

CERTIFICATION TERMS A-Z

- **Agreement Statement**

Top Portion: A form signed by the applicant for the Provisional Certificate when the applicant has deficiencies to complete for the regular certificate.

Bottom Portion: A form signed by the applicant and employing superintendent when the program is to be completed for a regular certificate.

- **Approved Program:** A sequence of courses approved for the preparation in teaching, administration or special services (non-teaching) in a specific content area/endorsement from a state approved teacher education institution.

- **Basic Skills Competency:** Verification that an applicant demonstrates proficiency in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. This is documented by either:
Passing the PRAXIS Series I [PPST]; or

Successful employment experiences of three (3) or more consecutive years in an approved, accredited, or otherwise legally operated school (i) while holding or qualifying to hold a regular certificate issued by another state on the basis of completion of an approved teacher education program, or (ii) holding current credentials from the Professional Teaching Standards Board; or

Have been certificated by any other state following the successful completion of a basic skill competency examination required by that state.

- **Certificate:** An authorization issued by the Nebraska Commissioner of Education to an individual who meets the qualifications to engage in teaching, administration or special services.

- **Certification Officer:** One full-time staff member designated by the head of the education unit of each standard institution of higher education.

- **Certificates Issued on The Basis of Equivalency:** The Nebraska Commissioner of Education may issue any certificate to an applicant who files with the office of the Commissioner evidence of possession of the required qualifications or of education and experience equivalent to the required qualifications.

- **Commissioner:** The Nebraska State Commissioner of Education.

- **Comparable and Equivalent Certificate:** A certificate issued by another state, by the U.S. Department of Defense, or by a foreign country pursuant to standards comparable and equivalent to those in NDE Rule 21. The certificate, for the purpose of supporting or justifying the initial issuance of a Nebraska certificate, will be given the same consideration as if it were a Nebraska certificate.

- **Conditional Permits:** A temporary authorization to perform professional duties. A conditional permit shall be valid for up to one (1) year from the date of issuance.

- **CRC (Courses Required for Completion):** A form indicating the remaining coursework for a program to become a teacher, administrator or special service provider.

- **Court Records:** Any court documents as related to a “yes” answered to any of the Personal and Professional Fitness questions on the application form.

- **Deficiencies:** State requirements not met for the issuance of a regular certificate.
- **Entry Level Certificate:** The first regular certificate acquired in Nebraska by an applicant.
- **Fees:** Required non-refundable charge for processing an application. Any changes to a certificate that are the result of errors by the Department, and written requests by an applicant to change a name or address on a certificate to be made at no charge to an applicant.
- **Fingerprint Cards and Fees:** Cards provided by the Nebraska Department of Education Teacher Certification office for fingerprinting for certification.
- **Fingerprint Clearance:** Nebraska State Patrol and FBI background checks are complete.
- **Governing Body:** The school board of a public school district, a board elected or appointed to provide direction to a nonpublic school, or an individual or corporate owner of a nonpublic school.
- **Human Relations Training:** Course work or employment experiences that lead to (a) an awareness and understanding of the values, lifestyles, contributions, and history of a pluralistic society; (b) the ability to recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, including, but not limited to, sexism, racism, prejudice, and discrimination, and an awareness of the impact such biases have on interpersonal relations; (c) the ability to translate knowledge of human relations into attitudes, skills, and techniques which result in favorable experiences for students; (d) the ability to recognize the ways in which dehumanizing biases may be reflected in instructional materials; (e) respect for human dignity and individual rights, and (f) the ability to relate effectively to other individuals and to groups in a pluralistic society other than the applicant's own.
- **Human Relations Training Approved Courses List:** A listing of courses that have been pre-approved by the Nebraska Department of Education Teacher Certification office to meet this requirement.
- **Initial Teaching Certificate:** The first certificate issued on the basis of completion of an approved teacher education program when all Nebraska academic and state requirements have been met. If requested by the applicant at the time of application, the certificate will be valid only in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. The Initial teaching certificate expires on the applicant's date of birth in the fifth year following the year of issuance or renewal.
- **Institutional Verification:** A form completed by the certification officer of the teacher education institution of higher education verifying your completed full, approved program to teach, your recent college credit hours or the recommendation for the provisional certificate when the program is not yet completed.
- **Local Substitute Teaching Certificate:** This certificate is valid for forty (40) days of substitute teaching per school year in the Nebraska school system requesting the issuance. The certificate expires on the applicant's date of birth in the third year following the year of issuance of the certificate.

- **Nebraska school system:** An institution organized to provide elementary or secondary instruction that is accredited or approved by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE), an educational service unit accredited by NDE, or a special education service agency approved by NDE.
- **Official Transcripts:** College academics listed on official school paper, having the school seal which must be sufficiently legible so that microfilm copies of them are readable. Photocopied or faxed transcripts are not accepted.
- **Personal and Professional Fitness Questions:** A series of six questions required for completion of the Certification Application. These questions are:

Have you ever had a professional license, certificate, permit, credential, or other document authorizing the practice of a profession suspended, revoked, voided, denied, rejected, or voluntarily surrendered?

