

Frequently Asked Questions about Licensure

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[Submitting an Application Packet for Licensure](#)

What is a complete application packet?

A complete application packet is the application completely filled out and signed. It includes official transcripts from all colleges or universities attended, and any supporting documentation as listed in the instructions on the application. Please use the check off list included in the application packet to ensure completeness.

How do I pay and what are the fees?

A Cashier's Check or Money Order made out to the Public Education Department (PED) in the amount of:

- \$125 for initial teaching, administrative and instructional support providers
- \$35 for initial coaches, substitutes, educational assistants and health assistants
- \$95 for endorsements, except when applying for a license as that is included on the initial application
- \$95 for renewal of teaching, administrative and instructional support providers, unless it has been expired more than 1 year, then need initial application & fee of \$125 plus background check information (see Educator Ethics)
- \$35 for renewal of coaches, substitutes, educational assistants and health assistants
- \$75 for fingerprint processing. (If you have a clearance report from the FBI, which is current within 2 years, you may submit that in lieu of the finger print cards.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/dl10/APPLICATION%20PROCESSING%20FEES%20FOR%20LICENSURE.pdf>

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Are the fees refundable if I am not eligible for a license?

No. Fees are non-refundable. The fee is an application-processing fee. It does not pay for a license.

What address do I send my application packet to?

Professional Licensure Bureau
300 Don Gaspar (Rm. 101)
Santa Fe, NM 87501

What if my application packet is not complete?

It will be returned to you so that you can gather the documentation required and resubmitted as a complete packet. Incomplete application will delay the processing time, as it will not enter our workflow until it is complete.

I know I don't qualify, but if I check off for other types of licenses and endorsements besides the ones that I qualify for, will you tell me what I need?

Checking off for licenses and endorsements you know you don't qualify for will delay the issuance of the license(s), and endorsement(s) for which you do qualify. We will not tell you what you need but will refer you to the colleges and universities who offer approved licensure and endorsement programs. Completing an approved program is the best option. Read the rules to find the requirements:
http://www.nmcpr.state.nm.us/nmac/_title06/title06.htm

What is the process once my application has been received?

The monies are accounted for, the application packet is scanned into an imaging system, and then it goes into workflow for review. Turn-around time will depend on the applications on queue for review, and the busy time of the year.

How long will it take for my application to be reviewed?

May to September 8-12 weeks
October to April 1-4 weeks

If I check "yes" to any of the legal questions on the applications, what happens?

Your application is referred to the Professional Ethics Bureau for further review, and you must provide all pertinent documentation to move the clearance process along.

How can I expedite the process?

Provide a complete packet and be patient. Calling consultants to check on the status only delays the processing.

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Administrators

How do I become an administrator in New Mexico?

- Bachelor's degree; Master's degree
- Completion of an approved educational administration program;
- Level 3A teaching license;
- Passage of the Education Administrator Assessment

Does NM reciprocate administrative licensure from other states and/or countries?

Yes. You are required to have a master's degree, provide a current administrative, and any teaching licenses, have completed approved administrative and teacher education programs, and provide verification of 7 years of teaching and/or administrative experience.

Must an administrator have a teaching background?

In most cases, yes, however for individuals coming from Higher Education, not necessarily.

Teachers

Do you license higher education (college) teachers?

No. Higher education is governed by the [Higher Education agency](#).

What are different ways to become licensed as a teacher in NM?

Option 1 – Approved Program

Possess a bachelor's and/or master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university AND have completed an approved educator preparation program that includes student teaching, and pass the New Mexico Teacher Assessments (NMTA) for Basic Skills, Teacher Competency, and the Content Knowledge Assessment in the subject matter area. (For Elementary, it is the Elementary Content.)

Option 2 – Reciprocity

Possess a bachelor's and/or a master's degree from a regionally accredited college or university; possess a current valid and standard certificate/license from another state or country; provide proof of having completed an approved teacher education program (if the program is not contained on a transcript, you must provide documented evidence of the program you completed); provide proof of passage of a teacher competency exam for that out-of-state/country certificate or license, and provide evidence of having satisfactorily taught under that out-of-state certificate or license from the school and/or supervisor where you taught.

