas, Gregory, Hand, Hanson, Hughes, Hutchinson, Hyde, Jerauld, Jones, Lake, Lyman, McCook, Miner, Sanborn, Stanley, Sully, Tripp, Yankton

# Statewide Highlights

## Key Statistics



The survey period for the South Dakota Dental Hygienists survey was conducted between **February 28, 2024 and April 5, 2024.**



A total of **202 dental hygienists** from South Dakota participated in the salary survey. This is approximately **25%** of the hygienists in the state



The average income **grew X%** from last year. **XX%** of hygienists received an increase in the last 12 months. **XX%** of hygienists received a pay increase in the last 2 years.



**XX% of participants** say they would consider a job change. **Another XX%** were neutral for considering a job change. Pay is the main reason for a potential change.



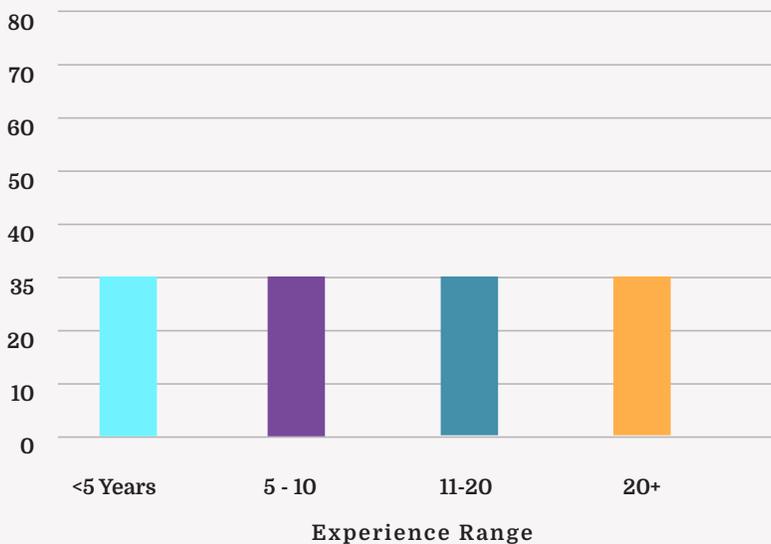
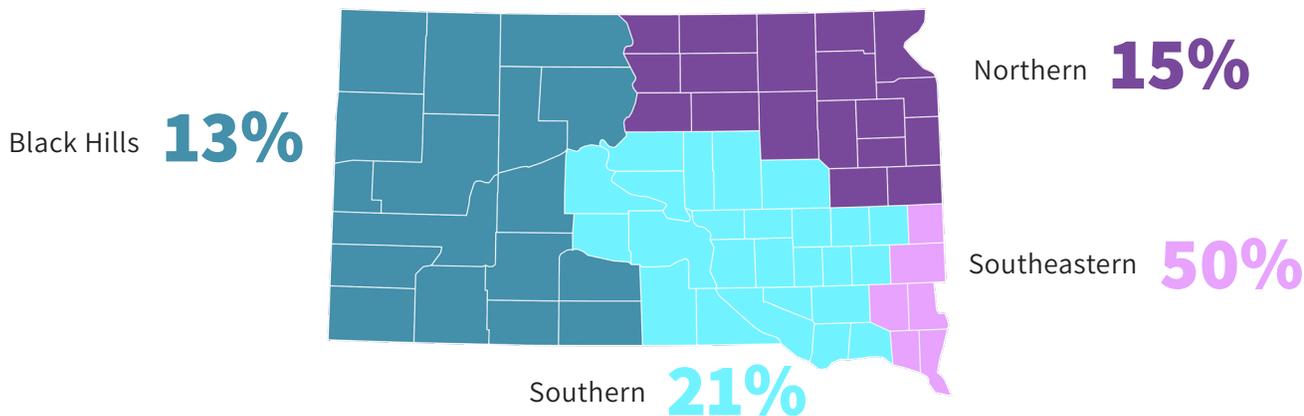
**X% of respondents** plan to exit the workforce in the next 5 years. This could exacerbate the talent shortage and have a significant impact on oral care and business growth.



**Location** was the most significant factor related to pay. Pay in the Black Hills region is nearly **XX%** higher than the rest of the state.

