

For guidance and FAQs for current educators and staff please see the **Guidance for Current Educators and Staff - Educator Evaluations and Non-renewal** document located under the [Current Educator Evaluation and Support](#).

For guidance and FAQs for Intern and Emergency Permits- *for candidates pursuing intern certificates in the 2020-21 academic year* - please see the **Intern and Emergency Permit Waivers FAQ** document located under [Educator Certification and Preparation](#).

Educator Certification Guidance and FAQ: Section Topics

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Currently Enrolled Educator Candidates

Although many candidates have completed the requirements necessary to receive their standard certificates at the end of the spring semester, some candidates have been unable to fulfill testing requirements due to the closure of schools and testing sites. Building upon [prior guidance related to educator preparation requirements](#), this guidance provides updates related to candidates currently enrolled in educator preparation programs (EPPs) and the requirements for certification given the impacts of COVID-19.

To manage the impact of the public health crisis on educator certification candidates, Governor Abbott has issued waivers to allow certain candidates who have completed EPP requirements to qualify for a one-year probationary certificate so that they may be certified for the 2020-21 school year without meeting testing requirements, paid internship requirements, and other pre-employment requirements. The waiver applies to individuals who meet one of the following conditions:

- Teacher candidates who completed clinical teaching during Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020 and are designated as having completed all preparation requirements by their educator preparation program;
- Teacher candidates who completed an internship during Spring 2020 and are designated as having completed all preparation requirements by their educator preparation program; or
- Non-teacher candidates who completed a practicum during Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020 and are designated as completing all requirements of their educator preparation program.

While State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules allow for a probationary certificate for certain candidates enrolled in alternative certification programs, the flexibility provided by Governor Abbott’s waiver creates the possibility for additional candidates to receive the one-year probationary certificate and seek (or maintain) employment as a certified educator. This flexibility also provides some clarity for hiring districts about who is eligible for hire as a certified educator.

Updated August 10, 2020

Eligible candidates should begin the application process immediately following the instructions below, and educator preparation programs will be able to recommend eligible candidates using options in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS).

EPPs will need to work with their program specialist to understand the processes and identify any additional documentation that may be required if they are unable to complete the recommendation during the priority recommendation window. **The issuance of these certificates is authorized by Governor Abbott’s March 13, 2020 disaster declaration. When this declaration is lifted or expires, these certificates will no longer be able to be issued. TEA does not determine this end date. We highly recommend that you get your candidates through this process as quickly as possible.**

The probationary certificate will be valid for one year only and candidates must complete all testing requirements to receive the standard certificate before the probationary certificate expires.

Certification Flexibility Due to COVID-19:

Background of Applicant	Flexibility Provided
Teacher candidates without an existing certification who completed clinical teaching in Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020, who have not passed their required certification exams.	Teacher candidates who completed clinical teaching during Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020 and are designated as having completed all preparation requirements by their educator preparation program are eligible for a Probationary certificate . The certificate will be issued upon submission of a complete candidate application and preparation program recommendation indicating that all other requirements have been met. Complete candidate applications and program recommendations must be completed in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS).

<p>Non-teacher candidates without an existing certification who completed a practicum in Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020, who have not passed their required certification exams.</p>	<p>Non-teacher candidates who completed a practicum during Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020 and are designated as completing all requirements of their educator preparation program are eligible for a Probationary certificate.</p> <p>The certificate will be issued upon submission of a complete candidate application and preparation program recommendation indicating that all other requirements have been met. Complete candidate applications and program recommendations must be completed in ECOS.</p>
<p>Teacher candidates on intern certificates that are expiring in Spring 2020, who have not passed their required certification exams.</p>	<p>Teacher candidates who completed an internship during Spring 2020 and are designated as having completed all preparation requirements by their educator preparation program are eligible for a Probationary certificate.</p> <p>The certificate will be issued upon submission of a complete candidate application and preparation program recommendation indicating that all other requirements have been met. Complete candidate applications and program recommendations must be completed in ECOS.</p>
<p>Non-teacher candidates on intern certificates that are expiring in Spring 2020, who have not passed their required certification exams.</p>	<p>Non-teacher candidates who completed a practicum during Fall 2019 and/or Spring 2020 and are designated as completing all requirements of their educator preparation program are eligible for a Probationary certificate.</p> <p>The certificate will be issued upon submission of a complete candidate application and preparation program recommendation indicating that all other requirements have been met. Complete candidate applications and program recommendations must be completed in ECOS.</p>

FAQs from Teacher Candidates

1. What constitutes a complete candidate application? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

A complete candidate application is the correct online application (in this case, Probationary Certificate Texas Program) submitted by the candidate with the required \$78 fee; verification of fingerprint complete status; and an EPP online recommendation for issuance of the certificate.

2. What steps do I take to apply for this probationary certificate? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)



Follow the step-by-step instructions included in this document to submit your online application and payment to TEA.

3. What is a probationary certificate good for? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

A probationary certificate issued in the appropriate teacher or non-teacher certification area allows a candidate to be appropriately certified to serve in that role during the one-year validity period of the credential.

4. How long is a probationary certificate valid for? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

A probationary certificate issued under provisions of the Governor waivers is valid for one year.

