

Illinois Teacher Certification

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The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBOE) is responsible for **Illinois teacher certification**. Established on February 15, 2000, Illinois has a three-tiered teacher certification system for individuals who wish to teach in Illinois. The ISBOE issues the following teaching certificates:

1. **Initial Certificate** - Initial Certificates are issued to teachers who have less than four years of teaching experience. Initial Certificates are valid for four years with the possibility of a 1-year reinstatement. Initial Certificate holders are required to move to a Standard certificate.
2. **Standard Certificate** - Standard Certificates are issued to teachers who have four or more years of teaching experience on a valid certificate and complete one of the necessary professional development options. A Standard Certificate is valid for four years.
3. **Master Certificates** - Master Certificates are available to individuals with Standard Certificates who have received National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification. A Master Certificate is valid for ten years.

Provisional teaching certificates are issued to teachers with valid teaching certificates from other states. They are valid for two fiscal years and have specific provisions regarding when Illinois requirements, including passing Illinois certification tests, must be completed to obtain an Initial or Standard certificate.

The ISBOE also issues special certificates for individuals who are entering teaching through non-traditional, or alternative, teacher preparation programs. These programs are typically designed for professionals with a non-teaching related bachelor's degree who are considering teaching as a second career. These special certificates include:

- A one-year, nonrenewable, Provisional Alternative Teaching Certificate. This is the first step to obtaining an Initial Alternative Teaching Certificate.
- A four-year, nonrenewable, Initial Alternative Teaching Certificate. The holder of this certificate must then complete the requirements to obtain a Standard Certificate.
- A four-year, nonrenewable, Resident Teaching Certificate. The holder of this certificate must then complete the requirements to obtain a Standard Certificate.

The ISBOE issues Initial, Standard, Provisional, and Resident Certificates in one of four educational areas:

1. Type 04: Early Childhood (birth-3)
2. Type 03: Elementary (K-9)
3. Type 09: Secondary (6-12)
4. Type 10: Special (K-12)

The Process for Illinois Teacher Certification

The process of obtaining an Initial Certificate from the ISBOE is relatively straightforward. The steps include:

- Complete the necessary Illinois education requirements. This may be done in one of three ways:
 1. Attend a state-approved teacher education program at an Illinois college or university. Individuals receiving their education this way are required to pass the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS) Basic Skills certification test prior to entering the teacher education program.
 2. Attend a state-approved out-of-state teacher education program.
 3. Attend a state-approved alternative or resident teacher preparation program.
- Obtain student teaching experience. Beginning in the Fall of 2004, candidates in Illinois approved programs must pass the appropriate ICTS content test prior to student teaching.

- Pass all of the necessary ICTS tests. Individuals educated out-of-state, must pass the ICTS Basic Skills and Content tests. All candidates must also pass a third ICTS test, the Assessment of Professional Teaching Test.
- Submit an application to the ISBOE with all necessary documentation. Graduates of Illinois teacher preparation programs will submit a signed and sealed application from their Illinois college or university. Graduates of out-of-state programs will submit an application with supporting documentation that also includes a form for a transcript evaluation of their college credentials.

To obtain a Standard Certificate, individuals must:

- Have a valid Initial, Initial Alternative, Resident, or Provisional teaching certificate.
- Have four years of teaching experience.
- Have completed one of the available professional development options, which include:
 - Obtaining an advanced, education related, degree.
 - Completing 12 semester hours of graduate-level coursework towards an advanced, education related degree
 - Completing an approved "Induction and Mentoring Program". One-year programs are permitted if certified before September 1, 2007. After that date, a 2-year program is required.
 - Completing the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process or receiving NBPTS certification.
 - Obtaining a 12 hour, post-bachelor's degree, education related, professional development certificate from an Illinois college or university.
 - Obtaining an additional Illinois certificate or endorsement.
 - Completing four semester hours of graduate-level coursework in either assessment of teaching performance, or NBPTS certification preparation.
 - Obtaining 60 Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDUs).