# Statewide Highlights Demographics

Below shows the map distribution of where the 202 hygiene responses came from. The response rate distribution was very close to what was anticipated. Black Hills was low as they represent 25% of the hygiene population and had a response rate of 13%. Other regions performed higher than anticipated to provide high quality data.



## Years of Experience

Participants with a wide variety of experience participated in the report.

**XX years of experience was the average of all participants.**

## Education

Highest level of education completed by participants

**XX%**

Associate

**XX%**

Bachelor

**XX%**

Master

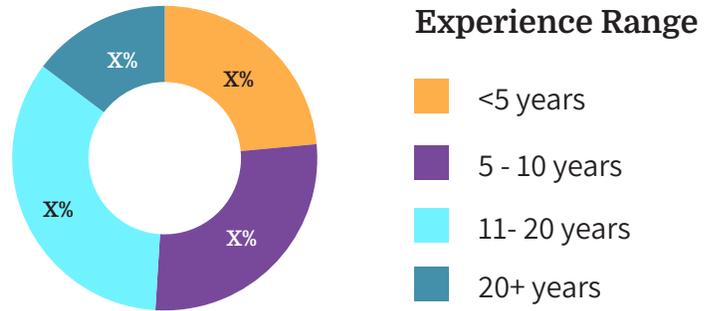


# Region Highlights Demographics

## Highlights from the Region:

- Tenure at current employer is nearly **X** years above the national average.
- **XX%** believe they're paid fairly and satisfied with their compensation. Opportunity exists to move many away from "neutral".
- **XX%** of employees were satisfied or very satisfied with their employer.

## Years of Experience as an RDH:



## Do you believe you're paid fairly?

**XX%** Yes

**XX%** No

**XX%** Don't know

## How satisfied are you with your cash compensation?

Very satisfied	<b>X%</b>
Satisfied	<b>X%</b>
Neutral	<b>X%</b>
Dissatisfied	<b>X%</b>
Very dissatisfied	<b>X%</b>

## Years at Current Employer:

Number of years hygienists have been employed with their current employer.

Less than 5 years	<b>X%</b>
5 - 10 years	<b>X%</b>
11- 20 years	<b>X%</b>
20+ years	<b>X%</b>

# X

Average years with employer

# Compensation Summary South Dakota

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Compensation in the dental hygiene market has been challenging for a variety of reasons. A nationwide workforce shortage has been a contributing factor for hygiene staff and wage growth.

The most significant variable of compensation is location. Full-time wages on average were lowest in the Southeastern part of the state. Southern wages were slightly ahead of Southeastern (+X.X%), followed by Northern (+X.X%), then Black Hills (+XX%).

X% was the average increase in the last 12 months and X years was the average tenure with their current employer. The Northern region could be closing the gap for average wages as this region experienced the highest increases in the last 12 months.

Years of experience was not a significant variable for pay across the state. Pay compression occurs when employees with less experience are paid close to or just as much as others with more years of experience.

XX% of survey respondents said they believe they are paid fairly. Frequent comments from those who didn't respond favorably to this question voiced concerns with new hires or new grads making the same rate. Concerns about doing additional responsibilities compared to other coworkers was another issue identified.

XX% of hygienists were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with their cash compensation. When we look at fairness, this suggests most people in the survey earn enough but don't feel appreciated compared to others in their field.

## Region:

Full-time and Part-time

**\$XX**

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Average Hourly Rate

**XX Years**

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Average Tenure as an RDH

**X%**

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Average Increase in last 12 months

