

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

◆ **What should be included in all correspondence sent to Louisiana Teacher Certification and Higher Education?**

All correspondence sent to Louisiana Teacher Certification and Higher Education should include the following:

1. Full name and date of birth
2. Social security number
3. Certificate number (if known)
4. Degree when and where
5. Mailing address
6. Telephone number where he or she can be reached

With all application requests, a certification fee and a Professional Conduct Form should also be included.

◆ **How should payment be made for fees associated with certification?**

Payment should be made in the form of a personal check or money order, made payable to Louisiana Department of Education. ***Cash is not accepted.***

◆ **Where should certification materials be sent?**

All correspondence should be mailed to the following address:

Louisiana Department of Education
Teacher Certification and Higher Education
Office of Quality Educators
P. O. Box 94064
Baton Rouge, LA 70804-9064

◆ **How can a certification specialist be contacted?**

By telephone: toll free (1-877-453-2721) and a Baton Rouge line (225-342-3490).

By email: customerservice@mail.state.doe.la.us

Additionally, one can find on the State Department web site (<http://www.doe.state.la.us>) the information and downloadable forms needed for most certification transactions.

◆ **How does an individual who has completed a teacher education program in the State of Louisiana obtain initial certification?**

The individual should contact the Dean of the College of Education where the degree was earned. The college or university will collect the required fee, provide an institutional recommendation for certification, and request certificates for all current graduates at the same time. The institutional

recommendation includes the signature of the dean of education, the registrar, and for secondary education also includes the signature of the appropriate academic dean.

For each applicant, the following are necessary:

1. A personal check or money order in the amount of \$55.00
2. An application form (obtained through the College of Education at the respective institution)
3. An official transcript showing degree earned, completion of student teaching, and final grade point average of at least 2.5
4. An original NTE/PRAXIS score report or scores reported on official transcript (or on computer in Teacher Certification office). **Scores for PRAXIS tests taken after 8/31/00 must be submitted electronically to the teacher certification office by the Educational Testing Service (ETS).**
5. Completed Professional Conduct Form

◆ **How does an applicant get an initial certification if he/she completed an out-of-state teacher education program?**

An individual who completed an out-of-state teacher education program must mail a completed Out-of-State Applicant package, accompanied by a personal check or money order in the amount of \$55.00. The application materials are included on the State Department web site (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section).

◆ **How would an individual get a copy of his/her teaching certificate?**

To get a copy of his or her teaching certificate, an individual must complete and mail a Request for Change/Action form, along with a personal check or money order in the amount of \$15 and the completed Professional Conduct Form. All requested documents must be included. The application materials are included on the State Department web site (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section).

◆ **How does an applicant get re-certified or have a certificate reinstated or renewed?**

One would complete and mail a Request for Change/Action form, along with a check or money order in the amount of \$25 and all requested documents. The application materials are included on the State Department web site (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section).

◆ **How do I get a copy of the Louisiana certification requirements?**

A complete copy of *Bulletin 746* will be available on the Department of Education web site. In addition, all necessary certification procedures and forms are available on the web site (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section).

◆ **How does an applicant have an endorsement or degree added to his/her certificate?**

Complete and mail a Request for Change/Action form, send a \$25 personal check or money order, and include all requested documents. The application materials are included on this web site (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section).

◆ **What is the procedure for an applicant to have a name changed on his/her certificate?**

Using the Request for Change/Action form, an individual can add a name to his/her certificate by sending a copy of the marriage license or other legal document that shows the name change. To remove a name, an individual should include a written request with signature or a copy of the divorce papers.

◆ **What should be done to add certification areas or a higher degree to an applicant's certificate?**

Using the Request for Change/Action form, an individual should include an official copy of the college transcript from a regionally accredited university. The personnel director of a local school district must verify experience requirements. Requests for higher certificates must come directly from the employing school district.

◆ **What should be done to add Plus 30 Graduate Hours to an applicant's certificate?**

Using the Request for Change/Action form, an individual should include official transcripts showing *graduate* credit earned from a regionally accredited university. Graduate credit used toward Plus 30 must be in addition to the graduate credit used in the master's program. The course work can be taken prior to, during, or after the master's degree is awarded, provided it is not used in the master's program. The graduate school dean or the registrar at the university at which the credits were earned must identify in writing the excess graduate credits earned during the master's program. *Degrees and courses earned since Act 650 (July, 1986) must be in or related to the field of certification, or in administration/supervision, or guidance/counseling to receive public school pay increment. Other graduate degrees may be added with the notation "not for public pay purposes."*

◆ **When is an official transcript required?**

An official transcript is required when an applicant desires initial certification or wishes to add certification areas to an existing certificate. Copies of transcripts are not acceptable.