- *If you answer yes, attach a written statement that fully explains the facts and where this occurred.*

Are you currently the subject of any inquiry or investigation by any law enforcement agency, prosecutor's office, governmental body, or licensing agency?

- *If you answer yes, attach a written statement that fully explains the facts and where this is occurring.*

Is any action currently pending against you by any law enforcement agency, prosecutor's office, governmental body, or licensing agency?

- *If you answer yes, attach a written statement that fully explains the facts and where this is occurring.*

Have you ever been found guilty of a felony or misdemeanor or entered a plea of guilty or no contest to a felony or misdemeanor in any criminal, drug, or juvenile court? Minor traffic infractions and misdemeanor convictions for Driving Under the Influence or Minor in Possession of Alcohol need not be reported.

- *If you answer yes, complete [Criminal Charges Self-Reporting Form](#). (add link)*

<http://www.nde.state.ne.us/TCERT/pdfs/nde20-014.pdf>

Is an order or determination currently in effect by a court or any other governmental body which finds you to be any of the following: a mentally ill and dangerous person; mentally incompetent to stand trial; acquitted of criminal charges because of insanity; an incapacitated person in need of a guardian; or unable to manage your property due to mental illness, mental deficiency, chronic use of drugs or chronic intoxication?

- *If you answer yes, attach a copy of the order and a written statement that fully explains the facts and where this occurred.*

Are you currently an inpatient or resident in a mental health facility due to a determination by a qualified mental health professional?

- *If you answer yes, please attach a written statement that fully explains the facts and where this is occurring.*

- **Professional Teaching Certificate:** An advanced certificate requiring a master's degree completed in the applicant's current endorsement area which was received at the baccalaureate level OR a master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction. This certificate is valid for teaching in all Nebraska school systems. The Professional teaching certificate expires on the applicant's date of birth in the tenth year following the year of issuance or renewal.

- **Provisional Commitment Teaching Certificate:** A certificate issued to an applicant who has completed a baccalaureate degree but has not completed an approved teacher preparation program. The applicant must have completed at least 50% of the pre-student teaching requirements, including a course in teaching methods and at least 75% of the requirements for at least one subject or field endorsement. The certificate is valid for teaching in the Nebraska school system requesting the issuance of the certificate. This teaching certificate shall expire on August 31 of the year following the year of issuance or renewal. Applicants for this certificate must work very closely with the Certification Officer of the college or university where they are completing their coursework to ensure that they are meeting the appropriate academic requirements.
- **Provisional Teaching Certificate:** A certificate issued to an applicant who has not met all the recent college credit hours or employment experience requirements for a regular certificate. It is valid in all Nebraska school systems, except that if requested by the applicant at the time of application, this certificate is valid in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. This teaching certificate expires on August 31 of the year following the year of issuance or renewal.
- **Recency:** The documentation of recent college credit or employment experience has several applications in the certification process. It documents that an applicant has recent academic preparation to acquire professional skills or recent employment experience to apply and improve their professional skills.

For Initial Certification: Applicants for the Initial certificate must, within five years prior to the date of application must: (a) have taught for one [1] school year in an accredited, approved, or otherwise legally operated school in any state; or (b) have received six [6] semester hours of college credit for meeting the requirements of an endorsement; however, if the applicant has never held a regular certificate in any state and applies more than five [5] years after completion of an approved program, then the applicant shall meet this requirement with fifteen [15] specified hours of credit. (If the applicant is applying more than five [5] years after the completion of an approved program, it is strongly recommended that they contact the Certification Officer of the college or university where they intend to complete the fifteen [15] specified credit hours.)

To renew a certificate prior to expiration or less than five years after expiration: Applicants must have, within five [5] year prior to the date of application: (a) have taught half-time or more for one [1] school year in an accredited, approved, or otherwise legally operated school system; or (b) have received six [6] semester hours of credit from a college or university whose teacher education program is fully approved.

To renew a certificate five or more years after expiration: Applicants must have: (a) previously held a Nebraska initial, standard, or professional certificate; and (b) have received fifteen [15] specific semester hours of credit for coursework in an approved program for the preparation educators. (It is strongly recommended that they contact the Certification Officer of the college or university where they intend to complete the fifteen specified credit hours.)

- **Record of Residence:** A listing of all the applicants addresses (street address or rural address – no PO Box numbers) in the immediate past five years. This includes the month/year for each address where the applicant has resided.