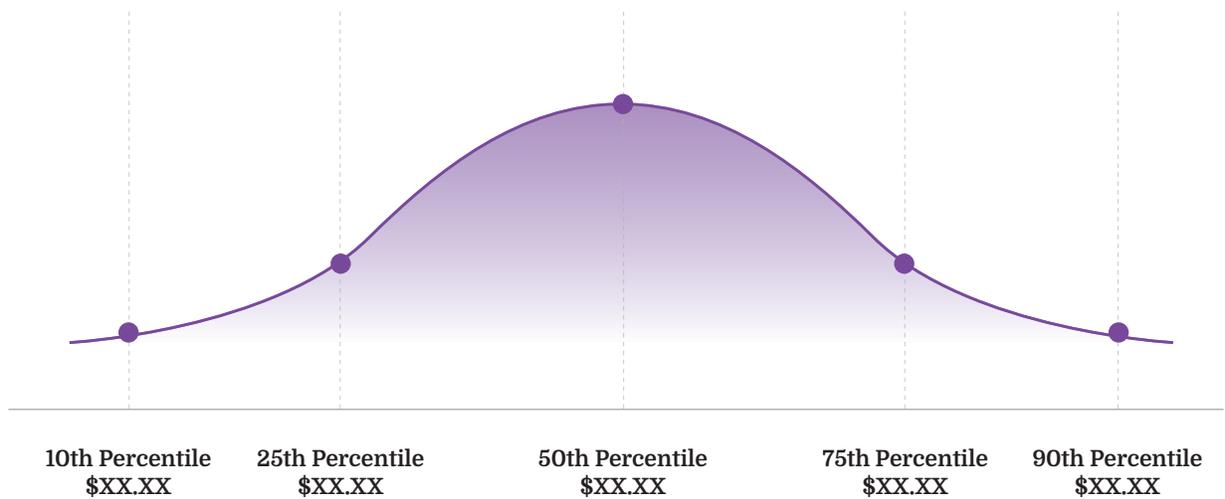
# Compensation Ranges

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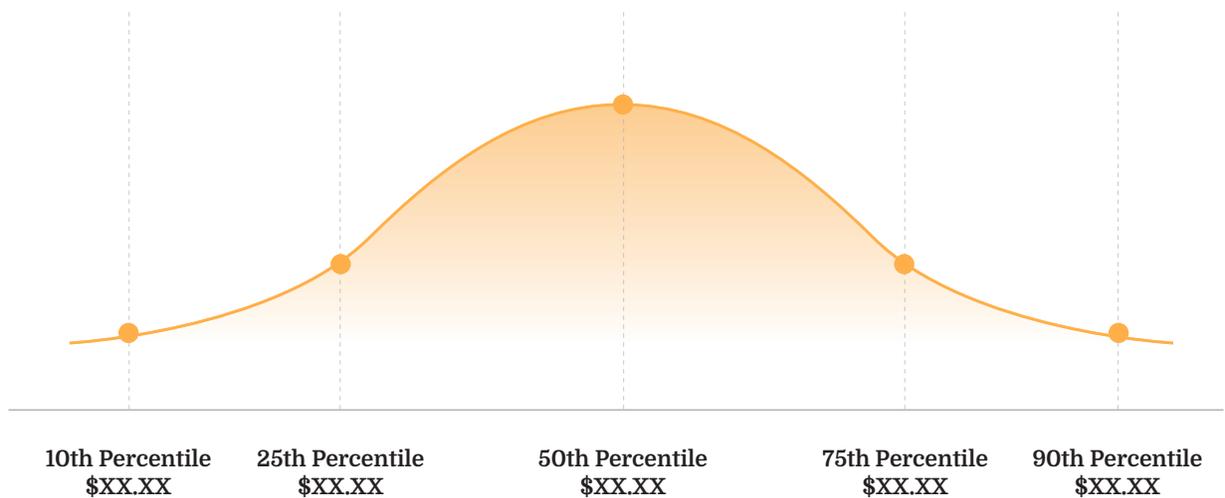
Ranges listed include all responses for full-time, part-time and temporary wages.

The 25th percentile means 25% of workers earn less than the reported wage and 75% of workers earn more. 50th percentile means 50% of workers earn less and 50% earn more. 75th percentile means 75% of workers earn less than the reported wage and 25% earn more.