5. What happens once I take and pass my certification exams after being issued the probationary certificate? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

If you have successfully completed all other preparation program requirements and your EPP confirms you are ready to apply for the standard certificate, you should submit a complete candidate application (in this case, Standard Certificate Texas Program) and payment to TEA. If you have additional preparation program requirements to complete, your EPP will confirm when you should submit your online application and payment to TEA so that they can recommend you for the standard certificate.

6. I have already met all preparation program requirements and passed my certification exams, what are my next steps? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

Submit a complete candidate application (in this case, Standard Certificate Texas Program) with the required \$78 fee and an EPP online recommendation for issuance of the standard certificate.

7. What if I'm a non-teacher candidate (e.g. principal candidate, school counselor candidate) on an intern certificate who completed a practicum, but did not meet all preparation program requirements? What certificate am I eligible for? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

Under current SBEC rules, you are eligible for the probationary certificate if you submit a complete candidate application (Probationary Certificate Texas Program) and payment and an EPP online recommendation for issuance of the certificate.

8. Will there can be any leeway for fingerprinting of teacher candidates who will not be able to go in for digital fingerprinting at this time? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

IdentoGO, the fingerprinting vendor for the Tx. Dept. of Public Safety (DPS), has closed or reduced operating hours in nearly half of its locations in Texas due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The closures have resulted in a decrease in fingerprinting appointment availability within certain regions. However, in the interest of student safety, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) is not planning to modify fingerprinting requirements for certificate applicants, non-certified employees, or any other individuals required to fingerprint for TEA or the State Board for

Educator Certification (SBEC). The agency will continue to monitor the situation and notify school districts and educator preparation programs if there is a change in policy. As a reminder to applicants for SBEC certification, fingerprinting is required for issuance of the initial certificate. As long as a person holds an SBEC certificate, TEA will receive real-time notifications of subsequent criminal history through the DPS Clearinghouse. Therefore, an individual does not need to fingerprint again to receive additional certificates. Furthermore, if an individual previously fingerprinted as a non-certified school district or charter school employee, TEA will be already subscribed to that person's criminal history and the person does not need to fingerprint again to obtain an SBEC certificate.

For more information about fingerprinting requirements or to submit a fingerprinting Help Desk ticket, please visit the TEA fingerprinting website at <https://tea.texas.gov/texaseducators/investigations/fingerprinting/fingerprinting-and-registry>.

Additionally, please visit the DPS Clearinghouse website for information about the fingerprinting vendor's operations and guidelines for reducing exposure to COVID-19 during the fingerprinting process. <https://secure.txdps.state.tx.us/Clearinghouse/index.aspx>.

9. Will applicants for SBEC certification or employment at a school district be allowed to wear masks during their fingerprinting appointment? Posted May 7, 2020

An applicant may wear a mask through most of the fingerprinting appointment. However, the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) has advised that applicants will be required to take a photograph without a mask. Therefore, if an applicant is unwilling to remove their mask for the photo-portion of the appointment, the process will stop, and the applicant will be asked to reschedule for a later date.

For the safety of everyone involved with the fingerprinting appointment, DPS has requested that the fingerprinting vendor adhere to recommended practices for the sanitization of workstations and public areas, maintain a 6' distance between people when possible, and that fingerprinting agents use any available personal protective equipment (PPE). DPS has also posted a list of guidelines to reduce the likelihood of exposure during the fingerprinting appointment. That list can be found here: <https://secure.txdps.state.tx.us/clearinghouse/>.

10. How can candidates complete the 15 clock-hours of field-based experiences on a school campus if the schools are closed? Posted March 26, 2020

Governor Abbott has waived the requirement that 15 clock-hours of field-based experiences must be completed on a school campus for those completing field-based experience requirements in spring or summer 2020. All field-based experiences may be completed by use of electronic transmission or other video or technology-based method.

11. Will candidates who pay the application fee for the probationary certificate issued under the governor’s waiver also have to pay the application fee for a standard certificate in the future? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes. Under current SBEC rules, these are two different certificate applications that require two separate fees for issuance. Many candidates around the state have met all testing requirements and with the support of their educator preparation program will be able to move straight to a standard certificate for a cost of \$78. Candidates who have not yet met their testing requirements have the option to seek the one-year probationary certificate or to wait until they can complete testing and then seek the standard certificate. For candidates who prefer to test and seek the standard certificate, additional testing centers will be reopening in early May where local guidance permits. Candidates who choose to seek the probationary certificate now and the standard certificate later would pay \$78 for each certificate.

12. The probationary certificate issued under the governor’s waiver requires that candidates complete all requirements. What is meant by this? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Requirements for initial certification as an educator in Texas are included in the Texas Administrative Code. In addition, individual educator preparation programs (EPPs) may have additional local requirements that candidates must satisfy. EPPs will need to make their own decisions about requirements that are above what is required by the state. EPPs must verify that candidates have completed all requirements for this certification.

13. When will testing centers be reopened? Where is the best source of information about testing center closures? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Test Centers are beginning to re-open across the state. As they do, they may have reduced capacity in order to meet health and safety guidelines and physical distancing restrictions. As a result, in your search for available appointments you may need to broaden your search geographically or extend your search to future dates. Since additional appointments may become available as more sites re-open over time, you can monitor seat availability and reschedule if desired. The Texas Educator Certification Examination Program [website](#) continues to be the best site to receive updated information.

14. My scheduled TExES exam was canceled due to COVID-19 and my exam registration has expired. What are my next steps? [Posted May 7, 2020](#)

If your exam was canceled due to COVID-19 and your exam registration expired before you could reschedule, please contact Pearson. Pearson will provide you with a free exam code to allow you to register again.

