

Procedures for Moving from Initial to Standard-Level Certification

Initial teaching certificates are issued to teachers who have less than four years of teaching. To move from Initial to Standard certification, you must accrue four years of teaching on a valid certificate and complete one of the professional development options allowed in legislation.

Once you have four years of teaching, the Initial certificate becomes invalid. If you have your professional development option completed you must apply for the Standard certificate. If you do not have an option completed, you must apply for a one-year reinstatement and complete the professional development within that year. If you do not complete an option within that reinstatement year, you cannot apply for another certificate of that same type. You can apply for a certificate of another type if you meet the requirements for that certificate.

If your certificate registration expires and you do not have four years of teaching experience you must reregister the Initial certificate through your Regional Office of Education. Registration runs on a fiscal year July 1 to June 30. No matter what time of the year you apply, if it's within that fiscal year, that's your first year. If you applied for a certificate in May of 2005, for example, the July 1, 2004-June 30, 2005 year is the first year of your certification. Therefore, it is quite possible that your registration will expire before you have four years of teaching experience. There is no limit to the number of times you can register the Initial if you do not have the required experience.

Application Checklist

Teachers who have four years of teaching experience and have completed one of the professional development options need the following to apply for a Standard certificate:

- ISBE Form 73-97, Assurance Statement for Initial to Standard-Level Teaching Certification.
- ISBE Form 73-03C, Application for Teaching Certificate (one application and fee for each Initial teaching certificate if more than one is held).
- ISBE Form 73-10, Certificate Registration (only one regardless of how many certificates are held).
- Statement(s) on school or district letterhead verifying teaching experience.

Teachers Who Have Local Professional Development Committees

Some public schools have maintained Local Professional Development Committees (LPDCs). If your school or district has an LPDC, you must submit your Statement of Assurance to the LPDC for a recommendation either online using CeRTS or on paper form ISBE 73-97. If you don't know whether you have an LPDC, contact your school district. LPDCs forward their recommendations to the appropriate Regional Superintendent. If the Regional Superintendent recommends issuance, the Standard certificate is issued.

Teachers Who Do Not Have Local Professional Development Committees

If you do not have an LPDC, your Statement of Assurance is submitted directly to the Regional Office of Education. The Regional Superintendent must have your letter(s) verifying teaching experience to make a recommendation for issuance.

OTIS and CeRTS

OTIS (Online Teacher Information System) is an application that allows you access to your certification file through the "Educator Portal." OTIS is a secure system that allows you to submit

applications, pay registration, make name changes and order duplicate certificates. You can find a link to OTIS on our main page www.isbe.net.

CeRTS (Certificate Renewal Tracking System) allows you to submit your Statement of Assurance and receive notifications electronically. Although a certificate number is used to identify you, CeRTS is not a certification file. You will not see all the certificates and endorsements you hold through CeRTS as you can in OTIS. You can find a link to CeRTS on our main page www.isbe.net.

Paper Forms

Paper forms can be downloaded from the State Board website www.isbe.net by clicking on “Certification” and then “Forms.” All forms are in PDF files, and you must have Adobe Acrobat downloaded on your computer to open the files. If you do not have Adobe Acrobat, a free download is available at the bottom of the page under the link “Plug Ins.” Forms are also available from your Regional Office of Education.

Submission of Statement of Assurance

The Statement can be sent electronically using CeRTS. CeRTS is programmed to submit your Statement to your LPDC, if you have one, or to your Regional Office of Education if you don’t, based on what you enter in your profile. If you prefer to use paper, submit ISBE Form 73-97.

Complete one option. Do not submit additional or partly completed activities. For example, if you have completed an advanced degree, use that option and do not submit additional activities such as CPDUs.

Maintain the evidence of completion for the professional development activity or activities completed in preparation for the possibility of a random audit.

Be sure to follow up with your letter(s) of teaching experience.

Submission of Application

The application and \$30 fee is submitted to your Regional Office of Education and can be sent electronically using OTIS. If you prefer to use paper, submit ISBE Form 73-03C.

Statements Verifying Teaching Experience

The statement(s) verifying the nature and duration of teaching experience must be submitted to the Regional Office of Education. The statements must be on school or district letterhead and signed by the chief school administrator or a designee. The Regional Superintendent cannot make a recommendation for issuance without the verification of teaching experience.

