



**Illinois  
State Board of  
Education**

## **Guidance for Institutions of Higher Education on Exemptions of Teacher Licensure Requirements**

On April 24, 2020, Governor Pritzker signed Executive Order 2020-31. The executive order provides information on temporary exemptions of certain educator licensure requirements. ISBE filed companion emergency rules on April 27, 2020. The purpose of this document is to provide clarity to Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs), specifically Educator Preparation Programs, on how this executive order will affect them and their teacher candidates.

### **1. What is the impact of Executive Order 2020-31 on the authority of institutions of higher education to determine students' eligibility for graduation?**

Executive Order 2020-31 makes provision for the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to exempt certain requirements for licensure. ISBE continues to require completion of baccalaureate- or master's-level degrees as a condition for licensure. Institutions should continue to implement their academic policies about satisfactory completion of course and program requirements in making determinations about eligibility for degree completion and graduation. IHEs retain the authority and obligation to evaluate candidate readiness and recommend candidates for licensure.

### **2. Is Executive Order 2020-31 retroactive such that candidates who previously did not perform satisfactorily during student teaching/internship experiences, did not pass the edTPA, or did not earn at least a grade of C- in licensure coursework are now eligible for a license or subsequent endorsement?**

No. Executive Order 2020-31 only impacts candidate work completed during the period of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations. Institutions should continue to implement their academic policies about satisfactory completion of course and program requirements in making determinations about eligibility for degree completion and graduation.

### **3. During the period of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations and Executive Order 2020-31, if a candidate earns a D in a class or elects pass/fail, credit/no credit or another non-qualitative binary grading nomenclature will they ever have to retake that class for the purposes of ISBE licensure? How will the course outcome be noted on the transcript?**

The candidate will not need to retake the course. The Illinois Board of Higher Education and Illinois Community College Board, with the Illinois Articulation Initiative, issued guidance pertaining to Pass/Fail and letter grades and documentation on the transcript. See this [joint guidance on pass/fail grading](#) or [https://www.ibhe.org/pdf/ICCB,-IBHE,-IAI-Pass-Fail\\_FINAL\\_Guidance.pdf](https://www.ibhe.org/pdf/ICCB,-IBHE,-IAI-Pass-Fail_FINAL_Guidance.pdf).

**4. For how long is the exemption of the edTPA in effect? What happens to candidates who already have submitted the edTPA evidence for scoring in Spring 2020?**

The edTPA exemption applies only to candidates during the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations. Candidates who submitted edTPA documentation for scoring will receive a score. The outcome of this scoring will not impact the candidate's eligibility to be entitled for licensure during the period of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations.

To view refund policies regarding the edTPA, please visit [this page](#).

**5. How should IHEs entitle candidates who are receiving the edTPA exemption?**

The ISBE Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS) system is set up to prevent candidates who are missing any licensure assessment from being entitled. The ELIS team is currently adding a new column to the "not eligible" tab of the entitlement page in ELIS where licensure officers can verify that a candidate is eligible for the edTPA exemption. This verification will trigger the candidate to move to the "eligible" tab and the IHE may proceed with entitlement. ISBE anticipates this new feature being available on or around April 24, 2020 and will provide an informational training to IHEs when it is ready. ISBE will communicate with institutions of higher education with approved educator preparation programs when the updates to ELIS are completed. IHEs should *not* entitle any candidates for initial teaching licensure until this feature is in place.

**6. When should IHEs entitle candidates for licensure?**

Institutions of higher education must entitle candidates as soon as possible after confirming which educators qualify to be licensed under the emergency provisions and after being notified by ISBE that necessary ELIS entitlement updates are in place. Changes will be implemented on or around April 24, 2020. ISBE will contact licensure officers and college deans when entitlement changes are in place and will provide training on new entitlement procedures for recording edTPA exemptions and entitling for short-term approvals.

Once the degree is conferred, Licensure Officers should promptly proceed by moving candidates to Completed Program status in ELIS. Institutions that fail to entitle candidates during the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations will not be able to honor exemptions toward candidate program completion after the proclamations end.

Licensure candidates should apply for the entitlement in their ELIS accounts as soon as they are able. Candidates who do not receive their license within one year will no longer be eligible for exemptions if they seek licensure at a later date.

**7. Are IHEs obligated to keep record of any candidates who are entitled under the emergency provisions?**

Yes. IHEs must retain internal records of each educator who qualifies for licensure under the emergency provisions for auditing purposes. ISBE will provide institutions with an

Excel template to use for record-keeping purposes and reporting to ISBE as well as training for using the template.

**8. Since student teaching and the edTPA are now exempted, can students who have completed all other preparation program requirements who were scheduled to student teach in Fall 2020 be entitled for licensure in Spring 2020?**

No. The exemptions specifically apply to candidates who were unable to complete requirements due to school closures during the Gubernatorial emergency Proclamations. If the emergency proclamations are extended, additional guidance will be provided.

**9. How should student teaching or internships be noted on an educator's transcript if the experience is exempted?**

The academic policies of each institution apply to the transcribing of academic work through clinical, student teaching, and other field experiences.

**10. Explain the academic year 2020-2021 content test exemption for entry into student teaching, and alternative educator preparation programs.**

During the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations, candidates who enter alternative licensure programs or beginning student teaching or an internship shall be required to pass the content test prior to receiving the professional educator license and not prior to student teaching or program entry.

**11. Does Executive Order 2020-31 mean candidates in Fall 2020 may not start student teaching/internships until after the executive order is lifted?**

Executive Order 2020-31 does not speak to if candidates may begin a student teaching or internship experience in Fall 2020. IHEs should continue to monitor conditions as they plan student teaching and internship experiences for Fall 2020.

**12. What licensure is available for individuals who are adding a subsequent teaching endorsement but who were unable to complete either/both a field experience and/or content test?**

Individuals who wish to add subsequent teaching endorsements to a PEL and completed all requirements except either/both a field experience and/or content test are eligible to receive a short-term approval. ISBE will provide training to licensure officers in entitling candidates in these programs for a non-renewable, short-term approval.

**13. What licensure is available to school support personnel or administrative candidates who were unable to complete either/both an internship and/or content tests?**

School support personnel and administrator candidates unable to complete either/both an internship or content test are eligible to receive a short-term approval. ISBE will provide training to licensure officers in entitling candidates in these programs for a non-renewable, short-term approval.

**14. For educators working in schools with a short-term approval, what is the process for changing short-term approvals to an endorsement upon successful completion of the content test?**

When the educator passes the applicable content test, they are eligible for the endorsement. Educators should request an entitlement from their institution of higher education and apply for the entitlement through their ELIS accounts.

**15. How should institutions of higher education handle interviews for principal and superintendent candidates that are supposed to occur in-person?**

Institutions of higher education are encouraged to utilize online approaches for requirements that normally occur in-person. Conducting principal preparation candidate interviews virtually and via written format is permissible and encouraged.

**16. For what length of time are these exemptions in place?**

The exemptions are in place for the duration of the Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations. Note: The Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamations are separate from the governor's shelter-in-place order. Exemptions are not aligned to the shelter-in-place order.

**NOTE:** IBHE and ISBE will continue to monitor conditions related to COVID-19 and adjust policies and recommendations as needed. This document will be continuously updated. The agencies will work with stakeholders and legislators to craft statutory and regulatory language that will support candidates impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Email additional questions to [licensure@isbe.net](mailto:licensure@isbe.net) or [info@ibhe.org](mailto:info@ibhe.org).