15. My scheduled TExES exam was canceled due to COVID-19 and I am unable to find a new appointment before my exam registration expires. What are my next steps? [Posted May 7, 2020](#)

If your exam was canceled due to COVID-19 and you are unable to find an appointment before your exam registration is set to expire, please contact Pearson. If your exam registration will expire within two weeks' time, Pearson will instruct you to withdraw your registration for a full refund (minus the tx.gov fee).

16. I already have an existing certification. Do I need to complete additional fingerprinting and background check processes to add the probationary certificate? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

If you fingerprinted previously for an SBEC-issued certificate or employment in a Texas school district or charter school, you are not required to repeat the fingerprinting process for issuance of the probationary certificate. TEA will receive notification through the DPS Clearinghouse about updates to our criminal history record. All information may be considered to determine your fitness for a certificate or employment in a school. Authority to receive notification about your criminal history is found in Tx Gov. Code, Chap. 411 Subch. F and Tx Edu Code Chap 22, Subch. C.

17. I am a principal candidate who has completed all of my preparation program requirements but was not able to take and complete my certification exams, including PASL. Am I eligible to apply for the probationary certificate? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes, principal candidates who meet this description are eligible to apply for the probationary certificate under the Governor-approved waiver.

18. Will scores for the new ETS TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition test be accepted in lieu of taking the TOEFL iBT® test at a test center? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes, the test is identical in content, format, and on-screen experience to the TOEFL iBT test taken at a test center.

FAQs from Districts

1. I have an employee who is currently on an intern certificate. What does this guidance mean for them? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

The provisions of the Governor waiver allow your employee to qualify for issuance of a probationary certificate if he or she meets specified requirements, submits a completed online application to TEA, and is recommended for certification by his or her EPP.

2. How long will the certificate be effective for? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

A probationary certificate issued under provisions of the Governor waiver is valid for one year.

3. Does a district need to complete any additional paperwork to hire someone on a probationary certificate? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

No. For TEA purposes, a district does not need to complete any additional paperwork to hire someone on a probationary certificate. If an employing district has paperwork that is completed as part of its hiring process, the district should continue to comply with its own standard operating procedures.

4. Can a teacher with a probationary certificate serve as a teacher of record? Posted April 22, 2020

Yes. Candidates issued a probationary certificate under provisions of the Governor waiver are considered appropriately certified to serve as a teacher of record.

5. How can I validate that an individual holds a probationary certificate? Posted April 22, 2020

As a standard best practice, districts should utilize their secure entity access through ECOS to verify an individual's certificate status.

6. Senate Bill 7 (85R) requires schools to obtain a notarized pre-employment affidavit prior to starting work in a public school or ESC. Given the social distancing requirements. What guidance does TEA have regarding how to handle the notarization of the affidavit during this time? Posted May 7, 2020

As of September 1, 2019, Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.009 applies to applicants for a position described by TEC §21.003 in a public or private school. The law requires that applicants submit a pre-employment affidavit disclosing whether the applicant has ever been charged with, adjudicated for, or convicted of having an inappropriate relationship with a minor.

The role of TEA in this requirement is to adopt the pre-employment affidavit. In November 2017, the Commissioner approved a pre-employment affidavit that does not require notarization. To comply with the law, schools should use this form for every applicant to whom TEC §21.009 pertains. The Commissioner also approved a version of the affidavit that allows for notarization. Schools may use the notarized affidavit for the candidate selected for employment in the position but are not required to use this form for all applicants. To download either version of the affidavit, see the "To the Administrator Addressed" memo at <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/correspondence/taa-letters/pre-employment-affidavit-for-educators>.

Should a public or private school choose to use a notarized affidavit during the period of social-distancing, the school may use a mobile notary or a notary specially certified to perform online remote notarization. Online notaries in Texas are governed by the Texas Government Code, Subchapter C, Chapter 406 and the Texas Administrative Code Title 1, Chapter 87.

7. Will the probationary certificate be an option for out-of-state prepared candidates who are unable to obtain full Professional certification in their home state due to testing centers being closed? Posted April 28, 2020

No. The probationary certificate is established for in-state candidates completing requirements for certification through a Texas-approved educator preparation program.

As part of the review of out-of-state credentials process, an applicant that has completed all requirements for certification in another state and is only lacking completion of state-required tests for issuance of licensure in the other state may submit a letter of verification from the state department of education that confirms the applicant's completion of all certification requirements and specifies the tests needed for issuance of the certificate. This official letter from the state department of education can serve as verification of eligibility for issuance of the standard certificate in the other state. It is accepted via email to osc75@tea.texas.gov.

Current SBEC rules in 19 TAC Chapter 230, Subchapter H, Texas Educator Certificates Based on Certificates and College Credentials from Other States or Territories of the United States, §230.111(d) General Provisions, states the following: "A statement, approval letter, or certification entitlement card issued by the authorizing licensing agency in another state or territory of the United States specifying eligibility for full certification upon employment or completion of specified examination requirements shall have the same standing as a certificate."

Given the current events of COVID-19 and its impact on certification and testing, TEA's Division of Educator Certification will continue to look for ways to maximize flexibility with the credentials review process and stay within its current rules.

8. Does the probationary certification waiver also apply to candidates seeking bilingual or special education certification? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes.

