

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.

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**MAY 2020 CERTIFICATION CHANGE: Emergency COVID-19 Certificate**

SED has created the Emergency COVID-19 Certificate for individuals seeking certificates or certificate extensions that require certification exams that have been unavailable due to the virus. This certificate is valid for one (1) year and allows the individual to be employed in the area of the certificate or certificate extension. During that year, the COVID-19 Certificate holder must take and pass the missing exam(s).

To earn the Emergency COVID-19 certificate, candidates must have completed all requirements for the certificate or certificate extension they seek other than the required exams.

**Deadline to Apply: September 1, 2020**

Candidates for the Emergency COVID-19 Certificate must apply for the certificate or extension sought, (e.g., Initial Childhood Education certificate) **AND** for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate, in the same certificate title as the certificate or extension sought (e.g., Childhood Education), on or before September 1, 2020.

**TWO applications** are required: one for the certificate (or extension) sought AND one for the COVID-19 Certificate. Applications are submitted on TEACH; the option for the COVID-19 Certificate will be made available by SED as soon as possible.

**Application Fee:**

There is no fee to apply for the Emergency COVID-19 certificate. Applicants apply on TEACH and do not pay the fee; SED then waives the application fee and changes the application status to “Ready for Review”.

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

### **Eligible Candidates:**

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, or a Transitional B, C, or D certificate;
- 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.

### **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.

### **Certificate or Certificate Extension:**

The certificate or certificate extension originally sought in tandem with the COVID-19 certificate will automatically issue in TEACH when all exam requirement(s) are met.

**MAY 2020 CERTIFICATION CHANGE:**

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.

**MAY 2020 CERTIFICATION CHANGE:**

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.

**MAY 2020 CERTIFICATION CHANGE:**

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).

**APRIL 2020 CERTIFICATION CHANGE:**

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).

**APRIL 2020 CERTIFICATION CHANGE:**

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 HOUSSE 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](#).

For State Education Department guidance on all COVID-19 related changes to certification, please visit their [website](#).