



Superintendent's Circular

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HRS-L01
Version 01

STATE LICENSURE AND REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHERS

This circular will remain in effect unless rescinded or superseded by a subsequent version.

According to Massachusetts General Law, all teachers must hold a valid license issued by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) in the most appropriate subject and grade level corresponding to their teaching assignment(s). Teachers are not hired by BPS unless they qualify for the appropriate license or license waiver. A waiver permits the district to employ an unlicensed teacher for one school year only and does not count as a license. Waivers are requested only by the BPS Office of Human Resources in rare circumstances where there are no licensed candidates available to fill a position.

This Superintendent's Circular provides guidance for meeting Massachusetts state licensure requirements.

I. DATA COLLECTION AND TRACKING PROCEDURES

To collect and track data about the licensure of BPS teachers and paraprofessionals, the BPS Office of Human Resources requires online reporting of critical information, including Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure (MTEL) results, licensure status,

coursework, and degree information of teachers. All teachers and their administrators must comply with these data collection procedures. Furthermore, it is every educator's professional responsibility to know their personal licensure status and take the necessary steps to maintain their license validity.

II. MASSACHUSETTS STATE LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS

A. Know what license is required by your teaching position:

- The license required for your position should be made clear to you upon hire, but when in doubt, ask your principal/head of school, Human Resources coordinator, or Human Resources manager.
- The fundamental requirement is that teachers must possess the license that affords the most appropriate fit for their teaching assignment. For example, while it may seem acceptable for a teacher of 6th grade math and science to work under an Elementary (1-6) license, the MA DESE offers a Middle School Math/Science (5-8) license which is a more appropriate license for this teaching assignment.
- For more information about currently offered licenses and specific requirements, visit www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp.
- Individual's official state licensure records and history can be accessed securely through the MA DESE's ELAR portal at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/elar/>. If you do not know your username and/or password, click on "Forgot username/password" and it will walk you through some steps to retrieve the username and reset

the password. If you still have difficulty, you can call the DESE Licensure Help Desk at 781-338-6600 and they should be able to reset it for you.

- See Attachment A for guidance on which “type” of license (Provisional, Initial, Professional, Temporary) suits your level of preparation and/or experience.

B. Apply for the appropriate license.

- When interested in obtaining a new license, or advancing your non-professional license, the best first step is to apply for the license you plan to pursue. Even if you have not yet met all of the requirements, this is DESE's opportunity to evaluate your standing with regard to the current requirements and give you written instructions on what remains to be done. They leave all applications open until you are granted the license.
- Online applications can be submitted through the MA DESE's ELAR portal at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/elar/>, where you indicate which license you are interested in obtaining and pay the application fees. Applications cost \$100 for the first submission and \$25 for each additional.
- Submit official transcripts (undergraduate and graduate) to the MA DESE by mail or in person. The address is:

Office of Educator Licensure
Mass. Dept. of Education
75 Pleasant Street

Malden, MA 02148

- Additional documentation, such as out-of-state teaching licenses and letters verifying applicable teaching experience or preparation, may also need to be submitted.
- Upon review of your application and transcripts, the MA DESE will notify you in writing if additional documentation or clarification is necessary, or if you still have additional requirements to complete. This is called the evaluation letter. It will give you instructions on your next steps.
- Make sure your social security number appears on all documents sent to MA DESE.

C. Take and pass all relevant MTELs.

- The test(s) you are required to take will be dictated by the DESE, based on the application that you submitted. General information about which tests are required for which license can be found online at www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp. If you still aren't certain which tests you need, and you do not have time to wait for the DESE's evaluation letter, you may call the Office of Human Resources at 617-635-9600.

D. Advance or renew your license.

- Teachers who hold a temporary, provisional, or initial license are required to be working to advance toward a professional license. See attachment A for guidance on the progression of licenses.

- Teachers who hold a professional license must renew it every five calendar years. There is an expiration date associated with each individual's professional license indicating when it needs to be renewed.
- Renewal of a professional license requires the completion of 150 Professional Development Points (PDPs) within the five-year renewal period. At least 15 of these points must be in the content of the license (i.e., what you teach). The next 15 points must be in pedagogy (i.e., how you teach). Fifteen points must be in Sheltered English Immersion or English as a Second Language (SEI or ESL), 15 points must relate to training in schooling methods for students with disabilities and/or diverse learning styles, and the remaining 90 points can be in "elective activities" that address other educational issues or improve student learning, content knowledge, or pedagogy.
- The activities that teachers participate in to earn PDPs should be dictated by their Individualized Professional Development Plan (IPDP), which must be reviewed and signed for approval by their principal/head of school every two years. Signed copies of the approved IPDP must be maintained in the school building.
- Visit <https://www.doe.mass.edu/pd/ipdp.docx> to view or print an IPDP template.
- Online applications for renewal can be submitted through the MA DESE's ELAR portal at <https://www.doe.mass.edu/licensure/elar/> after all PDP requirements have been completed.

- All educators and other employees seeking licensure related verifications must [complete this form](#).

For more information about this circular, contact:

Owner:	Licensure Manager
Department:	Office of Human Resources
Mailing Address:	Bruce C. Bolling Building, 2300 Washington Street, Roxbury, MA 02119
Phone:	617-635-9212
Email:	ohc@bostonpublicschools.org

Mary Skipper, Superintendent

ATTACHMENT A

Massachusetts Teacher Licensure – At a Glance

MASSACHUSETTS EDUCATOR LICENSURE

Licenses granted by the Massachusetts Department of
Elementary & Secondary Education

75 Pleasant Street, Malden, MA 02148

781-338-6600

www.doe.mass.edu/licensurehelp

YOU MAY START HERE...

PROVISIONAL LICENSE	TEMPORARY LICENSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid for 5 years of employment• For people who have not completed an approved educator preparation program <p><i>Requires:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bachelor's degree• Passing score(s) on MTEL www.mtel.nesinc.com• Additional coursework required for elementary, early childhood, moderate disabilities, severe disabilities, library, and/or instructional technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid for 1 calendar year• For experienced teachers from another state <p><i>Requires:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Possession of a valid educator license/certificate from another state that is comparable to at least an initial license in Massachusetts• 3 years teaching under a valid out-of-state license/certificate

...OR YOU MAY START HERE:

INITIAL LICENSE	PROFESSIONAL LICENSE
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid for 5 years of employment• (May be extended one time for 5 additional years of employment) <p><i>Requires:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A bachelor's degree• Passing score(s) on MTEL, www.mtel.nesinc.com• Completion of an <u>approved educator preparation program</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Valid for 5 calendar years <p><i>Requires:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 3 years of employment under the Initial license• Completion of a beginning teacher induction program• One of the capstone options for the Professional license (i.e., master's degree including or in addition to 12 graduate credits in content)• Continuing professional development required to renew Professional licenses every 5 calendar years