Option 3 – National Board Certification

Possess a valid certificate issued by the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. [NBTS](#)

Option 4 – Alternative Licensure

Possess a bachelor's degree including 30 semester hours in a particular field OR a master's degree including 12 graduate semester hours in a particular field OR a doctorate degree in a particular field; pass the New Mexico Teacher Assessments (NMTA) for Basic Skills and Teacher Competency; pass the appropriate Content Knowledge Assessments (CKA), AND complete an approved alternative program through an accredited New Mexico college or university OR [OPAL](#)

Does New Mexico have reciprocity with other states and/or countries?

Yes. Limited and only for teachers and administrators.

Do I have to submit OFFICIAL transcripts if I am reciprocating a license from another state/country?

Yes. Foreign transcripts must be evaluated by a service for equating to the U.S. semester hour system. See the list of accepted agencies at our web site. <http://www.naces.org/>

I am reciprocating a license. What level of teaching license will I receive?

If you provide test scores and less than 3 years of teaching experience, you will receive a level 1 license (base salary \$30,000).

If you provide 3-5 years of teaching experience, you will receive a level 2 license (base salary \$40,000).

If you provide 6 or more years of experience and a master's degree, you will receive a level 3A license (base salary \$50,000).

I received my degree from another state but did not get licensed there. How do I get a NM license?

You will have to meet NM licensure rules for the particular license. You are required to have completed an approved teacher education program and provide proof of passing the required NM exams.

Is testing required?

Yes. New Mexico requires the New Mexico Teacher Assessments for Basic Skills and Teacher Competency. You are also required to pass Content Knowledge Assessments in your first teaching field. For the k-8 license, this is the Elementary

Content Knowledge, even if you intend to teach middle school. The Professional Licensure Bureau is will to review test scores from other states even if not coming under reciprocity.

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I took the New Mexico exams but did not pass. How can I get a license? <http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/testingRequirements.html>

We will not issue a license until you have passed all required exams.

Will you issue a one-year license to allow me time to pass the exams?

No. The "No Child Left Behind" Act does not allow for someone holding a temporary license to be in the classroom.

I already have a NM license. I want a different license, what do I need to do?

You can complete an alternative licensure program. You will have to meet the minimum course work and testing requirements for the additional license. You can apply for a 3-year non-renewable internship license while you complete those requirements. There are pre-requisites you must meet prior to receiving this license.

If I am licensed as a secondary teacher and I take the elementary test, will I get an elementary license?

No. You must meet course work requirements for the license. We will accept up to 12 semester hours of general education credit from the secondary education program, the remaining 18 semester hours must be specifically in professional elementary education OR you can complete an approved alternative program in elementary education. You will be required to take the required teacher competency and elementary content assessments.

What is an endorsement?

An endorsement is a teaching field on a teaching license. Endorsements available are: visual arts, technology education, health, physical education, library media, gifted, psychology, history, geography, etc., language arts, reading, TESOL, science, information technology, business education, mathematics, modern, classical & native language, bilingual, family & consumer science, agriculture, and performing arts.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/licensure/2010/endorsements/index.html>

Can I add endorsements in language arts, history, science, or mathematics to an elementary or special education license?

No. We do not add core subject areas as endorsements to these types of licenses.

I'd like to get an endorsement on my license, what do I need to do?

You must submit an endorsement application with transcripts reflecting a minimum of 24 semester hours of credit in the endorsement area, (teaching field); 12 of those hours must be upper division level (on a special education or elementary license, the credits can be lower division) OR provide proof of having passed a content knowledge assessment in the endorsement area (the teaching field).

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/2010/apps/endorsement%20application%20062110.pdf>

Will your office provide a list of the courses I need for the endorsement?

