

## ISBE: Becoming A Teacher in Illinois

### Frequently Asked Questions

Last Updated March 2025

#### General Licensure and Requirement Questions:

##### **1. Will this presentation be shared?**

Yes, see [Becoming a Teacher in Illinois](#).

##### **2. How long it takes for a license to be approved?**

The current timeframe for evaluations is approximately two to three weeks. Evaluation timeframes are subject to change based on the number of applications that are submitted. If you have a job pending that requires the license, a school district can place a "rush" request on the application and it will be evaluated within 10 business days.

##### **3. Are endorsements only via content exams, or are there alternative ways?**

Content tests and coursework are required for nearly all endorsement areas. There are some exceptions to this, however. Please contact your college or university to learn about the various exceptions based upon the content area of the endorsement.

##### **4. Once someone has a paraprofessional educator license, does he/she need to still complete an Illinois educator preparation program?**

Individuals seeking a Professional Educator License (PEL) must complete an approved educator preparation program. A PEL is not required if you have a paraprofessional license and wish to serve only as a paraprofessional.

##### **5. Can I get PEL online?**

Yes, you can find all the institutions that offer an online program by using the filters on the ISBE [Directory of Approved Programs webpage](#).

##### **6. Where would we send in our higher degree to see if we qualify for alternative licensure?**

Approval to enter an alternative licensure program is determined by the college or university where you are completing coursework. Once you have found an alternative licensure program

you are interested in, the program coordinator will review your transcripts to see if the program is a good fit for you.

**7. Can you explain “residency” a little further?**

A “residency” program includes content-specific and teaching-related coursework paired with field experience that is delivered concurrently through a yearlong clinical experience in which candidates learn alongside a mentor teacher.

**8. Is there an alternative route to school support services licensure?**

Currently, Illinois does not offer any alternative licensure programs in school support programs. Please view all of the routes to school support licensure on the ISBE [PEL School Support Personnel Endorsements webpage](#).

**9. I already have some college credits that I earned in the past. Can I continue at the college where I completed the credits at, or will I have to register at one the schools that were shown in the beginning?**

If the college or university where you completed coursework is not in Illinois, you may still be able to qualify for a PEL via reciprocity (meaning you would earn your out-of-state teaching license then transfer it to Illinois). If the college or university where you completed coursework is in Illinois, you would need to continue taking coursework at one of the ISBE-approved providers. It is likely that some of the coursework you previously completed can be accepted as transfer credits. Talk to the program coordinator at the college or university you are interested in attending to see if this is an option.

**10. What is an ROE?**

ROE stands for a Regional Office of Education. ROEs, along with Intermediate Service Centers, assist educator licensure applicants with the process of becoming licensed.

See the ISBE [Licensure Message Center](#) webpage for contact information so you can reach out to your local ROE for assistance and guidance.

Out-of-Country Applicant Questions:

**11. What are the requirements for those who completed their degrees outside of the United States?**

The requirements remain the same. Out-of-country transcripts must be evaluated by an approved agency. Please reach out to your local ROE for further assistance and guidance directly related to your situation. Find contact information on the ISBE [Licensure Message Center](#) webpage.

Illinois offers full reciprocity. Educators will be considered for all areas listed on their valid, comparable out-of-state or out-of-country license at the time of the initial evaluation for an Illinois PEL. Per Part 25 Rules, all out-of-state and out-of-country licenses must be equivalent to a PEL.

ISBE has authority to determine license equivalency and may request additional documentation to verify equivalency. Any educator applying with an out-of-country license also must submit a translated out-of-country credential evaluation showing preparation in the licensure area that is being sought. See the International Resources dropdown on the ISBE [Requirements](#) webpage to learn more.

An individual must have a PEL to serve as a teacher, school support personnel, or an administrator at a public or approved nonpublic school in the state of Illinois.

*Complete the following steps moving forward:*

- Create an account in the Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS).
- Apply for your Professional Educator License.
- Submit licensure documents to ISBE.
- ISBE will evaluate your application.
- Register your license in ELIS.

See the ISBE [Educators Trained in Other States webpage for more information.](#)

**12. As an international student, can I apply for a PEL? I have a degree and experience from my home country.**

Yes, ISBE has authority to determine license equivalency and may request additional documentation to verify equivalency. Any educator applying with an out-of-country license also must submit a translated out-of-country credential evaluation showing preparation in the licensure area that is being sought. See the International Resources dropdown on the ISBE [Requirements](#) webpage to learn more.

Testing Questions:

- 13. I know of a company called Momentrix that produces competency exams for individuals seeking to enter education. What other resources exist for competency exam prep?**

Illinois does not utilize Momentrix for its testing vendor. Pearson is our testing vendor. All information on tests and practice tests can be found on the [Illinois Licensure Testing System website](#).

- 14. Is there a manual to study for the content test (s) that are required?**

Yes, you can find all practice exams and study materials on the [Illinois Licensure Testing System website](#).

- 15. Are practice content tests available?**

We have practice tests for many Illinois tests. This information can be found on the [Illinois Licensure Testing System website](#).