

Georgia Professional Standards Commission Frequently Asked Questions for Georgia's Pre-K Teachers

FAQ for Georgia's Pre-K Teachers

This document is designed to help Pre-K teachers understand the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC) certification process.

I have completed an educator preparation program in Georgia and would like to become certified. What steps should I take?

- If you completed an educator preparation program in the state of Georgia, you may qualify for the **5-Year Induction Certificate**. Submit the following to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission:
 - MyPSC Online Application
 - Official transcripts (from all colleges/universities attended)
 - Verification of Lawful Presence
 - Verification of program completion (the program provider must submit verification of program completion to the GaPSC electronically)
 - Verification of passing or exempting the GACE Program Admissions Assessment
 - Verification of passing the GACE Content Area Assessment
 - Verification of passing the GACE Educator Ethics Assessment
 - \$20 application processing fee payable via MyPSC (If you are obtaining your first Georgia teaching certificate, a processing fee may not be required). An Employer Assurance Form (EAF) completed by your current Georgia's Pre-K Project Director may exempt the \$20 application processing fee.

I completed an educator preparation program in another state but completed student teaching in Georgia. What steps should I take to become certified?

- **If you completed an educator preparation program in another state but completed student teaching in Georgia, you may qualify for the 5-Year Induction Certificate.** Submit the following to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission:
 - MyPSC Online Application
 - Official transcripts (from all colleges/universities attended)
 - Verification of Lawful Presence
 - Verification of program completion (*the program provider must submit verification of program completion to the GaPSC electronically*) *If you completed your entire state-approved educator preparation program outside of Georgia, you may upload a paper copy of the program completion form. The form must be completed by the program provider's certification official.*
 - Verification of passing or exempting the GACE Program Admissions Assessment
 - Verification of passing the GACE Content Area Assessment
 - Verification of passing the GACE Educator Ethics Assessment
 - \$20 application processing fee payable via MyPSC or Employer Assurance Form (EAF) completed by your current Georgia's Pre-K Project Director. An EAF completed by the project director may exempt the \$20 application processing fee.

I hold a Professional certificate in another state and have less than 3 years of professional experience. What steps should I take to become certified?

- **If you hold a professional certificate in another state and have less than 3 years of professional experience, you may qualify for the 5-Year Induction Certificate.**

Submit the following to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission:

- MyPSC Online Application
- Verification of Lawful Presence
- Official transcripts (from all colleges/universities attended)
- A copy of your out-of-state teaching certificate
- Copies of any content area assessments required to obtain the professional certificate(s). If no exams were taken, you should indicate no exams were taken on the online application.
- Verification of passing the GACE Educator Ethics Assessment
- \$20 application processing fee payable via MyPSC or Employer Assurance Form (EAF) completed by your current Georgia's Pre-K Project Director. An EAF completed by the project director may exempt the \$20 application processing fee.

What is the next step after I am issued an Induction certificate?

After you are issued an Induction certificate, the next step is obtaining a Georgia Professional certificate. There are two types of Professional certificates, Performance-Based Professional and Standard Professional. Both types of Professional certificates require at least 3 years of successful teaching experience within the last 5 years and a Professional level passing score on the GACE content area assessment.

What is the difference between the Performance-Based Professional and the Standard Professional certificates?

- Performance-Based Professional certificates are issued to teachers who have been evaluated for at least two years on the statewide Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES). Pre-K teachers in public schools will be issued the Performance-Based Professional certificate because they are evaluated on the TKES.
 - Standard Professional certificates are issued to teachers who are not evaluated on the TKES. Pre-K teachers working in early learning childcare centers will be issued a Standard Professional certificate because they are not evaluated on the TKES.
- Both the Performance-Based Professional and the Standard Professional certificates are classified as Professional.

I have not completed an educator preparation program. I hold a bachelor's degree but not in the field of early childhood education. What steps should I take to become certified?

