

Renewal Requirements

Rule 505-2-.36

Frequently Asked Questions

Georgia Professional Standards Commission

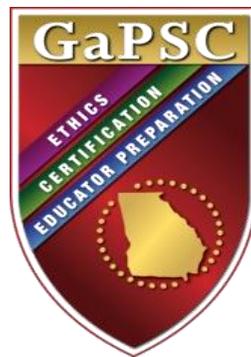


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Rationale

Certificate renewal is an outcome of applying Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC)-accepted continuing professional learning toward the continued validity of a state certificate or license. While it is essential for individual educators to maintain valid certificates and licenses, professional learning should be focused toward school improvement leading to improved teaching and increased student learning. The goal of certificate renewal and professional learning is for educators within a Georgia local unit of administration (LUA) to work together to enhance established educational goals for the individual educator, the school and the LUA to assist students in meeting state standards for student achievement. Written Professional Learning Plans (PLPs) or Professional Learning Goals (PLGs) shall be required for all certificate holders employed by a Georgia LUA. PLPs outline requirements for the professional growth of educators as well as clearly delineate support the school or school system will provide for the educator's professional growth. PLGs outline identified areas for educator growth for those educators not required to have PLPs. All professional learning approved for certificate renewal shall be designed around national professional learning standards as outlined by Learning Forward (formerly the National Staff Development Council). This requirement applies to the design of school and LUA learning communities, the selection of workshops that support learning communities, and any other professional learning designed for certified educators.

Types of Certificates and Licenses

Q. Which types of certificates can be renewed?

A. Georgia's renewable certificates are the Standard Professional, Performance-Based Professional, Advanced Professional, Lead Professional and Life certificates.

Q. Which types of licenses can be renewed?

A. Georgia's renewable licenses are Adjunct, Educational Interpreter, Non-Instructional Aide, Paraprofessional and Support Personnel.

Validity Period of Certificates and Licenses

Q. What are the validity periods of certificates and licenses?

A. Certificates are valid for a five (5)-year period. Licenses are valid for a period of one (1) to five (5) years depending on the type of license. For information regarding the validity period of a specific license, please see the rule for the license found under [General Rules and Procedures](#).

Renewal Cycle of Certificates and Licenses

Q. What are the renewal cycles of certificates and licenses?

A. Georgia certificates usually have a beginning date of July 1, and an ending date of June 30. Valid certificates may be renewed from October 1, of the calendar year in which the certificate expires. The grace period between July 1, and September 30, allows completion of professional learning during the summer period. When renewed within this cycle, the validity period continues with no break in dates.

Experience Requirements

Q. Am I eligible to renew my certificate?

A. If you are employed in a Local Unit of Administration (LUA) at the time of application or have had at least one (1) year of acceptable educator experience in a Georgia LUA while under a valid Georgia renewable, professional certificate at the time that the experience was earned, you are eligible to renew your certificate.

Q. What constitutes one (1) year of acceptable experience?

A. According to GaPSC [Rule: 505-2-.25 Experience Requirements](#), paragraph (3) (a) 1: One (1) year of full-time experience in a P-12 setting is defined as a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days working full time in a GaPSC-approved educational setting. No computations for partial-year experience will apply.

Q. What if I do not have one (1) year of acceptable experience in a Georgia LUA?

A. Upon application, you will receive a Certificate of Eligibility (COE). According to the GaPSC [Rule 505-2-.23 Certificate of Eligibility](#), paragraph 1: The COE verifies that the individual is qualified for employment by the Local Unit of Administration (LUA).

Q. Assuming that I am employed at the time of renewal, and I have a Performance-Based Professional Certificate, what requirements will I need to satisfy in order to maintain this type of certificate?

A. You will need at minimum of two (2) Proficient or Exemplary annual performance ratings earned on the statewide Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) within five (5) years of the renewal date.

Q. Assuming that I am employed at the time of renewal, and I have a Performance-Based Professional certificate; however, I have earned

fewer than two (2) Proficient or Exemplary annual performance ratings earned on the statewide Teacher Keys Effectiveness System (TKES) within the five (5) years of the renewal date, will I be able to renew my certificate?

A. Yes. However, your Performance-Based certificate will be renewed as a Standard Professional certificate.

Q. Assuming that I am employed at the time of renewal and have either an Advanced Professional or a Lead Professional certificate, what requirement will I need to satisfy in order to renew my certificate and maintain the Advanced or Lead Professional certificate?