9. Can an emergency permit be reissued for the 2020-2021 school year? [Posted June 9, 2020](#)

Yes, the governor has suspended SBEC rules specific to emergency permit renewal. This will allow the employing districts to submit an online application and \$57 fee to re-issue the emergency permit valid for one additional year during the 2020-2021 school year.

This is not an automatic renewal of the emergency permit. Employing districts must initiate this process by submitting the emergency permit application for those certified educators that served on a permit during the 2019-2020 school year, that they intend to employ in the same assignment for the 2020-2021 school year.

10. Can teachers with a standard certificate add a certificate area under the conditions of the waiver? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

No. The waiver is for candidates who completed an internship or clinical teaching in 2019-2020. The probationary certificate available under the Governor's waiver are not a replacement for the current certification-by-exam route.

11. With the recent announcement of certification waivers, will there be any consideration given to providing some flexibility for currently certified teachers who are trying to add a certification? [Posted May 7, 2020](#)

No. As test centers are beginning to re-open across the state, we encourage current educators seeking to add additional certification areas to look for opportunities to test via additional certification by examination.

12. Will TEA extend the Texas one-year certificate for out-of-state educators who have been unable to obtain a standard certificate because of COVID-19? [Posted April 14, 2020](#)

YES. 19 TAC Chapter 230, Subchapter H, Texas Educator Certificates Based on Certification and College Credentials from Other States or Territories of the United States, includes a provision (§230.113(d)) that allows for a one-year extension of the certificate due to circumstances beyond the control of the educator.

For this reason, out-of-state applicants currently on a Texas one-year certificate that have been impacted by COVID-19 are eligible for an extension of their current temporary certificate. TEA will automatically extend the validity period one additional year for all current Texas one-year certificate holders whose one-year certificates expire between 3/1/2020 and 8/31/2020. No further action is needed by districts or one-year certificate holders.

13. Is TEA considering waiving teacher certification renewal? [Posted April 14, 2020](#)

Not at this time. In specific cases where an educator has a catastrophic illness or injury or is caring for an immediate family member with a catastrophic illness or injury, that educator is eligible for a hardship exemption to allow additional time for certificate renewal. While TEA is highly sensitive to the concerns around COVID-19, the current situation does not necessitate waiving teacher certification renewal requirements for all educators. Educators are able to renew their certification as early as six months prior to expiration, and certificate renewal is a paperless process completed through the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS). Because ECOS has 24/7 access, educators can complete the renewal process and submit their online payment at any time from their preferred location. Additional information on the [certificate renewal process](#), including a frequently asked questions document and guidance on obtaining continuing professional education hours, is available on the website.

14. Have there been any changes to the CPE requirements for teachers and will online workshops will satisfy the CPE requirements? [Posted May 7, 2020](#)

There have not been any changes to the continuing professional education (CPE) requirements for teachers in response to COVID-19. Regarding rules related to certificate renewal, educators may complete online trainings during this time that address requirements and obtain CPE hours

for the purpose of certificate renewal through approved providers. Information related to CPE requirements and approved providers can be found on the [CPE page](#).

15. Can employees who complete mandatory staff training during this time count the completion for the 2020-2021 school year? Posted April 14, 2020

Regarding rules related to certificate renewal, educators may complete online trainings during this time that address requirements and obtain continuing professional education (CPE) hours for the purpose of certificate renewal.

16. How will Texas handle the review of out-of-state credentials this year, given the effects of COVID-19 and its impact on testing and certification? Posted May 12, 2020

The Texas Education Agency joins other state departments of education in working to facilitate the transfer of credentials from one state to another. COVID-19 has impacted the completion of certification and testing requirements across the country. TEA is exercising the following options to support completion of the Texas review of out-of-state credentials:

- **Certificates** – While photocopies of certificates issued in other states and online certificate records from state department of education websites remain acceptable options for verification of licensure that can be uploaded into the educator’s certification file, TEA will also accept certificates issued by state departments of education that confirm testing is the only requirement lacking to qualify for standard certification in the other state. It is expected that the name of the credential will likely vary across states (e.g., temporary, probationary), but the common requirement for Texas to accept that credential issued in response to COVID-19 is that the completion of required tests is the only thing lacking to obtain standard certification. Official letters from state departments of education remain an acceptable form of documentation that a certification candidate has met all requirements except testing for issuance of standard certification in the other state.
- **Transcripts** – An official transcript that shows degree conferred and date, bearing the registrar’s signature and seal remains a requirement for completion of the out-of-state credentials review. TEA will continue to accept official transcripts received via postal mail. The effects of COVID-19 have caused some institutions to stop issuing paper transcripts and many have moved to online issuance only. Universities may deliver transcripts to TEA via eScrip-Safe, or by direct email to OSC75@tea.texas.gov. TEA will also accept photocopies of official transcripts from Texas school districts via their secure Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) access for entities. The upload of transcripts through ECOS for Entities should only be utilized by districts intending to employ individuals certified in other states that have applied for the Texas review of out-of-state credentials.

Once TEA has received all required documents and completed the Texas review of out-of-state credentials, individuals can apply for the Texas one-year certificate. A separate application and

related fees for the certificate and fingerprinting are required for issuance of the temporary state credential. Individuals who did not take and pass required tests in other states may teach for a year under the one-year certificate but **must** take and pass the required Texas examinations to qualify for issuance of the standard certificate in Texas.