An individual may receive a Master Certificate by applying after receiving notice that they have earned NBPTS certification. The Master Certificate issued will match the NBPTS Certificate as shown below:

NBPTS Certification	Illinois Master Certificate
Early Childhood	Early Childhood Master
Middle Childhood	Elementary Master
Early and Middle Childhood	Early Childhood Master & Elementary Master
Early Adolescence	Elementary Master or Secondary Master
Adolescence & Young Adulthood	Elementary Master & Secondary Master
Early Adolescence through Young Adulthood	Early Master & Secondary Master
Early Childhood through Young Adulthood	Special Master

Individuals who earn a Master Certificate are eligible for:

1. A stipend of up to \$3,000.
2. Compensation for mentoring of up to \$1,000 for providing 60 hours of NBPTS-related mentoring or 60 hours of professional development focusing on teaching and learning that occurs in Illinois' classrooms.
3. Compensation for mentoring of up to \$3,000 for providing 60 hours of services to teachers on the "Academic Early Warning List " (AEWL) or in schools where 50% or more of the students receive free or reduced price lunches.

Certification for Teachers Certified in Other States

Any individual who has a valid teaching certificate from another state may apply for and obtain a Provisional Certificate from the ISBOE allowing them to teach in Illinois. The Provisional Certificate is good for two fiscal years, in which time the individual must meet all of the requirements for an ISBOE Initial or Standard Certificate, including the necessary certification tests.

For individuals who hold a valid teaching certificate from a Central States Teacher Exchange Agreement or NASDTEC Interstate Agreement state, the process is somewhat easier. To receive an Initial or Standard Certificate, they must submit their teaching certificate, evidence of completing a state approved teacher education program for that state or verification of 3 years of teaching employment in the last 7 years, and official degree transcripts. Central States Teacher Exchange Agreement and NASDTEC Interstate Agreement states include:

Alabama	Massachusetts	Rhode Island
Arizona	Michigan	South Carolina
California	Missouri	South Dakota
Colorado	Nebraska	Tennessee
Connecticut	New Hampshire	Texas
Georgia	New Mexico	Utah
Indiana	New York	Vermont
Iowa	North Carolina	Virginia
Kansas	Ohio	Washington
Kentucky	Oklahoma	West Virginia
Maine	Oregon	Wisconsin
Maryland	Pennsylvania	Washington D.C.

All applicants are required to pass the required Illinois certification tests. There is a waiver exception for two of the three tests providing that the following criteria are met:

- Individuals are not required to pass the Illinois Certification Testing System (ICTS) Basic Skills Test if their out-of-state certificate was issued before June 30, 2004, or they had to pass a basic skills test to obtain their certificate in the other state. If these individuals have previously taken and failed the ICTS Basic Skills Test then they must take and pass the test.
- Individuals are not required to pass the ICTS Content-Area test if they were required to pass a test in the same content area to obtain their certificate in the other state.

All applicants must pass the Assessment of Professional Teaching test that is required of candidates seeking the early childhood, elementary, secondary, and special teaching certificates.

Illinois Professional Certificate Renewal

Individuals who hold Standard or Master Certificates and are employed as teachers in Illinois public, or State-operated elementary or secondary schools, must participate in continuing professional development activities to renew their teaching certificates. The requirement for continuing professional development for full time teachers holding Standard Certificates is:

- Earn an advanced degree.
- Meet Illinois criteria for becoming a highly qualified teacher in another teaching area.
- Complete the NBPTS certification process.
- Earn another Illinois certificate or endorsement
- Complete four semester hours of graduate coursework in Self-Assessment of Teaching Performance or NBPTS preparation.
- Earn Continuing education units (CEUs) or continuing professional development units (CPDUs).
 - Earn 120 CPDUs.
 - Earn 24 CEUs.
 - Earn any combination of CEUs, CPDUs, or semester hours that add up to 120 CPDUs. To convert semester hours to CPDUs, multiply by 15.
- To convert CEUs to CPDUs, multiply by 5.
- Professional development activities earning CPDUs must be for one of the following purposes:
 - To advance knowledge and skills in current areas of certification or endorsement.
 - To develop knowledge and skills in state priority areas.
 - To address knowledge, skills, and goals for a local school improvement plan.

- To expand knowledge or skills in an additional area of teaching.
- To address the needs of serving students with disabilities.

There are also potential "other" activities such as travel that may earn CPDUs. Consult the ISBOE Web site for more details.

Master Certificate holders must meet only one-third of the requirements of Standard Certificate holders during the 10-year period of the validity of their certificates.

Professional development activities are reported to the ISBOE or a Local Professional Development Committee (LPDC) by submitting a Statement of Assurance.

Some teachers are exempt from professional development activities. Individuals who hold a type 39 Substitute Certificate, and day-to-day substitute teachers are not required to participate in professional development activities. Part-time teachers who teach less than 50% of a school day or term need only complete 50% of the professional development requirements.

There are some special professional development requirements for Special Education Teachers and speech-language pathologists. Consult the ISBOE Web site for more details.

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