◆ **How does an individual get his/her transcript reviewed if he/she currently holds a Louisiana teaching certificate?**

Using a Request for Change/Action form, an individual should send a check or money order for \$25 and the official college transcript to the Teacher Certification office. The application materials are included on the State Department web site (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section).

◆ **How does an individual get his/her transcript reviewed if he/she does not have a teaching certificate?**

The individual should locate a college or university where he/she can pursue the coursework necessary for an education degree. College of education personnel will review the individual's transcript(s) and provide a written prescription of what is needed to achieve the teaching credentials the individual desires. The office of Teacher Certification will not evaluate an individual's transcript for

program completion or a change of level certification (e.g., Elementary to Secondary, Secondary to Elementary, Special Education to Regular Education, etc.).

◆ **How can an individual check on the status of a previously mailed request?**

An individual can call the Teacher Certification and Higher Education office. One should remember, however, that the usual time frame for handling mail requests is 2-4 weeks. During the summer months, due to the large volume of requests, processing time may be as much as 4-8 weeks.

◆ **If an applicant wants to reenter the active teaching force, how can his/her Type C Certificate be extended so he/she would be currently certified to teach?**

The applicant should use the Request for Change/Action form (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section) and include a personal check or money order in the amount of \$25.00. If the applicant has been out of the teaching profession for a period of less than five consecutive years and has taught at least one semester (90 consecutive days) during the five-year period, a Louisiana employing authority may request extension of the Type C certificate.

Another way to extend the Type C certificate is for the applicant to present a transcript showing that six semester hours of undergraduate or graduate credit* were earned during the five-year period. This coursework **must be related** to the teaching field--not theology, religion, law (other than school law), real estate, etc.

*Any teacher who does not teach at least one full semester as a regular teacher in any five-year period **must take the six hours** in order to extend a certificate.

◆ **How does an applicant reinstate a Type A or Type B Certificate?**

A Type A or B certificate is assumed to be valid unless information presented indicates a five-year lapse in service. Type A and Type B certificates become invalid if the holder of the certificate does not teach at least one full semester as a regular teacher every five years.

To reinstate an invalid Type A or Type B certificate, the certificate holder must present an official transcript from a regionally accredited university showing that six semester hours of graduate or undergraduate credit related to the teaching field have been earned. To have a duplicate certificate issued, he/she would use the Request for Change/Action form (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section). A \$15.00 fee must be enclosed.

◆ **How does an applicant get a higher certificate (Type A or Type B)?**

An applicant would use the Request for Change/Action form (see the **Application Procedures and Downloadable Forms** section) and enclose a personal check/money order for \$25. Since August 1, 1994, successful completion of the State Teacher Assessment Program has been required for teachers in public schools. For either Type A or Type B certificates, a verification form must be completed and submitted directly from the local educational agency, including the signature of the appropriate employing authority, showing three years in the certification field(s) for Type B and five years in the field for Type A. All inclusive experience should be listed on the application form.

Additionally, for the Type A certificate, an official transcript showing an earned Master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university must be submitted. **Requests for Higher Applications will not be accepted over the counter or by FAX.**

◆ **What is the new alternate certification program?**

The new alternate certification program is called the **Practitioner Teacher Program**. It is a three-year program during which a practitioner teacher will be issued a Practitioner License while engaged in coursework, on the job supervision, and state assessment. To get into the program, a person must be hired by a district to teach in one of its schools for the ensuing school year.

During the first year, the practitioner teacher will take at least 15 hours of coursework and be in an internship situation during the school year. Working under the guidance of a mentor teacher, the practitioner teacher is also supervised by university or private provider personnel and by the principal of the school in which he or she is employed.

During the second year, if no additional course work is needed, a practitioner teacher will undergo state assessment, if no additional coursework is needed, through the **Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program**. If additional coursework is deemed necessary, state assessment of the practitioner teacher will be postponed until the third year of practice. At the end of the third year of the program, all practitioner teachers who have successfully completed the program can apply for a Type B certificate.

Mary Helen McCoy, Section Administrator
Teacher Certification and Higher Education
Division of Teacher Standards, Assessment, and Certification
mhmccoy@mail.doe.state.la.us

Sheila Talamo, Director
Division of Teacher Standards, Assessment, and Certification
stalamo@mail.doe.state.la.us