FAQs From Educator Preparation Programs

To manage the impact of the public health crisis on educator certification and preparation programs, Governor Abbott has issued the following waivers for those completing clinical teaching during spring 2020, engaging in an internship or a practicum during spring 2020, or completing field-based experience requirements in spring or summer 2020: [Posted March 26, 2020](#)

- For those candidates who have met at least half of the required days of clinical teaching, demonstrated proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignments and for whom their field supervisors and cooperating teachers recommend to the candidates' educator preparation program (EPP) that the candidates should be recommended for a standard certificate, the requirements of 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(i)(I) imposing clinical teaching requirements are waived as necessary.
- For those candidates who have met at least half of the required hours of practicum, demonstrated proficiency in each of the educator standards for the assignments, and for whom the field supervisor and site supervisor recommend to the EPP that the candidates should be recommended for a standard certificate, the requirements of 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8) imposing minimum practicum requirements are waived as necessary.
- The requirements for candidates' experiences to be performed in actual school settings under 19 TAC §228.35(e)(6) and 19 TAC §228.35(e)(8)(A) are waived as necessary.
- The requirements for a minimum number of hours of field-based experience under TEC, §21.051(b), and 19 TAC §228.35(e)(1)(A) and §228.35(e)(1)(B) are waived as necessary.
- The requirements for face-to-face observations under 19 TAC §228.35(g) and 19 TAC §228.35(h) are waived as necessary.
- The requirements for educator and administrator surveys for educator preparation program accountability under 19 TAC §229.3 are waived as necessary.

1. **How do programs recommend candidates for the probationary certificate?** [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

EPPs will use the same process to recommend these candidates as for any probationary certificate. Step by step guidance is available in this document. EPPs will need to provide information about the candidate, verify the certificate, and select district 000005 (TEA Cohort 2020) to recommend.

2. **Do programs have to provide formal observations for these candidates on a probationary certificate?** [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

No. Candidates who have successfully completed an internship or clinical teaching have fulfilled this requirement. These candidates are not completing an internship under the probationary certificate, so formal observations are not required. The exception would be candidates who did not successfully complete an internship under their intern certificate, who are addressed below.

3. Do programs need to mark these candidates as finishers on the finisher records list? Posted April 22, 2020

Yes. If the candidate has completed the EPP requirements, the EPP needs to update the finisher records list in ECOS to note that the candidate is a finisher. Candidates do not need to pass certification exams to be marked as a finisher.

4. How should programs work with candidates who were unsuccessful in their internship? Posted April 22, 2020

For candidates who completed an internship under an intern license but who were unsuccessful, EPPs should recommend them for a probationary certificate under this process. However, these candidates should not be marked as finishers. EPPs should complete formal observations for these candidates.

5. What should programs do with candidates who have not yet had their bachelor's degree conferred? Posted April 22, 2020

When completing a recommendation, EPPs can put a date of degree conferral that is in the future.

UPDATED
8/10/2020

6. Is there any documentation necessary for recommending these certificates? Updated August 10, 2020

Yes. EPPs will need to complete the Probationary Certificates Recommended under Governor Waiver spreadsheet provided by TEA. This form will need to include information for all candidates recommended for a probationary certificate under these conditions. This form will allow TEA to make necessary adjustments in our databases. TEA has provided this form for [download](#) on the TEA Program Provider Resources [website](#).

7. Will principal candidates who have not taken their 268 test and/or PASL but completed all other requirements be eligible to apply for the probationary certificate? Posted April 28, 2020

Yes, principal candidates who meet this description are eligible to apply for the probationary certificate under the Governor-approved waiver.

8. If fingerprinting site closures cause delays in candidates submitting completed applications, could the time frame for the probationary certificates be extended? Posted April 28, 2020

IdentoGO, the fingerprinting vendor for the Tx. Dept. of Public Safety (DPS), has closed or reduced operating hours in approximately half of its locations in Texas due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The closures have resulted in a decrease in fingerprinting appointment availability in certain regions. However, in the interest of student safety, TEA is not planning to modify fingerprinting requirements for certificate applicants, non-certified employees, or any other individuals required to fingerprint for TEA/SBEC. Please visit the DPS Clearinghouse website for information about the fingerprinting vendor's operations and guidelines for reducing exposure to COVID-19 during the fingerprinting process.

<https://secure.txdps.state.tx.us/Clearinghouse/index.aspx>.

9. How does a candidate get their standard certificate after having the probationary certificate? Does the EPP need to recommend the standard certificate? Posted April 28, 2020

Candidates who have the probationary certificate under the Governor's waiver are eligible for standard certification once they have completed all testing requirements. Candidates will need to submit a complete application for the standard certificate and be recommended for certificate issuance by their EPP.

UPDATED
8/10/2020

10. Please provide clarity around the requirements for the probationary certificates issued under the Governor's waiver. The window for educator preparation programs to approve the new Probationary Certificate is May 15 - July 1. If candidates have required summer trainings that are not complete until after July 1, are they eligible? If candidates will graduate in August, are they eligible? Updated August 10, 2020

The conditions related to the probationary certificate are in effect until terminated by the Office of the Governor or until the March 13, 2020 disaster declaration is lifted or expires. For processing purposes, TEA has temporarily updated the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) to enable EPPs to automatically recommend these certificates during the priority recommendation window. Due to updated technical requirements, the priority recommendation window has been extended through September 30. Please follow up with your program specialist to understand the processes and any additional documentation that may be required if you are unable to complete the recommendation during the priority recommendation window. Additionally, as testing centers continue to open, there are additional opportunities for candidates to complete testing requirements.