A. You will need a minimum number of Exemplary TKES annual performance ratings earned within five (5) years of the renewal date and no annual performance ratings below the Satisfactory or Proficient level earned during the most recent five (5) year validity period of the certificate. (The number of Exemplary performance evaluations will be determined when sufficient data on the distribution of TEM ratings on TKES is available.)

Q. Assuming that I am employed at the time of renewal and I have either an Advanced Professional or a Lead Professional certificate and I have the minimum number of Proficient TKES annual performance ratings; however, I didn't meet the required number of Exemplary TKES annual performance ratings or I have received one (1) annual performance rating below the Satisfactory or Proficient level during the most recent five (5) year validity period of the certificate, will I be able to renew my certificate?

- A. Yes. However, the Advanced Professional or your Lead Professional certificate will be renewed as the Performance-Based certificate.
- Q. Assuming that I am employed at the time of renewal and I have either an Advanced Professional or a Lead Professional certificate; however, I have not earned the minimum required number of Exemplary TKES annual performance ratings, or I have received one (1) annual performance rating below the Satisfactory or Proficient level during the most recent five (5)-year validity period of the certificate, will I be able to renew my certificate?**
- A. Yes. However, the Advanced Professional or your Lead Professional certificate will be renewed as the Standard Professional certificate.

Professional Learning

Q. Who will need to satisfy Professional Learning requirement?

A. Most certificate and license holders who are employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification at the time of renewal application must satisfy professional learning requirements.

However, there are some exceptions as listed below:

- Educators who also hold valid *National Board for Professional Teaching Standards* certification at the time of renewal in a field comparable to one held on their Georgia educator certificate
- Educators who also hold valid *Georgia Master Teacher* certification at the time of renewal.
- Educators certified in the *service fields of Speech and Language Pathology, Audiology, School Psychology, School Counseling, and School Social Work* who meet optional requirements associated with GaPSC-accepted or national credentials as outlined in the appropriate GaPSC field rules as long as this is approved by the supervisor as appropriate for professional learning
- *Non-Instructional Aides* who earn required clock hours of job-related training, as determined by the employing LUA
- *Support Personnel License* holders who meet the requirements for renewal outlined in the Individual Development Plan developed by the employing Georgia LUA

- *Educational Interpreters* who hold a valid RID Certification or submit official documentation verifying the EIPA assessment has been completed during the validity period established on the license - If the initial license required completion of a bachelor's degree, all degree requirement must be completed before the applicant may apply for renewal
- *Permit* holders who meet renewal requirements as outlined in the Permit Rule
- *Adjunct License* hold who meet renewal requirements determined by the employing Georgia LUA
- *Faculty of Georgia colleges and universities* who meet guidelines stated in the [505-2-.36 Renewal Requirements Rule](#)

Q. I am not employed in a GA LUA in a position that requires certification, but I am employed in GA education agency or organization. Will I need Professional Learning Units?

A. In order to renew your certificate, you may do one of the following:

- Follow the guidelines for faculty of Georgia colleges and universities as stated in the [505-2-.36 Renewal Requirements Rule](#), or
- Follow the guideline for educators who no longer work in schools, agencies, or other education organizations in Georgia (see below)

Q. I am no longer employed in a school, agency, or other education organization; however, I would like to renew my certificate.

A. Educators who no longer work in schools, agencies, or other education organizations in GA must satisfy one of the following requirements:

- Complete any combination of six (6) semester hours of college course work; ten (10) PLUs awarded prior to January 1, 2016, or one hundred (100) clock hours of Bright From the Start (BFTS)-approved training; or ten (10) Continuing Education Units (CEUs).
 - College course work must be earned at an institution that meets the accreditation standards outlined in GaPSC [Rule 505-2-.31](#)

[GaPSC-accepted Accreditation; Validation Of Non-Accredited Degrees.](#)

- PLUs must be awarded by a State of Georgia education Agency, a Regional Educational Service Agency (RESA), a Georgia LUA or a GaPSC-approved college or university. Only those PLUs awarded prior to January 1, 2016, and within the timeframe stated in the [505-2-.36 Renewal Requirements](#) Rule will be acceptable for certificate renewal.
 - Bright from the Start (BFTS) trainings must be earned from an approved provider. A list of these trainings can be found on the BFTS website at <http://dec.al.ga.gov/>.
 - CEUs must be awarded from a GaPSC-approved accredited college or university or from a provider authorized by the International Association for Continuing Education and Training (IACET).
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- Hold a valid National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification at the time of renewal in a field comparable to one held on their Georgia educator certificate
 - Hold a valid Georgia Master teacher certification at the time of renewal
 - Have at least one (1) year of acceptable, successful, educator experience, as outlined in GaPSC [Rule 505-2-.25 Experience Requirements](#), while working in another state on a valid certificate issued by that state
 - For educators certified in the service fields of Speech and Language Pathology, Audiology, School Psychology, School Counseling, and School Social Work, meet optional requirements associated with GaPSC-accepted state or national credentials as outlined in the appropriate GaPSC field rules, or
 - Re-take and pass at the Professional level the content assessment approved by the GaPSC at the time of renewal for the field(s) being renewed. Only the fields for which the educator passes will be renewed.

