

## # January 2026 Dental Compliance Threat Report

**\*\*StoicGuard Intelligence Brief\*\***

**\*Current as of January 8, 2026\***

Developed by dental compliance researchers using public HHS, OSHA, and state board data.

### ## Executive Summary

2025 marked a turning point for dental practice risk: ransomware attacks surged, HIPAA settlements hit new highs (\$350K–\$4.4M range), and new state teledentistry mandates took effect January 1, 2026. Less than 50% of U.S. dental offices maintain full HIPAA compliance, leaving most exposed to fines, breaches, and shutdowns.

This free report highlights the top threats and actionable steps. Protect your practice before the next inspection or hack.

### ## 1. HIPAA Enforcement Surge

**\*\*Key 2025 Settlements:\*\***

- Westend Dental (Indianapolis): \$350,000 for ransomware exposure (patient records accessed).
- First Choice Dental: \$1.225M class-action settlement for data breach.
- The Aspen Group: \$4.4M settlement tied to 2023 breach.
- Multiple practices: \$1M+ class actions from patient right-of-access failures.

**\*\*2026 Outlook:\*\*** Willful violations up to \$2M+. OCR prioritizes ransomware and access complaints.

### ## 2. OSHA Penalties & Infection Control

**\*\*2026 Adjusted Penalties:\*\***

- Serious violations: \$16,550 each (up from 2025).
- Bloodborne pathogens remain #1 citation.

**\*\*Relief Opportunity:\*\*** Small practices can reduce penalties up to 70% with prompt correction (new 2025-2026 guidelines).

**\*\*Shutdown Risk:\*\*** Spore testing failures lead to immediate board suspensions – #1 cause of summary closures.

### ## 3. Cyber Breach Explosion

**\*\*Major 2025 Incidents:\*\***

- Absolute Dental (Nevada): 1.2M+ patients exposed.
- Delta Dental of Virginia: 146,000 affected (Aug 2025 breach).
- True Dental Care (PA): Ransomware locked 17,640 records.
- DDS Safe ransomware: Potentially 432 practices impacted.
- Advanced Dental & others: Ongoing phishing/ransomware wave.

**\*\*Trend:\*\*** 15+ documented dental breaches in 2025 – small and large groups hit equally.

#### **## 4. New Teledentistry Mandates**

**\*\*Georgia HB567 (Effective Jan 1, 2026):\*\***

- Requires dental plans to cover teledentistry at same rate as in-person.
- Strict HIPAA/privacy rules + informed consent mandatory.
- In-person exam required for certain services (e.g., orthodontics).

Similar expansions expected in other states.

#### **## Protect Your Practice Now**

One gap can cost \$50K–\$1M+ in fines, lost revenue, and reputation damage.

**\*\*StoicGuard Solution:\*\***

- Instant AI scan with live federal checks
- Proprietary Shield Score™ benchmarking
- Elite: Ongoing monitoring + remediation

**\*\*Next Step:\*\*** Run a \$59 compliance scan at [stoicguard.com/scan](https://stoicguard.com/scan)

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