## South Dakota Base Salary Range



## Region Base Salary Range

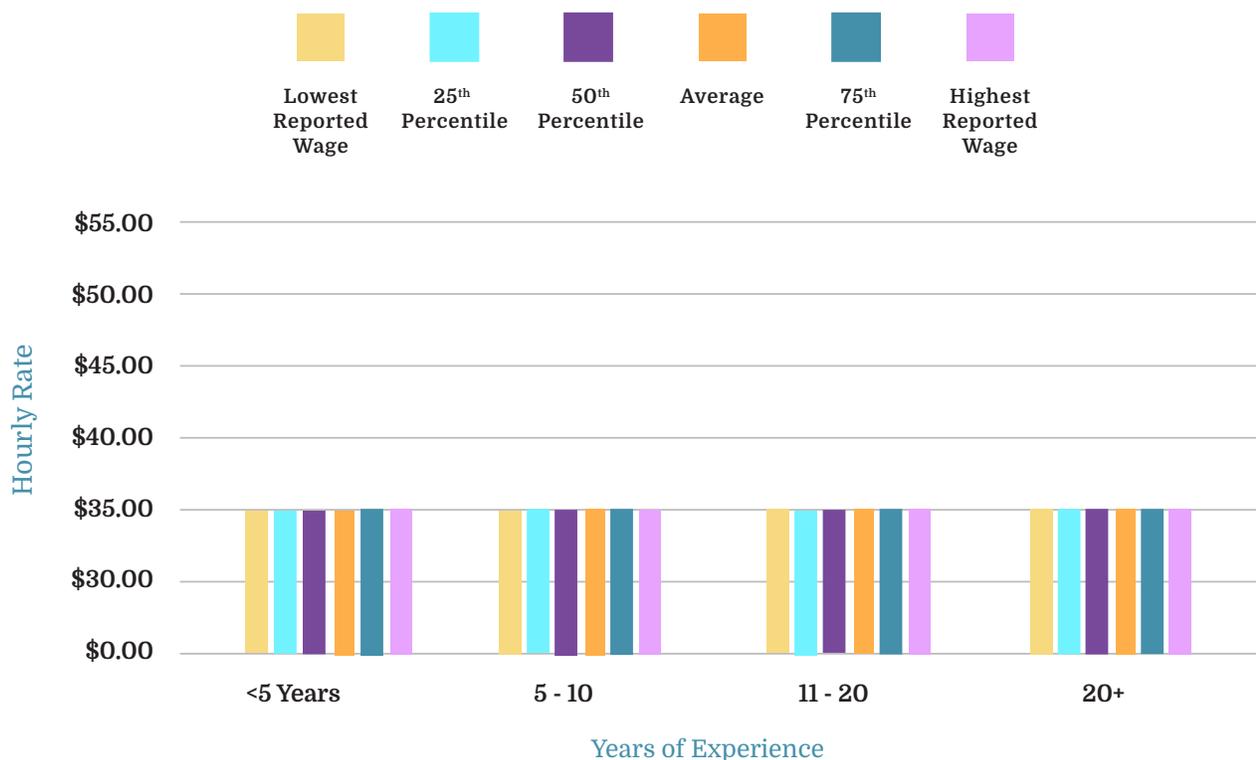


# Income Full-time Employees (30+ Hours/Week)

The following wages include **Region** full-time hourly wages. Full-time hours are defined as 30 hours a week or more. Salaried responses were converted to an hourly rate to have an accurate comparison. Years of experience as an RDH is included in this report as many employers use this as a baseline to determine wages.

Years of Experience	Lowest Reported Wage	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Highest Reported Wage
<5 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
5 - 10 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
11 - 20 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
20+ years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX

## Region Full-time Wages

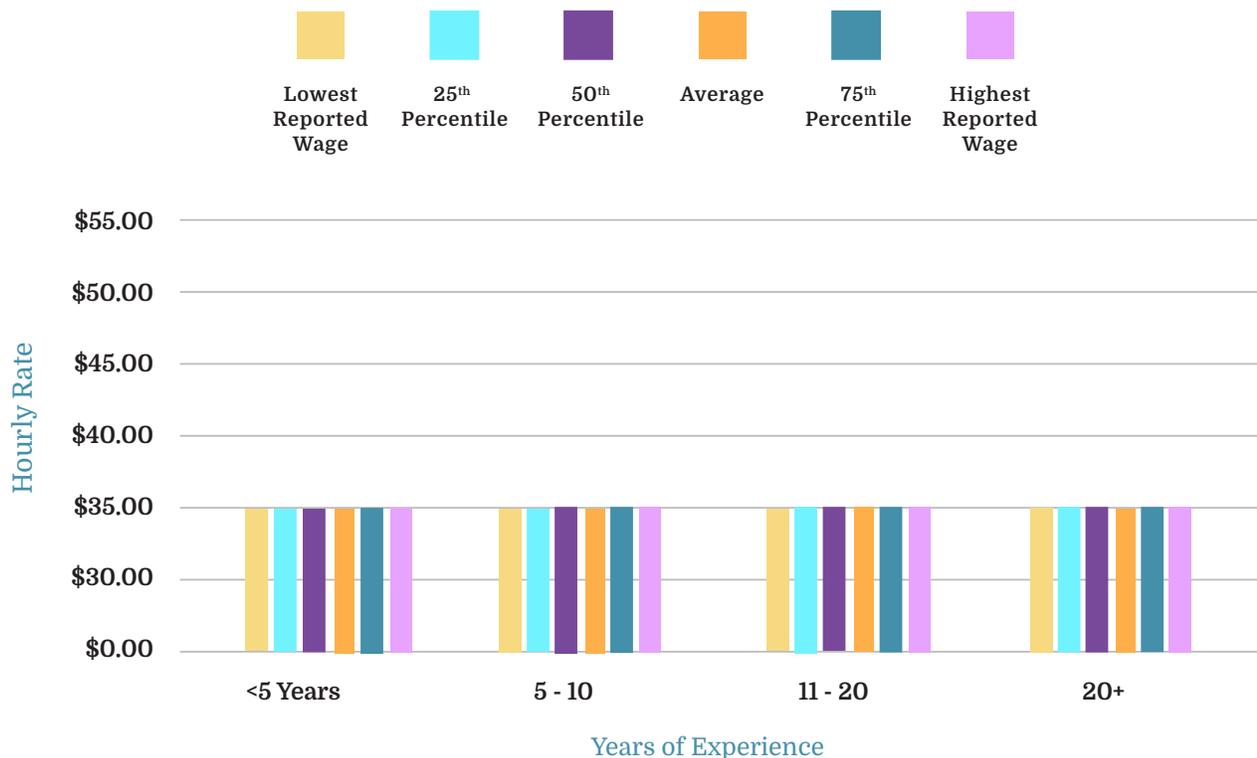


# Income All Region Employees

The following wages include **Region** full-time, part-time and temporary hourly wages. Salaried responses were converted to an hourly rate to have an accurate comparison.

Years of Experience	Lowest Reported Wage	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Highest Reported Wage
<5 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
5 - 10 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
11 - 20 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
20+ years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX

## Region Wages



# Income Part-time Employees (Less than 30 Hours/Week)

The following wages includes regular part-time hourly wages. Part-time hours are defined as working less than 30 hours a week. All **South Dakota** part-time wages were aggregated to provide the best data. Region responses distribution was as follows: XX% Black Hills, XX% Northern, XX% Southeastern, and XX% Southern.

Years of Experience	Lowest Reported Wage	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Highest Reported Wage
<5 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
5 - 10 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
11 - 20 years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
20+ years	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX

## South Dakota Part-time Wages

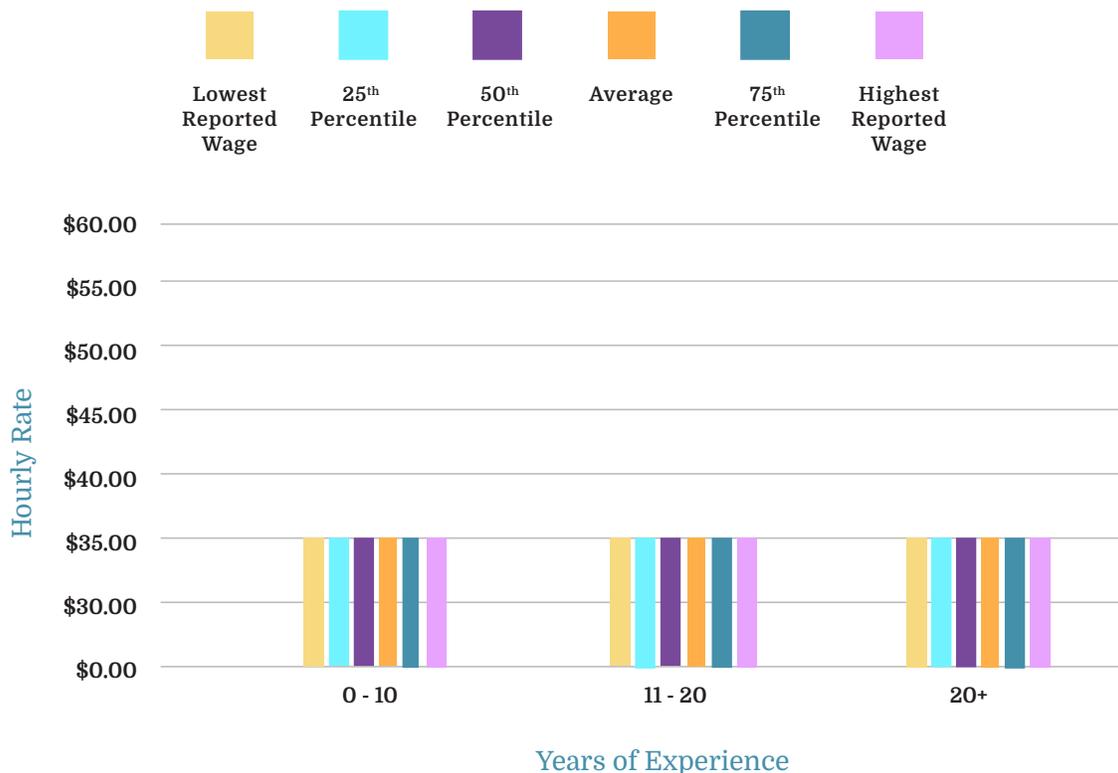


# Income Temporary Employees (As Needed)

The following wages includes regular temporary wages. All **South Dakota** temporary wages were aggregated to provide the best data. Regions and years of experience didn't play a significant variance in determining wages.

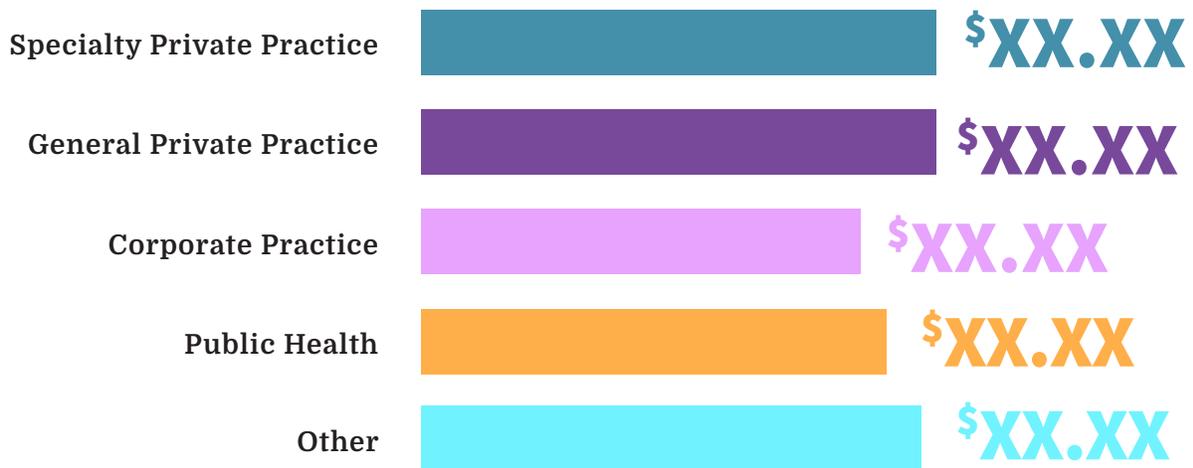
Years of Experience	Lowest Reported Wage	25 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Average	75 <sup>th</sup> Percentile	Highest Reported Wage
<b>0 - 10 years</b>	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
<b>11 - 20 years</b>	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX
<b>20+ years</b>	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX	\$XX.XX

## South Dakota Temp Wages



# Practice Type

Below are the average wages for dental hygienists by practice type in the Region. Wages included are part-time and full-time. Average years with current employer may be a factor in the averages. General Private Practice: X years, Corporate Practice: X years, Public Health: X years, Speciality Private Practice: X years, and Other: X years.



