



## Office of Teaching Initiatives

### Certification from Start to Finish

New York State teachers, administrators, and pupil personnel service providers are required to hold a New York State certificate in order to be employed in the State's public schools. The certificates are issued by the Office of Teaching Initiatives, and certify that an individual has met required degree, coursework, assessment, and experience requirements. Certificates are issued in a number of titles in three major categories: classroom teaching, administrative and supervisory, and pupil personnel service (e.g., school counselor, psychologist, social worker).

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#### 1. **Choose the best preparation pathway**

There are a number of routes or Preparation Pathways, depending upon your background and preferences. Once you have chosen the appropriate pathway, you must complete the requirements for the certificate you choose and submit an application, supporting documents, and fee to the New York State Education Department.

#### 2. **Decide which certificate to apply for**

You must select the appropriate certificate by category, title, and type.

**Area of Interest:** Certificates are divided into major groups, or categories. Examples are Administration and Pupil Personnel Services, Classroom Teacher, and Career and Technical Teacher. For a complete list, go to Certificate Area of Interest.

**Title:** The certificate title denotes the subject and grade level that you are authorized to teach. Examples include Early Childhood Education (Birth-Grade 2), Biology (Grade 7-12), and School District

Administrator (K-12). [Find the requirements for the certificate you want see #3.](#)


**Type:** The type of certificate issued to you depends upon your educational background and experience. Examples include Initial certificate, Professional certificate, and Teaching Assistant Level III certificate. For a complete list, go to [Types of Certificates and Licenses](#).

### 3. Find the requirements for the certificate you want

To determine that specific requirements for any given title, you can use the online search feature called "Search Certification Requirements." To begin a search, click on the icon below



### 4. Applying for a certificate

Applying online is easy and fast, and allows you the options of paying by credit card or mailing your payment. To apply online, click on  .

If you are enrolled in a [New York State teacher preparation program](#) or [alternative teacher preparation program](#), you need to apply online and indicate "Pathway: Approved Teacher Preparation Program " as your pathway. Your college Certification officer will submit your institutional recommendation.

#### What happens once you receive my application?

**Submitted Online:** After you have entered your payment the "Application Confirmation" screen will appear. It will have the date we received your application, amount of the fee owed, requirements that have been completed, and the requirements that need to be completed in order to receive the certificates you have applied for. You may login to TEACH at any time and click the Account Information link to see the status of your application.

### 5. Send us your supporting documentation

Once you have applied for a certificate, you must send to us any supporting documentation necessary in order to conduct a complete evaluation of your credentials. Supporting documentation would include, but is not limited to:

- o ORIGINAL OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS OF ALL COLLEGE STUDY;
- o CLEP, DANTE, ACTFL, or Excelsior exam score reports;
- o any documentation of paid teaching experience that we have requested;
- o documentation of experience in lieu of student teaching;
- o copy of teaching certificates from other states;

- o copy of professional license or Certification such as professional license for LPN or speech language pathologist, etc;
- o and/or any other information that we may have previously requested that will enable us to complete an evaluation.

Transcripts are not required for all pathways to Certification. Specifically, we do not require transcripts for applications submitted through the NYS Approved Teacher Preparation Program pathway. A recommendation from the college in which you completed your program leading to Certification is sufficient.


Please note due to storage space limitations we can only retain paper records for 3 years. If you previously submitted paper documentation more than three years ago, we no longer have them on file. Please submit new documentation.

You may **send all paper documentation or correspondence** to us at:

New York State Education Department  
Office of Teaching Initiatives, Room 5N-EB  
89 Washington Avenue  
Albany NY 12234

You can check to see if we received the documents you sent to us. Access your TEACH account, click on Account Information, and select the link for Correspondence to view a list of all documents you sent to us.

#### 6. Check the status of your application

Click  to check the status of your application and to view your pending evaluation.

**Address Change:** If you have not received your certificate in the mail and your address changes, you may login to TEACH at any time and click Verify/Update Profile to update your address. Even after you receive your certificate, it is important that you notify us of future address changes so that you can receive any additional notices.

For more information go to

- o [Becoming Certified - What's My Next Step?](#)
- o [How do I check on the status of an application I submitted online?](#)

#### 7. Receive your certificate by mail

**Effective and Expiration Date:** Please take notice of the effective date and validity period of your certificate. Certain certificate types, such as Initial, Provisional, and Teaching Assistant certificates are

time limited. You must complete the requirements for the next level certificate before the first certificate expires. For more information on certificate validity periods, go to [Types of Certificates and Licenses](#).

**Check for Errors:** If you have received your certificate in the mail and it has errors such as misspellings, wrong subject area or Certification type, please send the certificate back to us with a letter identifying the error. We will correct the error and re-issue your certificate at no cost to you. You may wish to return the certificate "return receipt requested" and keep a photocopy for your records.

**Duplicate Certificates:** If your certificate is lost or stolen you may apply for a duplicate certificate. Click to apply for a duplicate certificate. For more information go to [Duplicates](#).

**Certificate Time Extensions:** If you are unable to meet the requirements for the next level certificate before your certificate expires, you may be eligible for a time extension. For more information, go to [Time Extension of a Provisional, Initial, or Transitional Certificate](#).

**Certificate Re-Issuance:** If your Initial certificate expires, your certificate may be re-issued. For more information go to [Re-issuance of an Expired Initial certificate](#).

## 8. Professional Development for Certificate Holders

Requirements for holders of advanced-level certificates vary by type of certificate.

**Professional:** Holders of the Professional classroom teaching certificate must complete 175 hours of professional development every five years. Satisfaction of this requirement maintains the validity of the certificate. For more information on acceptable professional development activities, and how to report and record hours completed, go to [Professional Development for Professional Certificate Holders](#).


**Level III Teaching Assistant:** Holders of the Level III Teaching Assistant certificate must complete 75 hours of professional development every five years. Satisfaction of this requirement maintains the validity of the certificate. For more information on acceptable professional development activities, and how to report and record hours completed, go to [Professional Development for Teaching Assistant Level III Certificate](#).

**Permanent:** Holders of the Permanent certificate do not have to meet a continuing professional development requirement. The certificate is good for life, unless revoked for cause.

## 9. Apply for an additional certificate

Holders of most New York State certificates may qualify for an additional certificate without meeting all of the requirements that a first-time applicant must meet. To determine whether this provision is applicable to you, as well as the exact requirements for a second Certification, go to



Click  to apply online for an additional certificate!