No. Each university has their approved endorsement program of courses. We will only refer you to the endorsement competencies. The courses you take must address those competencies.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/licensure/2010/dl10/resENDORSEMENT%20AREAS.pdf>

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Instructional Support Providers

Is there a three-tiered system for counselors, speech language pathologists, etc?

No. The three-tiered system is designed for teachers only.

I have many years of experience in my field; do I receive a level 3 license?

No. All new applicants begin at level 1 regardless of the experience.

<http://teachnm.org/programs/professional-development-dossier/pdd-overview.html>

If I am nationally board certified, do I receive a level 3 license?

No.

How long do I have to stay at a level 1 before I can apply for level 2?

You can renew a level 1 license at any time during the 3 year period of the license provided that you have been evaluated at least once while holding the level 1 license, have satisfactorily demonstrated the competencies and your employer recommends you for the next level of license. Please review the specific rule for your type of license at the licensure site under "Licensure rules:

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/index.html>

How long do I have to stay at level 2 before I can apply for a level 3?

You can renew a level 2 license at any time during the 9 year period of the license, provided that you have been evaluated at least once while holding the level 2

license, have satisfactorily demonstrated the competencies and your employer recommends you for renewal.

Support Providers (coaches, educational assistants, substitutes

Must I be employed first before I am eligible for an educational assistant or substitute teaching license?

Not necessarily, but you are required to complete an Orientation Session with a local school district before a license can be issued.

Do you issue 1 year licenses for coaches to allow them time to complete the New Mexico Athletics Association (NMAA) coaches' training program?

Yes. However, the 1 year license is non-renewable. The NMAA training program must be completed by the expiration date of the 1-year license. The license is issued for the school year (July 1 to June 30).

http://www.nmact.org/athletics/for_coaches

If I hold a teaching license, do I have to have an educational assistant license or a substitute-teaching license to serve in those capacities?

No.

Three-Tiered Licensure Systems

What is the three-tiered licensure system and the Professional Development Dossier (PDD)?

The three-tiered system is a system designed to attach base salaries to each level of teaching licenses. The 3-Tiered Licensure System includes annual evaluation and licensure advancement. The Professional Development Dossier (PDD) is the cornerstone of advancement for teachers in the 3-Tiered Licensure System. Teachers must complete the PDD in order to advance from Level 1 to Level 2 and to advance from Level 2 to Level 3.

Where can I get specific information about advancing through the three tiers?

At this website: <http://www.teachnm.org>

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When can I do my Professional Development Dossier (PDD)?

For the 2009-2010 school years, the PDD submission period will open on October 15, 2009 at 12:01 a.m. and close on March 31, 2010 at 5:00 p.m. When a license

is advanced after a successful PDD submission or resubmission during this window, the issue date will be July 1, 2010.

For the 2010-2011 school year and all subsequent years, the PDD submission period will open on July 15, at 12:01a.m. and close on March 31, at 5:00 p.m. When a license is advanced after a successful PDD submission or resubmission received before October 15 at 12:01 a.m., the issue date will be July 1 of the same year. When a license is advanced after a successful PDD submission or resubmission received on or after October 15 at 12:01 a.m., the issue date will be July 1 of the following year. <http://teachnm.org/programs/professional-development-dossier/pdd-overview.html>

Is the three-tiered licensure system for teachers only?

Yes, and only if teaching in a NM pre k-12 classroom.

Must a level 1 teacher advance after 5 years?

Yes. As long as you have taught for all 5 years of the license.

Can an extension be given to a level 1 teacher who has not taught in NM for 5 years?

Yes. You will need to attach a notarized statement to your renewal application stating that you have not taught in NM for 5 years. Example: If you taught for 3 of the 5 years – you can extend the level 1 license for 2 years. Upon the 5th year of teaching, you will be required to complete and pass a dossier prior to the expiration of your license.

Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT)

I am an experienced teacher and now my district has notified me that I am not highly qualified, what does this mean?