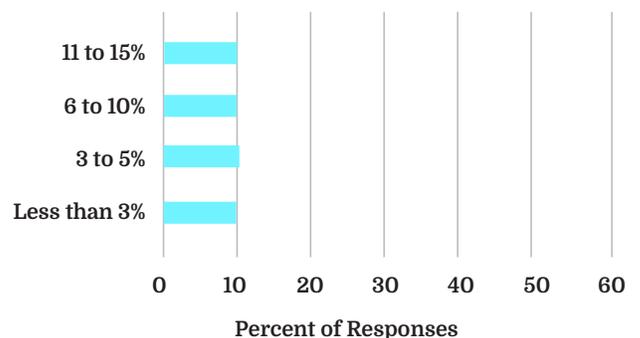
# Variable Compensation

XX% of respondents reported a pay increase in the last year. The average increase in the last 12 months in the Region was X.XX%. Across all time periods, X.XX% was the average increase.

When was your last pay increase?



Pay Increase Amounts



# Bonus

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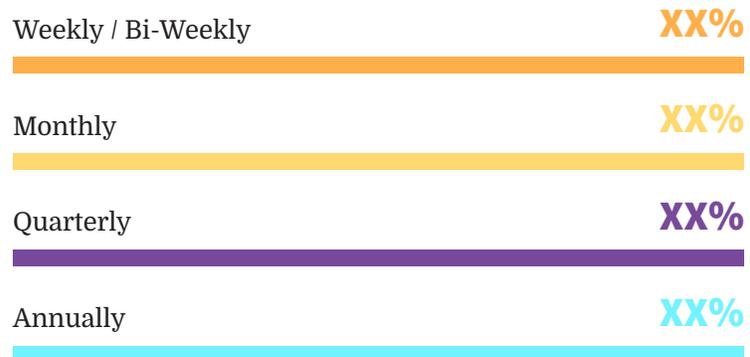
XX% of hygienists in the Region reported being bonus eligible. A foundational component of compensation is setting clear achievements to let employees know how to reach their financial incentives. This can also help businesses reach their financial goals. XX% of participants didn't know how their bonus is calculated. The "other" category includes a holiday bonus, a pre-determined amount set by the office, or sign-on bonus for new staff.

XX% of bonus eligible hygienists indicated they worked full-time with the remainder employed part-time.

## How is your bonus calculated?



## How often is your bonus paid out?



# Benefits

This is the list of benefits offered to full-time employees in the Region. Excluding part-time employee benefits in this section creates the best comparison. When hygienists were asked how to improve their benefits, a majority of comments referenced paying more for health insurance premiums and offering more paid time off. Please note, this is not an exhaustive list of all benefits offered by employers.