- **Regular Teaching Certificate:** An Initial, Standard, or Professional teaching certificate; or a comparable and equivalent, teaching certificate.
- **Resident:** An individual who has established a home where the individual is habitually present and to which having departed there from, intends to return.
- **Rule 21:** Provides procedures for the issuance of teaching, administrative and special services certificates and permits for use in accredited or approved Nebraska school systems.
- **Rule 23:** Provides procedures for the administration of a basic skills competency examination for individuals seeking an entry level Nebraska teacher or administrator certificate.
- **Rule 24:** Regulations for obtaining endorsements indicating grade levels and areas of specialization on Nebraska teaching, administrative and special services certificates
- **Special Services Certificate:** A certificate issued to individuals to perform (non-teaching) services as an Audiologist, School Nurse, School Psychologist, School Transition Specialist, Speech Language Technician, or Coach.
- **Special Education Training:** Course work or written and verified narrative of employment experiences that provide an individual with the knowledge of (a) the exceptional needs of the disabilities defined under the Special Education Act, (b) the major characteristics of each disability in order to recognize its existence in children, (c) the various alternatives for providing the least restrictive environment for children with disabilities, (d) methods of teaching children with disabilities in the regular classroom, and (e) pre-referral alternatives, referral systems, multidisciplinary team responsibilities, the individualized education plan process, and the placement process.
- **Standard Institution of Higher Education:** Any college or university whose teacher education program is a fully approved by the Board, or by a comparable agency in any other state or country.
- **Standard Teaching Certificate:** A certificate issued based upon two (2) consecutive years of teaching half time or more, in the same school system in the past five years while holding a valid regular teaching certificate. It is valid for teaching in all Nebraska school systems, except that if requested by the applicant at the time of application, such certificate is valid only in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. The Standard teaching certificate expires on the applicant's date of birth in the fifth year following the year of issuance.
- **State Substitute Teaching Certificate:** A teaching certificate valid in all Nebraska school systems, but persons holding such certificate may not teach more than ninety (90) teaching days in the same school and same assignment. The State Substitute certificate holder may be employed to teach by a school system only on a non-contractual basis. If requested by the applicant at the time of application, such certificate shall be valid only in Nebraska nonpublic school systems. The substitute teaching certificate shall expire on the applicant's date of birth in the fifth year following the year of issuance.
- **Teaching:** Includes, but not be limited to, the following responsibilities: (a) The organization and management of the classroom or the physical area in which the learning experiences of pupils take place; (b) the assessment and diagnosis of the individual educational needs of the pupils; (c) the planning, selecting, organizing, prescribing, and directing of the learning experiences of pupils; (d) the planning of

teaching strategies and the selection of available materials and equipment to be used; and (e) the evaluation and reporting of student progress.

- **Temporary Teaching Certificate:** Is a certificate that is valid in all Nebraska school systems. The temporary certificate expires on August 31 of the second year following the year in which it is issued.
- **Trades Teaching Certificate:** This certificate may be issued to applicants who do not meet the college credit requirements for a regular certificate. This certificate is valid for teaching in the Nebraska school system requesting the issuance of such certificate and only in the area of trade endorsement area. The Trades teaching certificate expires on the applicant's date of birth in the second year following the year of issuance or of the third year following the year of renewal. The Trades teaching certificate is not be valid for substitute teaching.
- **Transitional Teaching Certificate:** A certificate issued to an applicant who has completed a baccalaureate degree but has not completed an approved teacher preparation program. The applicant must have completed at least 75% of the requirements for at least one subject or field endorsement. This certificate requires a written request for the issuance of the certificate from the superintendent of schools or the governing body in which the applicant intends to teach which includes documentation that the school system has not found a fully qualified teacher for the position. Applicants for this certificate must work very closely with the Certification Officer of the college or university where they are completing their coursework to ensure that they are meeting the appropriate academic requirements.
- **Two-Year Affidavit:** A form signed by the applicant indicating the Human Relations Training is a deficiency and requesting the two (2) years within which to complete the requirement.
- **Verification of Successive Experience:** For issuance of an Initial certificate or for renewal of a certificate, is defined as employment, half-time or more (FTE .50), for one year. This experience must have been acquired within the past five years while holding or qualifying to hold a regular certificate.
- **Verification of Successive Experience:** Required to advance to a Standard, Professional, or Administrative Certificate is defined as employment, half-time or more (FTE .50), for two consecutive years. This experience must have been acquired within the past five years while holding or qualifying to hold a regular certificate.
- **Verification of Successive Experience:** Required to meet the basic skills competency requirement is defined as employment, half-time or more (FTE .50), for three consecutive years in an approved or accredited school while holding a valid certificate issued by a state. The certificate must have been issued on the basis of completion of an approved teacher education program.
- **Withdrawal of Application:** An applicant may request in writing that his or her application for a certificate be withdrawn without refund of any fees submitted. The Department shall notify the applicant in writing if the request will be granted. Any request granted by the Department shall end consideration of that application, and shall not be subject to appeal pursuant to Rule 21