11. Normally there is a statement of eligibility that needs to be filled out by districts for probationary certification. Is this needed for the probationary certificate issued under the Governor's waiver? Posted May 7, 2020

A statement of eligibility from a district is not required for the probationary certificate issued under the Governor's waiver. EPPs should select the district "000005 - TEA Cohort 2020" when completing the recommendation.

12. Will candidates with the probationary certificate who do not have their standard certificate in EC-6 or 4-8 ELA by 12/31/2020 be required to take the Science of Teaching Reading exam to be eligible for their standard certificate? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes. All candidates pursuing certification in Core Subjects: EC-6, Core Subjects: 4-8, ELAR: 4-8, or ELAR/SS: 4-8 will be required to take the STR exam if they do not have their standard certificate prior to 12/31/2020.

13. If we have some students who do not have 35 days, can we count weekends as clinical teaching days? Are there other options for students who did not achieve the shortened 35-day requirement? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

The requirement for the number of days in internships and clinical teaching consists of school days. Weekends are not considered school days. We encourage the EPP to work with the clinical teacher and their cooperating teacher to identify solutions that will work within their local contexts, including taking advantage of flexibility in supporting students in non-traditional instruction.

14. Can candidates count days in placement conducting e-Learning working with their cooperating teachers? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes.

15. For principals and other non-teacher educators, some program models require practicum hours throughout the certification program. For example, in some programs, candidates are required to get 160 hours over two semesters – 80 hours the first semester and 80 hours the second. If the candidate completed 80 hours in Fall 2019 and was expected to have 80 hours in Spring 2020, have they met the requirement? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

The candidate just needs to complete 50% of the required hours as per the Governor's waiver - The combined total hours for Fall 2019 and Spring 2020 needs to be at least 80 hours total to reach the 50% minimum per the approved waiver.

16. In our principal prep program, candidates are required to complete trainings for T-TESS or AEL, and there is no allowance to complete these in any format other than face to face. Are there online alternatives? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

T-TESS and AEL are currently being converted to an online format for virtual use. Please contact LaWanda Carley at ESC 13 for more information on delivering T-TESS or AEL virtually to students.

17. Will the TEA-approved field supervisor training be put online if it is not offered during the Summer? Currently, these are not allowed to be offered in any other way other than face to face. [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

The field supervisor training is currently being converted to a virtual setting, and more information will be provided as it becomes available.

18. Does the 90-day emergency declaration extension or any of the current Governor’s waivers impact admission requirements? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

No. State requirements for admission to EPPs have not been waived. This includes documentation requirements and English language proficiency requirements.

19. Many universities are using Pass-Fail grading system. Is this acceptable per TEA as long as we meet the requirements at admissions on content hours and GPA per TAC for students? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

This is a university policy on grading. Grading policies used by the EPPs are at the discretion of the program.

20. Do candidates completing clinical teaching as an Educational Aide also get a 50% reduction in their time? That would mean they need 245 hours, right? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Yes. The waiver of 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(i)(I) reduces all clinical teaching requirements by 50%, including the requirement for candidates working as educational aides.

21. Are EPP 5-year continuing review audits continuing on the initial timeline? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

As of now, yes. The five-year continuing approval reviews for 2020-2021 are planned as scheduled. There will be a webinar in late summer late August to go over the EPP review process for 2020-2021. The webinar will cover the status report and required documents as well as the process and timelines for the reviews. We will notify EPPs if this changes.

22. What if the principal or field supervisor do not agree on recommending the candidate for their standard certification? What does the EPP do in this instance? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

The waiver is for duration (time) and not for quality. If either party says the candidate has not demonstrated success in all the standards, the EPP would recommend the candidate to complete an additional clinical teaching, internship, or practicum experience as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A)(iii), §228.35(e)(2)(B)(vii), or §228.35(8)(D).

23. Would a candidate who has completed at least 35 days in a full-day assignment (and met requirements for proficiency in the educator standards for the assignment and received recommendation from field supervisor and cooperating teacher) have successfully fulfilled the requirements for clinical teaching, even if the program required two placements but the student was only at one placement before the school district closed? [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A) requires that a candidate who is completing clinical teaching must complete an assignment for each subject area in which the candidate is seeking initial certification. If the requirement is met by one placement (with the waiver), then no additional placement would be needed.

EPPs may have local policies that candidates seeking one certificate must complete clinical teaching in two placements. This is at the discretion of the EPP, and in this case, the EPP would evaluate if the candidate completed requirements per EPP policy in one placement only. For example, if the candidate was seeking Music EC-12, and the candidate was placed in a high school music assignment, he/she would meet the requirement for subject and grade level as required in 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(A) but may not meet requirements in EPP policy that would require clinical teachers pursuing an all-level certificate to demonstrate proficiency in an elementary placement and a secondary placement.

Clinical Teaching

1. **With schools and districts closed or moving online, how can our candidates who are completing clinical teaching meet the required number of days? [Posted March 26, 2020](#)**

In accordance with Governor Abbott's waiver, candidates completing clinical teaching during spring 2020 who meet the following criteria will be considered to have successfully met requirements for clinical teaching: 1) Completed at least half of the required days of clinical teaching, a. 35 days for full-day assignments or b. 70 days for half-day assignments 2) Demonstrated proficiency in each of the educator standards for their assignments (to be determined by the preparation program), and 3) Received a recommendation from their field supervisor and cooperating teacher that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate.