The “No Child Left Behind” Act, has defined what a Highly Qualified Teacher is. You are required to either have passed an exam in your content area, or have a minimum of 24 semester hours in your content area, or be nationally board certified in your content area.

I was licensed prior to required testing, do I need to take an exam to be “HQT”?

Only if you do not meet the 24 semester hours in your content area.

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Ethics

How do I report improper or illegal behavior on the part of a school district employee?

Contact the Professional Educator Ethics Bureau by phone at 505-827-6439 or 827-6649, or by email: Ethics@state.nm.us

My license shows that it is pending on your database. What does this mean?

It means that either you did not submit fingerprint cards and the fee to our offices for processing, or you submitted fingerprint cards and an FBI Report has not yet been received. If you processed your fingerprint cards with your local district, it means the district has not submitted a copy of the FBI report for your file. They may be faxed to the Educator Ethics Bureau at (505) 827-6447.

Renewals

I need to renew my level 2 or 3 license – what do I need to do?

Same Level – You can now renew online. Visit www.teachnm.org

If lapsed for more than one-year – you need to submit an initial application & fee; official transcripts if not on file, etc., provide verification of 5 years of experience during the life of the expired license, and a Superintendent's Recommendation Form from the last employer.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/2010/forms.html>

If you taught, but not for 5 years (at level 1) - you need to submit a renewal application, fee and a notarized statement indicating the years you have taught or have not taught, and an extension of the license for the years that you did not teach will be issued to allow you time to submit your Professional Development Dossier.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/2010/apps/Continuing%20Renewal%20062110.pdf>

If you are not teaching now, but did teach under the license (level 2 or 3) – you need to submit a renewal application, fee and a Superintendent's Recommendation Form from your last employer.

If you did not teach at all during the life of the license – you need to submit a renewal application, fee, and a notarized statement indicating that you have not taught during the life of the license.

Internship Licensure

How can I qualify for an internship license?

With your application and fee, you need to provide our office proof of acceptance into an approved teacher education program, or proof of eligibility to complete the Online Portfolio Alternative Licensure (OPAL) process, or a letter explaining what you intend to do (already have a license, getting another, i.e. pre-k12).

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/2010/apps/First%20Time%20Intern%20Application%20062110.pdf>

Is the internship license renewable?

No. All requirements (course work and testing) must be met by the expiration date of the 3-year license. *There are absolutely no extensions on internship licenses!*

Can experience earned during the life of the internship license count toward advancement in the three-tiered system?

No. Internship experience cannot count toward standard licensure.

If I receive an internship license in one area, can I switch to another?

You can switch; however, you will only have 3 years in which to meet all requirements for either of the licenses.

Do I need to teach for all 3 years of the intern license?

No. However, if you are pursuing Online Portfolio Alternative Licensure (OPAL), you must teach for at least 1 year as the teacher of record before submitting the portfolio.

What if I complete all of the requirements in 1 year?

You need only to submit official transcripts showing completion of the course work, and a letter of completion if you are doing an approved alternative program. Exam scores should be on file.

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Job Opportunities

What should I do if I am offered a job before I receive my license?

Make sure that you have submitted a complete application packet to our office and that you meet requirements for the license. You can review the rules that govern licensure at our web site under "Licensure Rules."

Changes and/or Requests for Duplicate License

I need a copy of my license. What is the process?

Download the request form from our web site and submit it to our office. Please keep your license in a place where it can be easily located.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/licensure/2010/apps/Request%20for%20Duplicate%20License.pdf>

How do I change the name and address on my license?

Download the request form from our web site and submit it to our office by mail, fax, or email from the link on our web site.

<http://www.ped.state.nm.us/Licensure/2010/apps/Request%20for%20Name%20Change.pdf>

What is my file number?

Your file number is the 7-digit number, which is the same as your license number.

Errors in Your License

What should I do if I receive the wrong license or there is something wrong with the license?

Report it to our office immediately by emailing: LicensureUnit@state.nm.us or by sending it back to our office with a letter.

Please do not call us to report changes, as we need proper documentation for our files.

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