

REAL DENTAL COSTS · DATA & RESEARCH TEAM

California

Dental Costs & Access Fact Sheet 2026 — procedure prices, insurance gaps, Medicaid acceptance and dentist shortages.

[Open data](#) · [CC BY 4.0](#) · [Permanent DOIs](#)

Published by the Real Dental Costs Data & Research Team · realdentalcosts.com

Concept DOI (implant index): [10.5281/zenodo.20531728](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20531728) · Atlas DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.21707529](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.21707529)

Data edition 2026.1 · HRSA snapshot 2026-07-30

California at a glance

\$5,733

SINGLE IMPLANT, AVG.

51/51

RESTORATIVE COST RANK

32.6%

DENTISTS TAKING MEDICAID

9

DENTAL-DESERT COUNTIES

- A complete single dental implant averages **\$5,733** in California, \$1,226 above the \$4,507 national mean of our 51 markets — ranking California **51 of 51** on the restorative cost index (1 = least expensive).
- **32.6%** of California dentists accept Medicaid patients (rank 35 of 51), and the state provides **extensive** adult dental coverage.
- **9 of California's 58 counties** (16%) meet the dental-desert definition — an active shortage designation, below-median county income and above-median prices at once. 57 counties carry at least one active Dental HPSA designation.
- Nationally, 288 of 3,144 counties qualify as dental deserts, and 2,601 carry at least one active Dental HPSA designation.

Procedure prices: California vs the national mean

Every row is labelled with its data basis. **OBSERVED** = measured per-state prices. **ESTIMATED** = no per-state source; the national figure scaled by the restorative cost index. **NATIONAL** = no per-state source at all, so no geographic variation is invented.

Procedure	California range	California avg.	U.S. mean (51 markets)	Basis
Exam, cleaning & X-rays	\$65–\$445	\$260	\$203	ESTIMATED
Composite filling (1 tooth)	\$115–\$570	\$285	\$226	ESTIMATED
Deep cleaning (SRP, per quadrant)	\$215–\$445	\$305	\$242	ESTIMATED
Tooth extraction	\$95–\$1,015	\$380	\$300	ESTIMATED
Root canal	\$635–\$1,905	\$1,395	\$1,100	ESTIMATED
All-on-4 (per arch)	\$14,785–\$34,925	\$19,275	\$15,179	ESTIMATED
Professional teeth whitening	\$300–\$1,000	\$650	\$650	NATIONAL
Dental crown	\$1,780–\$3,970	\$2,331	\$1,369	OBSERVED
Porcelain veneer (per tooth)	\$470–\$2,730	\$1,663	\$1,759	OBSERVED
Braces (traditional, full case)	\$2,400–\$9,595	\$6,087	\$6,352	OBSERVED
Single dental implant (complete)	\$4,780–\$7,290	\$5,733	\$4,507	OBSERVED
Full set of dentures (both arches)	\$1,920–\$4,610	\$2,488	\$1,953	OBSERVED

What insurance actually pays in California

Applied to California averages: a typical full coverage plan structure (preventive ~100%, basic ~80%, major ~50%) against a \$1,500 annual maximum. This is an illustration of a common plan design, not a quote, and it is the subtraction carrier pages do not publish.

Procedure	California avg.	Tier	Plan pays	You still pay
Composite filling (1 tooth)	\$285	basic	\$228	\$57
Root canal	\$1,395	major	\$698	\$697
Dental crown	\$2,331	major	\$1,166	\$1,165
Full set of dentures (both arches)	\$2,488	major	\$1,244	\$1,244
Braces (traditional, full case)	\$6,087	ortho	\$1,500 (cap)	\$4,587
Single dental implant (complete)	\$5,733	excluded	nothing	\$5,733

The annual maximum is consumed by the whole plan year, not reset per procedure. Orthodontics and implants are the two lines where the gap is widest: the first exhausts the cap on its own, the second is usually excluded outright.

Methodology & sources

Single implant (complete) — our own observed 51-market series, DOI 10.5281/zenodo.20531728 (CC BY 4.0).

Crown, porcelain veneer, braces, dentures — Average Procedural Cost Study by ASQ360° Market Research for Synchrony's CareCredit. Cited wherever displayed, not redistributed in our open dataset.

All other procedures — national figures scaled by the restorative cost index, labelled *estimated*. Cosmetic rows carry no state variation.

Medicaid acceptance and adult benefit level — DOI 10.5281/zenodo.20666358.

Shortage and dental-desert counts — HRSA Dental HPSA snapshot 2026-07-30, crossed with county median income and state price level; DOI 10.5281/zenodo.21707529.

This is pricing and market research, **not medical advice** and not an insurance quote. Figures are market averages for budgeting and comparison — your quote depends on your case, provider and plan document.

Cite this fact sheet

Real Dental Costs Data & Research Team. (2026). California dental costs & access fact sheet 2026 [Data set]. Real Dental Costs. <https://realdentalcosts.com/en/full-coverage-dental-insurance/california/>

Machine-readable data: **<https://realdentalcosts.com/api/v1/state/ca.json>**

Web version: **<https://realdentalcosts.com/en/full-coverage-dental-insurance/california/>**

© 2026 Real Dental Costs · realdentalcosts.com · Generated by scripts/gen_state_factsheet_pdf.mjs from audit/_factsheet-data/california.json, data edition 2026.1. Reuse permitted under CC BY 4.0 with attribution.