2. **How can my candidates who were in clinical teaching this semester but were not able to meet the above criteria still qualify? [Posted March 26, 2020](#)**

In accordance with Governor Abbott's waiver, the requirements for candidates' clinical teaching experiences to be completed in an actual school setting are also waived. This means that these candidates may complete any additional requirement by supporting their cooperating teacher through non-traditional means and may demonstrate proficiency based on alternative arrangements established by the preparation program, such as but not limited to simulated, remote, virtual, or video classroom experiences and reflection.

3. **How can EPPs provide the required number of formal observations for candidates? [Posted March 26, 2020](#)**

In accordance with Governor Abbott’s waiver, all requirements related to field supervision of candidates have been waived, including the number, duration, timing, and format of the observation.

Internships

1. **With schools and districts closed or moving online, how can our candidates who are completing internships on an Intern or Probationary certification complete their internship?** [Posted March 26, 2020](#)

Per 19 TAC §228.35(e)(2)(B), an internship is, at minimum, one full school year for the classroom teacher. As defined in 19 TAC §228.2(30), a school year may be defined by a particular public or private school. This means that as districts adapt the definition of a school year based on the situation, the school year associated with active internships will also adapt. Because interns are district employees and subject to the requirements of that district, what qualifies as a full year will be dependent on what the district establishes as its modified calendar. Interns who complete the year in the district, even if shortened, will have completed the year according to the rule. Further, for 3 candidates who began their internship in January, the completion of this semester according to the district’s schedule will count as half of the year.

2. **How can EPPs provide the required number of formal observations for interns?** [Posted March 26, 2020](#)

In accordance with Governor Abbott’s waiver, all requirements related to field supervision of candidates have been waived, including the number, duration, timing, and format of the observation.

Practicums for Certificates other than Classroom Teachers

1. **How can candidates complete the required hours for their practicums?** [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

In accordance with Governor Abbott’s waiver, candidates engaging in a practicum during spring 2020 who meet the following criteria will be considered to have successfully met requirements for the practicum:

- Completed at least half of the required hours of the practicum (80 hours)
- Demonstrated proficiency in each of the educator standards for their assignments (to be determined by the preparation program), and
- Received a recommendation from their field supervisor and site supervisor that the candidate should be recommended for a standard certificate.

2. How can EPPs provide the required number of formal observations for candidates completing practicums? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

In accordance with Governor Abbott’s waiver, all requirements related to field supervision of candidates have been waived, including the number, duration, timing, and format of the observation

Educator Preparation Program Accountability

1. With disruptions in educator preparation program operations, will the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP) remain in effect for the 2019-2020 accountability year? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

During these times, we know that EPPs have numerous concerns and priorities related to ASEP. Given the interruption of testing, changes and increases in workload for principals and teachers, and disruptions in field experiences, the indicators in the Accountability System for Educator Preparation (ASEP) have been impacted. TEA will monitor the situation related to accountability and plans to make appropriate recommendations to the State Board for Educator Certification to allow flexibility for EPPs to meet the unique needs of their candidates, institutions, and partner LEAs during this crisis. Given that any ratings would not be calculated until much later in the year, there is time for SBEC to follow the rulemaking schedule and make changes before programs have any impact related to accountability.

2. Are the principal surveys for April to June still on schedule or will they be canceled due to the COVID-19 illness? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

Governor Abbott has waived the requirements for principals to complete the surveys.

3. Is the teacher survey related to educator preparation still happening this spring given COVID-19? [Posted April 22, 2020](#)

Governor Abbott has waived the requirements for teachers to complete the surveys.

Educator Certification Testing Updates

Pearson

Test center openings/closings due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) [Posted April 28, 2020](#)

Pearson will reopen the Texas-based Pearson VUE-owned test centers (PPCs) for Texas Educator Certification Examination Program testing **on May 1, 2020**, where local guidance permits.

In support of candidates' health and safety and the health and safety of their employees, Pearson will follow recommendations from the CDC and World Health Organization for preventing the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, Pearson asks that candidates comply with the health and safety guidelines outlined on [Pearson's COVID-19 webpage](#), including, but not limited to:

- acknowledging that you have not been diagnosed with COVID-19, have not had any flu-like symptoms in the last 14 days, and have not been under 14 days' quarantine or centralized observation;
- participating in social distancing;
- wearing a face mask in locations where required; and,
- in some locations, permitting a temperature check upon arrival.

In addition, Pearson is outfitting test centers with hand sanitizer, increasing their cleaning and disinfecting regimens between testing appointments, permitting the use of disposable gloves and, in locations where they are not required, permitting the optional use of face masks.

Many of Pearson's partner sites, some of which may be located at colleges and universities, have been and continue to remain open. Those that have been closed are making the determination to reopen based on local guidance.

To schedule or reschedule a test appointment:

Pearson encourages candidates to check for test center availability prior to registration by using the seat availability tool. Test centers that are open will appear in the seat availability tool and during the scheduling process. Note that test centers are enforcing social distancing recommendations, and therefore test center capacity will be impacted.

When you have a test appointment scheduled:

Please check your email often as circumstances may change, however if you have not received email notification of your test appointment being changed, you should plan to attend.

