

NYS Certification Changes in Response to COVID-19



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May 2020

In response to the COVID-19 crisis, the State Education Department (SED) has amended several regulations that govern certification in NY. These amendments may help individuals with certificates that expire in August 2020, have applied/are applying for certificates or certificate extensions before September 1, 2020, as well as special education teachers who teach in a special class.

Emergency COVID-19 Certificate

The Emergency COVID-19 Certificate is intended to address situations where applicants for certificates and/or certificate extensions have completed all the requirements except for state certification examinations. The COVID-19 certificate would permit individuals in this situation to be considered certified and thus employable in the area of the certificate and/or certificate extension sought.

The COVID-19 certificate is valid for one (1) year. During that year, the COVID-19 Certificate holder must take and pass the missing exam(s).

Examples of individuals who may be eligible for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate include, but are not limited to, those who:

- Complete or completed a New York State registered teacher or educational leadership preparation program leading to Initial or Professional certification, or a registered extension program, prior to the Fall 2020 term, including traditional programs and Transitional B, C, and D programs;
• Graduate or graduated from an acceptable out-of-state teacher or educational leadership preparation program and have less than three years of acceptable experience in another state prior to the Fall 2020 term;
• Are seeking Initial or Professional teacher certification through the "Individual Evaluation" pathway;
• Are seeking a Teaching Assistant certificate and have not passed the Assessment of Teaching Assistant Skills (ATAS);
• Are seeking a Transitional A certificate through the Option B pathway (CTE teachers), or a Transitional B, C, or D certificate;

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- Held an Initial teacher or school building leader certificate, have less than three (3) years of experience, and are seeking an Initial Reissuance;
- Hold or held a Transitional G certificate, or have acceptable postsecondary teaching experience, and are seeking an Initial or Professional teacher certificate; and
- Hold a valid New York State teacher certificate and are seeking an additional Initial or Professional teacher certificate, Supplementary certificate, or certain extensions.

**Application Process (Application Deadline is September 1, 2020):**

**TWO (2) applications** are required: one for the certificate (or extension) sought **AND** one for the COVID-19 Certificate. Applications are submitted on TEACH.

As per the state education department, “the Emergency COVID-19 certificate application will be available in TEACH in May 2020.”

Application Example: candidate for the Childhood 1-6 certificate has met all the requirements for the certificate EXCEPT for the Content Specialty Test (CST) required. This individual will submit two (2) applications on TEACH: one for the Childhood 1-6 certificate **AND** one for the COVID-19 certificate. The COVID-19 certificate will be issued if all other requirements are met; the Childhood 1-6 will be issued once the missing CST is successfully completed.

There is **NO FEE TO APPLY** for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate. Applicants apply on TEACH and do not pay the fee; SED will waive the application fee and change the application status to “Ready for Review”.

There **is still a fee** for the certificate or certificate extension sought.

**COVID-19 Certificate Renewal:**

If Emergency COVID-19 certificate holders do not successfully complete required certification exam(s) prior to the expiration date of the Emergency COVID-19 certificate, they can apply for a one-time, one-year extension of the certificate.

To renew the Emergency COVID-19 certificate, applicants must receive a recommendation for the renewal from a principal and the superintendent in the New York State school district in which the candidate is employed, or a recommendation for the renewal from the BOCES District Superintendent in the BOCES in which the candidate is employed.

## **ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION CHANGES, MAY 2020:**

1. Individuals with an Initial certificate, an Initial Reissuance, a Provisional certificate, or a Provisional Renewal that expires on August 31, 2020 will have the expiration date extended to January 31, 2021 in order to provide additional time to complete the requirements for the next level certificate.

*Note: Individuals who have not previously received a time extension, certificate reissuance, or certificate renewal can still access these options if they need more time beyond January 31, 2021 to complete requirements.*

The expiration dates will automatically be changed in the TEACH online system in May 2020.

2. Individuals with a Conditional Initial certificate that expires on August 31, 2020 will have the expiration date extended to August 31, 2021.

The expiration dates will automatically be changed in the TEACH online system in May 2020.

3. SED will allow any undergraduate or graduate level content core or pedagogical core course, completed during the Spring, Summer, or Fall 2020 terms with a “pass” grade, or its equivalent, to count towards the content core or pedagogical core semester hour requirements for certification through the Individual Evaluation pathway.

The passing grade, or its equivalent, must be in accordance with the pass/fail grading policy, or its equivalent, at the institution of higher education (e.g., credit/no credit, pass/fail, satisfactory/unsatisfactory policy).

## **PRIOR CERTIFICATION CHANGES, APRIL 2020:**

1. SED created an edTPA safety net for candidates in NYS teacher education programs whose student teaching or similar clinical experience in spring of 2020 was impacted by COVID-19. These candidates can take and pass either the ATS-W or edTPA. Eligible candidates who choose to take the edTPA but do not pass it, could take and pass the ATS-W or pursue the edTPA Multiple Measures Review Process (MMRP).
2. SPECIAL EDUCATION: The SOCE application deadline has been extended to June 30, 2021 so that school districts have time to identify staff who are eligible for the SOCE, inform them about the application process and any supports provided, and submit the materials needed for applications since school districts are losing time during the COVID-19 crisis.

- The deadline to complete satisfactory full-time teaching experience while being considered Highly Qualified through passing a HOUSSSE rubric for the SOCE or limited extension has been extended to June 30, 2021.

For additional information on changes to certification requirements for special education teachers, please see Fact Sheet 20-10: NYS Certification: Students with Disabilities at <https://www.nysut.org/resources/all-listing/filtered-resources/topic/certification-state>.

For State Education Department guidance on all COVID-19 related changes to certification, please visit their website at <http://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/>.