Q. I am a retired Georgia educator with at least one year of experience teaching in a GA LUA and would like to renew my certificate. Is there another option for me in addition to the above?

- A.** Retired Georgia educators, as verified by the Teachers Retirement System (TRS), who do not wish to meet the renewal requirements stated above may apply for a Retired Professional Certificate as outlined in [GaPSC Rule 505-2-.44 Retired Professional Certificate](#).

Focus of Renewal Credit

Q. What constitutes renewal credit for the GaPSC?

- A.** Renewal credits will be comprised of the following:
- Professional Learning Plans and Professional Learning Goals (see below), and/or
 - The Special Georgia Requirement in Special Education as outlined in [GaPSC Rule 505-2-.24 Special Georgia Requirements](#).
 - School districts may have additional professional learning requirements in addition what the GA Professional Standards Commission requires for certification.

Professional Learning Plans

Professional Learning Goals

Q. What is the difference between a Professional Learning Plan (PLP) and a Professional Learning Goal (PLG)?

- A.** Professional Learning Plans and Professional Learning Goals are developed by the educator in conjunction with his/her supervisor and the employing LUA. Satisfying the individual PLP or the PLG will be required before your certificate can be renewed.
- The PLP outlines specific requirements for the professional growth of the educator and targets areas for growth based on his/her scores on the statewide evaluation system. The PLG is more general in nature and should not only be directly associated with the educator's annual personnel evaluation, but it will also address the growth of the educator in terms of the contributions he/she makes to the professional

learning community. In addition, for educators evaluated under the statewide evaluation system, the PLP or the PLG may be related to any of the following:

- Field(s) of certification held,
- School/District Improvement Plan, or
- State/federal requirements.

Q. Will I be required to have a Professional Learning Plan or a Professional Learning Goal?

A. A certificate holder who is employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification must have either a Professional Learning Plan or a Professional Learning Goal. Educators who hold Professional certificates or higher shall engage in continuous improvement by developing PLGs. Professional Learning Plans will be required for the educators who fall into one or more of the categories listed below:

- Educators under an Induction certificate
- Educators returning to the profession after an absence
- Educators working on non-renewable certificates
- Educators working in a certification field in which they have not worked before
- Educators new to the state
- Educators who have low summative ratings

Q. Who will verify that I have met the Professional Learning Requirement?

A. The PLPs and PLGs are developed and maintained locally. When it is time for you to renew your certificate, the principal or other designated official will verify completion of PL requirements. The HR official responsible for the electronic renewal of a certificate will also verify that the PLP/PLG has been met prior to submitting documentation.

Applications Procedures

Q. How do I renew my certificate?

A. Applications for educators employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring GaPSC certification must be submitted electronically by the employing LUA according to procedures established by the GaPSC. Educators not employed by a Georgia LUA in a position requiring certification may apply for renewal according to procedures outlined on the [GaPSC website](#).

Q. Will I need a Criminal Record Check as part of the renewal application?

A. A criminal record check and/or a FBI background check (fingerprint) may be required for renewal. In order to determine if your situation warrants a FBI Background check and/or a Georgia criminal history check, please see [Rule 505-2-.36 Renewal Requirements](#).

Exceptions

Q. Will I be eligible to renew my certificate if I have received Unsatisfactory, Ineffective or Needs Development annual performance evaluations during the previous five (5) year validity cycle?

A. An educator who has received any combination of two (2) Unsatisfactory, Ineffective or Needs Development annual performance evaluations during the previous five (5) year validity cycle that have not been satisfactorily remediated by the employing Georgia LUA shall not be entitled to any certificate except for a Waiver in any field. For additional information, please see [Rule 505-2-.43 Annual Performance Evaluation](#).

Implementation

Q. When will these changes go into effect?

- A.** Educators holding professional certificates expiring prior to July 1, 2017, and apply for renewal prior to October 1, 2017, are not subject to professional learning requirements.