If you are ill on the day of your test appointment:

Do not report to the test center. If you miss your appointment due to illness, please review the absentee policy for emergency circumstances, which includes information about requesting a refund.

If you have any questions or need help:

Please contact Pearson Customer Support.

ETS – Performance Assessment for School Leaders (PASL)

Posted March 26, 2020

Modifications to the Spring 2020 PASL assessment [submission schedule](#).

Due to the nationwide impact the Coronavirus is having, ETS has extended the deadline for the PASL assessment. Based on the changes to the submission dates, score reporting deadlines will also be impacted. This decision was made taking into consideration candidates who are unable to complete their work by the original deadline due to sudden school closures.

We will continue to provide updates periodically. This information is also available at <https://www.ets.org/ppa>.

Task 3 video created in a virtual school environment

During this time of self-isolation, ETS® understands that your ability to complete the PASL assessment requirements may be impacted by school closures and restrictions on travel. In response, ETS is accepting Task 3 videos created in virtual school environments. While for many candidates it may be preferable to delay Task 3 submission until you are able to prepare a face-to-face video for the May 20, 2020 extended deadline, ETS will also accept and score Task 3 videos created in a virtual school environment. Candidates will still be responsible for providing all evidence necessary to meet the current task requirements and will be scored against those requirements.

Importantly, candidates have the option for a free registration voucher for the Fall 2020 or Spring 2021 submission window if they are not able to submit all three tasks by the May 20, 2020 extended deadline. See the final paragraph for more information about submitting in the fall or next spring.

The submission system has specific requirements as to the type and size of video files that are acceptable for uploading. The video file must meet these requirements to upload successfully. The requirement for two video segments combined into one file still applies. Please refer to the PASL assessment website for [file requirements](#). Candidates are still required to obtain and upload signed permission forms from individuals who appear in the online video.

When considering an online platform as an option, candidates should review all of the guiding prompts and activities and think about how their particular version of online facilitation will enable them to respond completely to the guiding prompts for each step and provide the required evidence to support those responses. For instance, does the submission show interaction between the candidate and colleagues while planning or implementing a plan? Can the candidate be seen meeting with the members of a collaborative team and show how they are impacting the school culture? Can the candidate be seen facilitating reflection among the collaborative team members? The evidence that the candidate provides to address all of the task requirements such as those listed above and all of the guiding prompts as well as the rubric are what raters will be looking for in both a face-to-face and an online platform video submission.

Candidates who are unable to complete the assessment this spring will be eligible to receive a registration voucher to take the PASL assessment over the next academic year. Candidates should contact ETS at ppa@ets.org or 1-855-628-5088 (Monday-Friday 8 am-6 pm ET) once they have confirmed they will not be able to complete the assessment, or if they have additional questions.

edTPA

Posted March 26, 2020

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with Governor Abbott's waiver, the requirement that an internship or clinical teaching experience take place in an "actual school setting" rather than a virtual school setting has been waived for candidates completing clinical teaching during spring 2020 and interns engaging in internships during spring 2020. As a result, many teacher candidates may have opportunities to teach students in non-traditional settings, including virtual learning environments, as part of their internship or clinical teaching experience. To this end, SCALE and Pearson have developed guidance for candidates that may be teaching in a virtual learning environment (VLE) when completing edTPA.

Guidance for Candidates Completing edTPA in a Virtual Learning Environment

A teacher candidate teaching in a VLE must first work with their educator preparation program (EPP), in partnership with the school district, to determine if the online learning platform will permit video recording of instruction and collection of other artifacts, such as student work samples. Alternative evidence submitted in lieu of standard artifacts and evidence must still demonstrate all the required elements measured within each task and meet all of the technical specifications as indicated in each subject-specific edTPA handbook. The VLE must be certified as a viable option by the EPP in which the teacher candidate is currently enrolled.

Guidance on the requirements for participating in a VLE, including evidence considerations for materials collected as evidence, are available in the **Guidance for edTPA in An Alternative Arrangement: Virtual Learning Environment** resource. If the edTPA Coordinator believes that the VLE is viable enough to allow for the collection of evidence that meets the requirements of the assessment, they and the teacher candidate must complete the **Request for edTPA Alternative Arrangements: Virtual Learning Environment** form and email it to edTPAEPPSupport@pearson.com for review and approval. *Note: Please download the form to complete all fields.* Confirmation of receipt will be emailed to the candidate and edTPA Coordinator within one business day of submission.

Once the Request for edTPA Alternative Arrangements: Virtual Learning Environment has been approved by Pearson, the teacher candidate and program will receive an acknowledgment of this approval, along with detailed submission procedures in order to complete edTPA. Please note that these procedures are applicable only to candidates whose program has submitted a completed request form to Pearson in advance of the submission and received confirmation of the approved request.

For access to the **Guidance for edTPA in An Alternative Arrangement: Virtual Learning Environment** and **Request for edTPA Alternative Arrangements: Virtual Learning Environment** forms, please visit [Impact of COVID-19 on the edTPA Pilot](#).

Additional Information

For more information related to the impact of COVID-19 on candidates completing edTPA (e.g., extensions to registration, additional submission windows), please visit [Impact of COVID-19 on the edTPA Pilot](#). Please contact [Customer Support](#) at 1-866-565-4872 Mon–Fri: 8:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. Central time, excluding holidays.