



Hanover County Public Schools, 200 Berkley Street, Ashland VA 23005 804-365-4500

Frequently Asked Questions about Teacher Licensure

Can I get a Virginia License if I hold a valid out-of-state teaching license or have completed an approved teaching program from a regionally accredited college or university?

Answer: If you hold a valid out-of-state license (full credential without deficiencies), you may qualify for a Virginia teaching license with comparable endorsement areas if you have completed a state-approved teacher training program through a regionally accredited four-year college or university or if you hold a valid out-of-state teaching license that must be in force at the time you apply for a Virginia license. If you are seeking licensure, you must establish a file with the Department of Education by submitting a complete application packet, which includes official transcripts. You must also satisfy the professional teacher's assessments prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education.

- You will find more details about Reciprocity on the following link to the Virginia Department of Education web site (**see item II**):
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/multiple_licensure_routes.pdf

Are there Professional Teacher Assessments required to obtain a Virginia license?

Answer: All applicants requesting initial teaching licensure are required to achieve passing scores on the VCLA. Some endorsement areas require a content area test: Praxis II. All applicants seeking endorsements in Early/Primary Education preK-3, Elementary Education preK-6, Special Education- General Curriculum, Special Education-Hearing Impairments, and Special Education-Visual Impairment, the required reading assessment is the Praxis Series Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Elementary and Special Education Teachers Assessment. The required assessment for teachers seeking an endorsement as a Reading Specialist is the Praxis Series Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE): Reading Specialist Assessment.

For information regarding registration, test administration, fees, etc, please visit the Web sites:

VCLA: www.va.nesinc.com RVE and Praxis II: <http://www.ets.org/praxis/va>

It is preferable that applicants have taken and passed needed assessments upon hire. Teachers can apply and receive a provisional 3-year license without them. However, if hired, teachers must apply for a license within 90 days of your start date.

Can I get a Virginia License if I am interested in becoming a guidance counselor, a school social worker, or a school psychologist?

Answer: You need a Pupil Personnel Services license. This is a five-year renewable license available to those who earned an appropriate graduate degree from an accredited institution with an endorsement as a guidance counselor, a school psychologist, a school social worker, or a visiting teacher. (This license does not require teaching experience or an assessment exam.)

I am changing careers and have a bachelor's degree? Can I become a teacher?

Answer: The Career Switcher Route and the Alternative Route to Licensure are avenues where experienced professionals from various occupations and life experiences can become classroom teachers, thereby increasing the quantity and diversity of applicants to the profession.

Individuals interested in enrolling in a Career Switcher Program must apply for admission directly to a certified program provider. Applicants must make certain that they have met the prerequisites stated below and have submitted their applications directly to a certified program provider. Applicants must possess:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution;
- Five years of professional work experience;
- Content coursework required for the desired teaching area; and
Qualifying scores on the professional teacher's examinations: Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA), Praxis II, and the Reading for Virginia Educators (RVE) (if applicable).
- You will find more details about Career Switcher Programs on the following link to the Virginia Department of Education web site:
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/educator_preparation/career_switcher/index.shtml

What are the steps I follow to see if I can enter the teaching field through the alternative route to license and receive a provisional license?

You must meet the following requirements:

- are entering the teaching field through the alternate route to licensure upon the recommendation of a school division
- Hold a baccalaureate degree (with the exception of individuals seeking the Technical Professional License)
- Have met the requirements for the endorsement area; and
- Need to complete an allowable portion (be within 6 hours) of professional studies and licensure requirements.
- You will find more details about Routes to Licensure in Virginia on the following link to the Virginia Department of Education web site (**see item III, A**):
http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/multiple_licensure_routes.pdf

How are the Career Switcher Program and the Alternative Route to licensure different?

Answer: A **career switcher program** is one that provides the professional studies coursework as part of the program before the individual is placed in a classroom and may or may not include a student teaching experience with a veteran teacher. It is helpful for individuals whose Bachelor's degree was not in a major course of study that is not directly related to an actual teaching endorsement such as psychology, accounting or political science.

The **alternative route to licensure** is for individuals whose major was directly related to an endorsement area, such as mathematics, Spanish, or chemistry. These individuals could receive a provisional 3-year non-renewable license if selected for hire by a school division and the teacher can take professional studies courses and the required assessments while teaching.

What is “professional studies coursework”?

Answer: Professional studies coursework is required coursework for those individuals who have not completed a teacher preparation program. These requirements generally include courses in: Human Growth and Development, Curriculum and Instructional procedures, Classroom and Behavior Management, Foundations of Education, and Reading.

If I want to teach my trade or vocation, how do I become licensed?

Answer: The Technical Professional license is for teachers who are experienced in a technical trade to teach the content and skills from that vocation such as electricity, cosmetology, computer networking and computer repair. It is a five-year renewable license and requires employment in the particular teaching assignment by a Virginia public or nonpublic school, a high school diploma or GED, technical competency and occupational experience.

What do I need to do to get a Provisional license to teach Special Education?

- **Answer:** Have a planned program of study in the assigned endorsement area, make progress toward meeting the endorsement requirements each of the three years of the license and *have completed the prerequisite coursework* in the competencies of foundations for educating students with disabilities and understanding and application of the legal aspects and regulatory requirements associated with identification, education, and evaluation of students with disabilities. A survey course integrating these competencies would satisfy this requirement.
 - Be employed by a Virginia public or nonpublic school as a special educator and have the recommendation of the employing school division;
 - Hold a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
 - Have an assigned mentor endorsed in special education.
 - You will find more details about Routes to Licensure in Virginia on the following link to the Virginia Department of Education web site (**see item III, C**): http://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure/multiple_licensure_routes.pdf
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What is an endorsement area?

Answer: It is the subject area or grade level in which you are licensed to teach.

Do I need a master’s degree to teach in Virginia?

Answer: No, only certain endorsement areas require a master’s degree such as Reading Specialist, Guidance Counselor, School Psychologist, School Social Worker, Speech-Language Pathologist and some Administration & Supervision endorsements.

Do I need a Virginia teaching license to be offered a contract with Hanover County Public Schools?

Answer: No, but you must be eligible for licensure. If you are offered a contract, the HCPS licensure office will help you in the application process. Application must be made through the HCPS Human Resources office within 90 days of your start date.

Where can I get more licensure information?

Answer: For more information, go to the Virginia Department of Education web site:
www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching/licensure