- If you have not completed an educator preparation program and you hold a non- ECE bachelor's degree or higher, you may qualify for the Provisional certificate. Individuals with a Provisional certificate in an approved teaching field can work as a lead teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K class while they are completing an educator preparation program. Upon employment, the Georgia Local Unit of Administration (LUA) or the Pre-K Project Director may request the Provisional certificate at their discretion after you have met the following:

- Hold a bachelor's degree or higher in any subject area with a 2.5 GPA (GPA requirement is waived if the degree is 10 years or older)
- Pass the appropriate GACE Content Area Assessment
- Pass or exempt the GACE Program Admissions Assessment
- Pass the GACE Educator Ethics Assessment
- Submit Verification of Lawful Presence

Once you are hired, the employing LUA must request the issuance of the Provisional certificate from the GaPSC.

How long is the Provisional certificate valid and can it be renewed?

The Provisional certificate usually lasts 3 years. In general, Provisional certificates are not renewable. Requirements to convert to a Professional certificate must be completed within 3 years.

I am pursuing a Professional certificate. Is participation in clinical practice or student teaching in a Georgia's Pre-K class located in an early learning childcare center acceptable?

Yes, clinical practice or student teaching in a Georgia's Pre-K class located in a childcare center is acceptable as long as the certification teaching field being sought is Birth through Kindergarten (B-K) and a supervising/mentor teacher with a valid professional certificate is on staff. The supervising /mentor teacher must be certified in the same teaching field as the student-teacher. The supervising teacher's name and their certification identification number will need to be indicated on the program completion form when the educator preparation program is completed.

I hold a teaching certificate from another state. Can I work as a lead teacher in Georgia's Pre-K Program at the certified level?

- If you have a valid (must be current and not expired) Professional out-of-state teaching certificate in Early Childhood or an Early Childhood-related field, you may work as a lead teacher at the certified level during your first Georgia's Pre-K school year only. After your first year, your out-of-state certificate will no longer be recognized at the certified level.

To apply for a Professional Georgia teaching certificate, submit the following to the GaPSC:

- MyPSC Online Application
- Verification of Lawful Presence
- A copy of all out-of-state educator certificates (valid or expired)
- Copies of any content area assessments required to obtain the professional certificate(s). If no exams were taken, you should indicate that no exams were taken when completing the online application.
- Official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended showing graduation dates and degrees awarded
- Georgia PSC Experience Verification Form. Successful full-time experience gained by out-of-state educators may be used to exempt all special Georgia requirements except the Standards of Conduct. An applicant must have earned a minimum of three full years of successful certified teaching experience to exempt the Educator Ethics GACE and the special education course. To exempt the

GACE content area assessment, an applicant must have 5 years of successful certified teaching experience. The out-of-state experience must be in the same field (subject area) as the certificate being requested. If the teacher qualifies for this exemption, he/she must upload a GaPSC Experience Verification Form completed by their previous out-of-state employing school system to their MyPSC account. If the previous employer will not allow the teacher to submit the form themselves, the form must be emailed to the GaPSC by the previous employing system. Forms sent via postal mail will not be verified. The GaPSC Experience Verification Form is not required if the teacher does not have experience.

- o \$20 application processing fee payable via MyPSC or Employer Assurance Form (EAF) completed by your current Georgia's Pre-K Project Director. An EAF completed by the project director may exempt the \$20 application processing fee.

I have passed the Program Admission Assessment GACE (PAA), the (GACE) Content Area Assessment, the GACE Educator Ethics Assessment, and I submitted Verification of Lawful Presence. Am I considered certified?

No, you are not considered certified. However, you may qualify for a Provisional certificate at the request of a Georgia LUA. Once the Provisional certificate is issued, you will have up to 3 years during the validity period of the certificate to complete a state-approved teacher preparation program. A Provisional certificate cannot be renewed or extended.

I completed an approved teacher preparation program and recently submitted an online application. How will I be notified that I have met all of the requirements for certification?

Once you have submitted an application via MyPSC along with all of the supporting documents, you may monitor receipt of materials and the status of your application through your MyPSC account at mypsc.org. All certificates and correspondences are issued electronically via MyPSC. You can check the status of the GaPSC application processing time by visiting the GaPSC website at www.gapsc.com

I have a professional Georgia teaching certificate and would like to earn a higher degree to upgrade to a higher certificate level.