Registration

If you have registration fees current, you may not need to pay registration fees. You can check your registration status online through OTIS. If you do owe registration, once your Standard certificate has been issued, you can pay registration online through OTIS. If you prefer to use paper, submit ISBE Form 73-10.

Reinstatement

Teachers who have four years of teaching experience but have not completed a professional development option are eligible for a one-time, one-year reinstatement that runs on the fiscal year July 1 to June 30. You can request the reinstatement through your Regional Office of Education using ISBE Form 73-93, Application for One-Year Reinstatement.

Professional Development Options (complete one)

- Advanced education-related degree, earned any time prior to application
- Approved Induction and Mentoring Program (one-year program permitted if certified before September 1, 2007, two-year program required if certified on or after September 1, 2007)
- National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process
- 12 semester hours of graduate-level coursework towards an advanced, education-related degree (may be prorated)
- a 12-hour, post-baccalaureate, education-related professional development certificate issued by an Illinois institution of higher education
- Subsequent Illinois certificate or endorsement
- Requirements for becoming “highly qualified” in another teaching area for NCLB purposes
- Exam
- Four semester hours of approved graduate-level coursework in one of the following:
 - Assessment of teaching performance
 - National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification preparation
- Continuing Professional Development Units (CPDUs) (may be prorated)

Prorations

Teachers need 60 CPDUs or 12 semester hours of coursework. The number of CPDUs or coursework, however, is prorated based on the number of years of teaching time **remaining on the Initial certificate as of July 1, 2003**. For example, a teacher issued an Initial Certificate in 2000 but who never taught would be required to meet the full 60-CPDU or 12-semester-hour requirement. A teacher who had already taught two years would need only 30 CPDUs or six semester hours. The CPDU requirement for out-of-state teachers with less than four years of teaching experience on comparable certificates is prorated based on the **number of years left to teach in Illinois**.

Years of teaching experience needed	CPDUs Required	Semester Hours Required
Up to 1 year	15	3
More than 1 and up to 2 years	30	6
More than 2 and up to 3 years	45	9
More than 3 and up to four	60	12

The list of creditable CPDU activities for Initial certificate holders is similar to those for Standard certificate holders; however, not all activities available to Standard certificate holders are available to Initial certificate holders. Initial certificate holders, for instance, cannot convert semester hours to CPDUs. The list of creditable CPDU activities, as well as other information for Initial certificate holders, is available on our website www.isbe.net by clicking on “Certification” and then “New Teachers.”

Approved Providers of Activities

Approved providers of the self-assessment and NBPTS prep courses, approved induction and mentoring programs or conferences, workshops, seminars and similar trainings can be found on the Professional Development Provider site by entering as a guest. To get to the provider site, from www.isbe.net, click on “Professional Providers” and then “Professional Development Provider System” and “Enter as a Guest.”

Regional Superintendents of Education

Regional Superintendents are locally elected officials authorized to register certificates, accept applications for certificates and endorsements, and make recommendations for issuance or renewal of Standard certificates, among other responsibilities, through Regional Offices of Education. Regions are formed by county or groups of counties.

Teachers must be registered in the area where they teach, and if not teaching, in the area where they live.

Contact information for Regional Offices of Education can be found in your phone directory under “local government” or on our website www.isbe.net by clicking on “Teachers.”

Teaching Experience

“Four years of teaching experience” means the equivalent of four years’ full-time employment, i.e., eight semesters of full-time teaching on a valid teaching certificate. Experience does not have to be accumulated through full-time teaching. For example, a teacher who teaches half-time for a full year can accumulate four years over eight school years. The years needn’t be consecutive.

A valid teaching certificate for this purpose is a certificate equivalent to an Illinois Master, Standard, Initial or Provisional early childhood, elementary, secondary, or special certificate or a comparable certificate from another state.

Time spent teaching or substituting in public or private schools on a valid teaching certificate counts towards the four years of experience. Teaching in a home school or on a substitute certificate (Type 39) or a Transitional Bilingual (Type 29) does not count.

Name Changes, Duplicate Certificates

You can change your name or address in your certification file, request a duplication certificate or update your file with an advanced degree (an official transcript must be submitted within 30 days of the request) through OTIS. If you prefer to use paper, you can download ISBE 73-71, “Certification Update/Duplicate Certificate Request/Name or Address Change.”