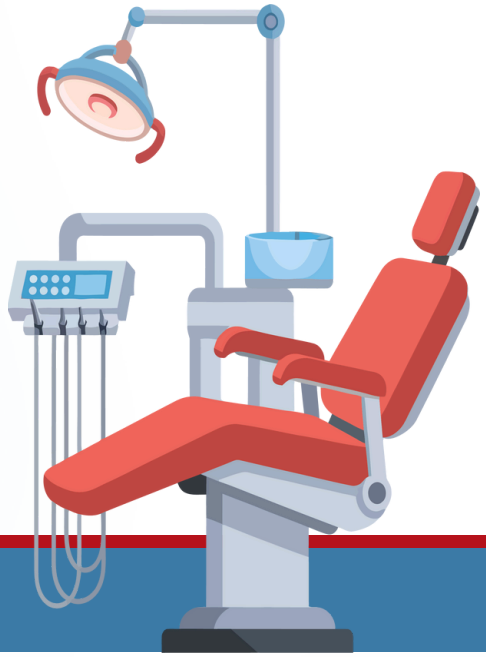
Renting Out a Dental Chair: A Guide to Pricing and Key Considerations



As experts at Masserano Practice Design and Development, Align Healthcare Real Estate, and Align Healthcare Practices, we frequently field questions from dentists about renting out a dental chair or operatory part-time to a third-party dentist. This arrangement can be an excellent source of additional income to help offset overhead costs, but it must be implemented thoughtfully to avoid pitfalls.

Rushing in without proper planning can lead to scheduling conflicts, legal issues, or financial imbalances. Below, we'll outline a simplified approach to determining fair pricing, along with essential factors to consider.

About Masserano Practice Design & Development

At Masserano Practice Design & Development and Align, we specialize in helping dental professionals build practices that are efficient, resilient, and designed for long-term success. From real estate strategy and architectural planning to equipment integration and operational workflows, we bring decades of experience guiding doctors through every phase of their practice journey - including how to prepare for and respond to the unexpected.

www.masseranopractices.com
800-605-7290
hello@masseranorec.com

ALIGN

Calculating a Fair Rental Rate

A practical starting point is to assess the value of your practice's fixed assets—the dental office improvements, build-out, equipment, and systems—while factoring in operational costs like rent and utilities. This method provides a baseline "cost per day" for using the space, which can then be adjusted for partial use.

1. **Amortize Fixed Assets**: Begin by estimating the total value of your fixed assets (e.g., build-out, equipment, and related systems). A common simplified approach is to amortize this over 5 years (60 months), rather than accounting for factors like financing interest or depreciation for initial calculations. This gives a rough monthly cost attributable to asset usage.

2. **Add Monthly Overhead**: Include your total monthly rent, utilities, and any shared services.

3. **Convert to Daily Cost**: Divide the combined monthly total by the number of working days per month (typically 22) to arrive at a daily rate for the entire office.



About Masserano Practice Design & Development

At Masserano Practice Design & Development and Align, we specialize in helping dental professionals build practices that are efficient, resilient, and designed for long-term success. From real estate strategy and architectural planning to equipment integration and operational workflows, we bring decades of experience guiding doctors through every phase of their practice journey - including how to prepare for and respond to the unexpected.

www.masseranopractices.com
800-605-7290
hello@masseranorec.com

ALIGN

Example Calculation

Suppose your fixed assets total $600,000. Amortized over 60 months, that's $10,000 per month ($600,000 ÷ 60). Divided by 22 working days, this equates to about $455 per day.

Add monthly rent and utilities at $7,000, which breaks down to $318 per day ($7,000 ÷ 22).

The **total daily cost for the whole office** is roughly $773 ($455 + $318).

If additional elements like staff support, supplies, or specialized systems are included, factor in those costs to increase the rate. Conversely, for renting just a portion (e.g., one or two chairs in a six-operatory office), prorate downward. In this example, one chair might start at $129 per day ($773 ÷ 6), but few dentists would accept the hassle for such a low amount. For two chairs used once a week (about 4 days per month), that could translate to around $1,118 monthly ($773 ÷ 6 × 2 chairs × 4 days)—a figure that might begin to justify the arrangement as rental income.

This baseline typically serves as a minimum starting point for negotiations and is adjusted for local market conditions. Compare it to local peer rates by networking with other practices to see how it aligns with market norms. In high-production areas, where dentists generate substantial hourly revenue, prevailing rates may well exceed this minimum to reflect profitability expectations for both parties.

Additional Factors and Risks

Beyond raw costs, consider the "roommate" dynamic: Sharing space introduces inconvenience, potential disruptions, and risks like liability or patient confusion. To mitigate this:

- **Minimum and Maximum Usage**: Set thresholds in your agreement, such as a minimum number of days per month to make the hassle worthwhile, and a cap on days or chairs to preserve flexibility for your own practice growth. Avoid arrangements that restrict your scheduling—ensure you can add emergencies, new patients, or expand operations without hindrance.

- **Scheduling Provisions**: Require advance notice (e.g., 30 days) for booking chairs, equipment, or services to prevent conflicts.

- **Legal and Compliance Essentials**: These setups are often called sharing or licensing agreements but function as leases or subleases. Always verify your master lease permits subletting; if you own the property (especially in a condo or co-op), check bylaws—co-ops frequently prohibit such arrangements. The third-party dentist must carry adequate general liability and property insurance and comply with any master lease or building rules. Draft agreements to clearly state the practices are separate entities, minimizing shared liability for malpractice or other issues. It's common for the renter to use their own software, computers, VOIP phones, and systems to maintain independence.





About Masserano Practice Design & Development

At Masserano Practice Design & Development and Align, we specialize in helping dental professionals build practices that are efficient, resilient, and designed for long-term success. From real estate strategy and architectural planning to equipment integration and operational workflows, we bring decades of experience guiding doctors through every phase of their practice journey - including how to prepare for and respond to the unexpected.

www.masseranopractices.com
800-605-7290
hello@masseranorec.com

ALIGN

Additional Factors and Risks

- **Non-Competition**: Ensure the third-party isn't competing for your patients—focus on complementary specialties if possible.

- **Perspective from Both Sides**: While this focuses on owners setting charges, third-party renters should evaluate based on their hourly production and profitability. In some cases, arrangements arise as favors (e.g., for a colleague temporarily without a facility), leading to flexible pricing. Regardless, consult peers for diverse insights.

Final Recommendations

Renting a dental chair can boost your bottom line, but prioritize safeguards. Always engage a dental-specific real estate attorney to review and draft the agreement, including cancellation terms (e.g., 30-60 days' notice). This ensures compliance, fairness, and protection for all involved. If you're exploring this option, reach out to our teams at Masserano Practice Design and Development, Align Healthcare Real Estate, or Align Healthcare Practices for tailored guidance.

About Masserano Practice Design & Development

At Masserano Practice Design & Development and Align, we specialize in helping dental professionals build practices that are efficient, resilient, and designed for long-term success. From real estate strategy and architectural planning to equipment integration and operational workflows, we bring decades of experience guiding doctors through every phase of their practice journey - including how to prepare for and respond to the unexpected.

www.masseranopractices.com
800-605-7290
hello@masseranorec.com

ALIGN