If you are a certified teacher and plan to earn a higher degree, visit the GaPSC website for guidance on certification upgrade rules, policies, and guidelines. You can go directly to the certification upgrade page by clicking or copying this link:

<https://www.gapsc.com/certificationupgrade>

What is a Georgia Local Unit of Administration (LUA)?

A Georgia LUA is a local education agency or a regional educational service agency, including but not limited to public, waiver, Investing in Educational Excellence (IE2), charter schools, and private schools (i.e., faith-based schools, early learning centers, hospitals, juvenile detention centers, etc.). State agencies and public and private institutions of higher education requiring certification for employment purposes are included in this definition. An early learning childcare center offering Georgia's Pre-K is also considered a LUA.

How can I access GaPSC forms?

All forms are located at <http://www.gapsc.com/Certification/FormsAndApplications.aspx>

Certificate Renewal Process

How can I renew my Professional certificate prior to expiration or after it expires?

- Renewal steps for teachers that **are currently employed**:
 - Submit an application via MyPSC requesting to renew your certificate. At the end of completing your online application, you will need to upload the Employer Assurance Form (EAF) completed by your Pre-K Project Director along with the documents to verify that you met the renewal requirements. A combination of the following items must be uploaded to your MyPSC account:
 - Verification of Lawful Presence if not previously submitted **and**
 - EAF completed by your Pre-K Project Director verifying that you have met your Professional Learning Plans or Professional Learning Goals **or**
 - Official transcripts reflecting the completion of 100 clock hours of BFTS-approved clock hours, **or** 10 International Accreditation for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) approved CEUs, **or** 6 semester hours completed during the validity date of your certificate **or**
 - Retake the appropriate GACE content area assessment for the teaching field.
- Renewal steps for teachers that **are not currently employed**:
 - Submit an application via MyPSC requesting to renew your certificate. At the end of completing your online application, you will need to upload a combination of the following items to your MyPSC account:
 - Verification of Lawful Presence if not previously submitted **and**
 - Professional Learning Verification form completed by your previous employing LUA or Pre-K Project Director **or**
 - Official transcripts reflecting the completion of 100 clock hours of BFTS-approved clock hours, **or** 10 International Accreditation for Continuing Education and Training (IACET) approved CEUs, **or** 6 semester hours **or**
 - Retake and pass the appropriate GACE content area assessment for the teaching field.

How can I renew my Paraprofessional license?

Paraprofessional renewal requests must be submitted to the GaPSC by an employing LUA or Pre-K Project Director through an online process. You must be employed as a paraprofessional by a Georgia LUA or as an assistant teacher in a Georgia's Pre-K classroom at the time of renewal. Please contact your employing LUA or the GaPSC for further advisement on the renewal of your paraprofessional license.

Submitting Documents to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission

As of 7/1/2021, the certification division of the GaPSC has eliminated paper applications and documentation mailed to the GaPSC office. Documents sent by postal mail to the certification division will be destroyed and not evaluated. Required documents, with the exception of transcripts and documents that must be submitted directly to the GaPSC via electronic submission, should be uploaded to your MyPSC account

- ✓ Official transcripts- must be emailed directly to the GaPSC at gapds@gapsc.com or mail@gapsc.com by the college/university's registrar. Official transcripts received by the GaPDS are imaged to the teacher's MyPSC account. If you have official transcripts already on file via your PDS profile, you do not have to resubmit them for certification transactions. Transcripts uploaded to the Georgia Professional Development System (GaPDS) or MyPSC are not considered official and will not be accepted.
- ✓ Experience Verification Forms completed by human resource representatives from out-of-state school systems, Georgia's Pre-K Project Directors, and Georgia accredited private school must be uploaded to MyPSC by the teacher. Experience must be full-time and with a satisfactory/successful performance rating.
- ✓ Acceptable GACE assessment scores must be submitted to the GaPSC via electronic submission from the Education Testing Services (ETS). Paper copies of GACE score reports will not be evaluated.

Georgia Professional Standards Commission Contact Information

(404) 232-2500 or (800) 869-7755 or mail@gapsc.com

The Certification Call Center is open 8:00 am to 4:30 pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, except for state holidays.

For additional information, visit the GaPSC website: <https://www.gapsc.com/>