

TEACHER LICENSING GUIDE

Practitioner License

Practitioner Licenses (3-year validity period): The practitioner level license is the first license issued to the educator. Individuals applying for the practitioner license must meet the following criteria:

- i. Hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
- ii. Be formally admitted to or have completed a state-approved educator preparation;
- iii. Be recommended by the state-approved educator preparation program; and
- iv. Have submitted qualifying scores on required assessments.

Licensed educators must complete an approved educator preparation program and submit qualifying scores on all required assessments within three (3) years of obtaining the practitioner license.

After three (3) years, if all requirements have not been met, the educator must apply for a practitioner license-second issuance.

Professional License (All levels and degrees)

Professional Licenses (6-year validity period): The professional license is issued to educators who have completed an approved educator preparation program and meet licensure expectations at the practitioner level.

Advancement from Practitioner to Professional License

In addition to demonstrating successful completion of an educator preparation program and submitting qualifying scores on all required assessments, the educator must meet licensure expectations for advancement to the professional license. To advance from a practitioner license to a professional license, an educator must have:

- Three (3) years of experience; and
- The recommendation of the Director of Schools, or documentation of thirty (30) professional development points.

Professional Development Points for Licensure Advancement or Renewal

Educators must earn a total of thirty (30) professional development points (PDPs) to advance or a total of sixty (60) PDPs to renew a teacher license. PDPs must be approved in TNCompass. Individuals employed by a local education agency (LEA) must have the LEA approve the accrued PDPs for advancement or renewal.

Reasons for PDP denial include, but are not limited to: activity not related to improving educator effectiveness; activity conducted outside the validity period of the license (effective dates); activity lacks adequate documentation; or duplicate activity.

Activities used for PDPs must be completed within the validity period of the license being advanced or renewed and must be related to improving educator effectiveness by:

1. Developing content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, or pedagogical content knowledge; or
2. Enhancing educator effectiveness (e.g., world language courses for those working with students for whom English is a second language, coursework that supports understanding and use of data).

Activities not related to improving educator effectiveness do not qualify for PDPs. This includes training activities such as sessions on blood borne pathogens and suicide prevention. While these training opportunities are highly valuable and often mandated, they do not explicitly focus on educator effectiveness.

| Option | PDPs Awarded | Required Documentation |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Professional Learning | 1 clock hour = 1 PDP | Certificate, transcript, or verification signed by Director of Schools (or designee) |
| Continuing Education | 1 continuing education unit (CEU) = 5 PDPs | Certificate or transcript |
| College/University Coursework | 1 semester hour credit = 10 PDPs | Transcript |
| Overall level of effectiveness rating | Overall Score of 5 = 20 PDPs Overall Score of 4 = 15 PDPs Overall Score of 3 = 10 PDPs | Information maintained by the department. No further documentation required; points may be accrued annually |
| National Board Certification | 30 PDPs | Official documentation from NBPTS |

- Activities must be completed within the validity period of the license being advanced or renewed.
- College/University coursework must be completed at regionally accredited institutions.
- Professional learning consists of in-service >30 hours; school, district, state activities required.
- Continuing Education consists of activities provided by institutions of higher education or professional associations, which do not result in academic credit leading to a degree. Certificate/transcript must indicate number of CEUs awarded.
- College/University Coursework consists of activities whose credit may be transferred/applied to a program that may result in the award of a degree.

PDP Procedures

1. Complete PDP Prior Approval Request Form.
 2. Submit completed PDP Prior Approval Request Form to the appropriate instructional supervisor for approval signature.
 3. Secure documentation of attendance that specifies date and time/number of hours granted.
 4. Upon receiving documentation of attendance, the educator must upload certificate to their account on the TNCompass website.
 5. Instructional supervisors will approve or deny PDPs on the TNCompass site for State review.
 6. Educators are responsible for monitoring their TNCompass account for points accrued.
 7. Educators are responsible for retaining hard copies of all relevant paperwork.
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For up-to-date licensing information visit: <https://www.tn.gov/education/section/licensing>

Remember that being properly licensed is the responsibility of the educator holding the license.