 **XX%**  
Health Insurance

 **XX%**  
Life Insurance

 **XX%**  
Flexible Schedule

 **XX%**  
Dental Insurance

 **XX%**  
Paid Time Off

 **XX%**  
Continuing Education

 **XX%**  
Retirement (401k)

 **XX%**  
Paid Sick Leave

 **XX%**  
Disability Insurance

 **XX%**  
Paid Family Leave

 **XX%**  
Paid Holidays

 **XX%**  
Mental Health Benefits

## How satisfied are you with your benefits?

 **X%**

 **X%**

 **X%**

 **X%**

 **X%**

Very Dissatisfied

Dissatisfied

Neutral

Satisfied

Very Satisfied

# Benefits

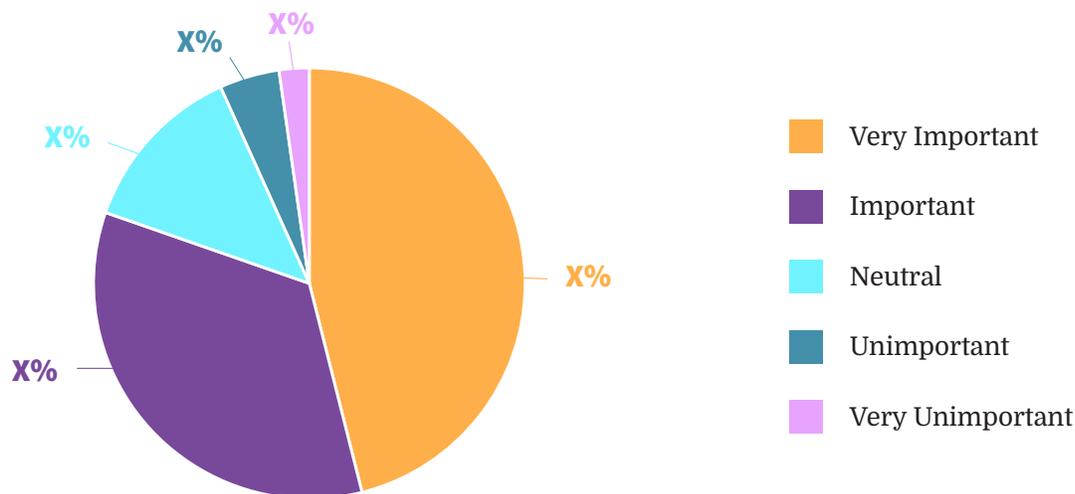
Survey participants were able to share what benefits are most important to them. Paid time off took the top spot as the most important benefit to hygienists in the Region.

Three out of the top 5 important benefits center around time. A close top benefit was paid continuing education. This is a common trend across the country and supported by other industry results as well.

XX% of full-time hygienists with less than 5 years of experience ranked benefits as important or very important.

- 1 Paid Time Off
- 2 Retirement
- 3 Paid Holidays
- 4 Flexible Work Schedule
- 5 Health Insurance

## How important are your benefits as part of your total compensation package?



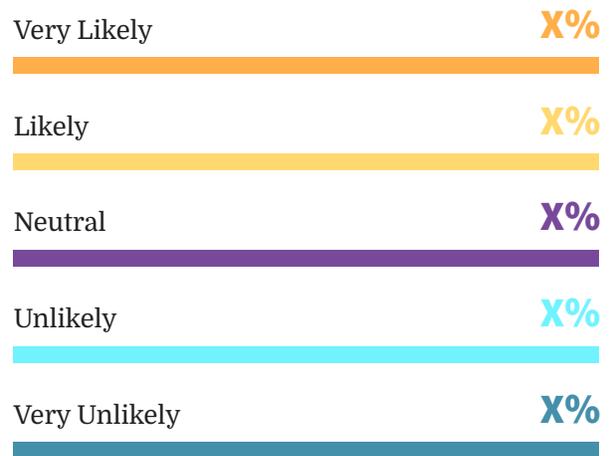
# Job Satisfaction and Turnover

XX% of hygienists are satisfied or very satisfied with their employer. This is significantly above national trends. Though satisfied with their employer, nearly XX% of hygienists are neutral, likely, or very likely to accept a different job offer. Pay is the key reason someone would consider changing their employer. The “other” category included responses such as hours or location. Nationally, the main reasons why hygienists leave their employer are pay, culture, and benefits.

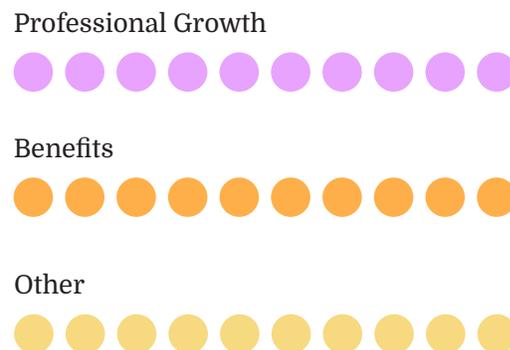
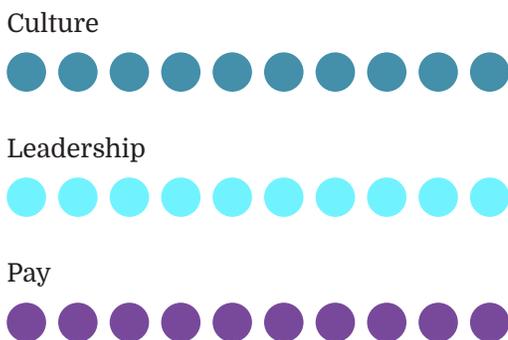
## Overall, how satisfied are you with your current employer?



## How likely would you be to accept a job offer from a new employer?



## What would be your main reason for leaving your current employer?



It's time to  
work **happier.**



**pay insights**

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