

**State Of California
Commission On Teacher Credentialing**

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EDUCATION SPECIALIST INSTRUCTION CREDENTIAL Requirements for Teachers Prepared in California

California has a two-tier credential structure. A Five-year Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Credential is the first document issued after an individual has met basic credential requirements. The Level II is the clear credential which is issued once all credential requirements have been completed.

The Education Specialist Instruction Credential authorizes the holder to teach in the area of specialization listed on the credential in the following settings:

- Special day classes
- Special schools
- Home/hospital settings
- Correctional facilities
- Nonpublic schools and agencies
- Resource rooms

Areas of Specialization

- *Mild/Moderate Disabilities (M/M)*
Includes specific learning disabilities; mild to moderate mental retardation; attention deficit and attention deficit hyperactivity disorders; serious emotional disturbance; and authorizes service in grades K–12 and in classes organized primarily for adults through age 22.
- *Moderate/Severe Disabilities (M/S)*
Includes autism; deaf-blindness; moderate to severe mental retardation; multiple disabilities; serious emotional disturbance; and authorizes service in grades K–12 and in classes organized primarily for adults through age 22.
- *Deaf and Hard of Hearing (DHH)*
Includes deafness; hearing impairment; deaf-blindness; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Visual Impairments (VI)*
Includes blindness; visual impairment; deaf-blindness; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Physical and Health Impairments (PHI)*
Includes orthopedic impairment; other health impairment; multiple disabilities; traumatic brain injury; and authorizes service to individuals ages birth through 22.
- *Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE)*
Includes the mild/moderate and moderate/severe disabilities listed above, and authorizes service to children ages birth to pre-kindergarten only*.

* An Early Childhood Special Education Certificate is also available to individuals who already hold a clear, professional clear, or life special education credential and who complete a certificate program through a Commission-accredited college or university. Contact an institution with an approved [Early Childhood Special Education Credential program](#) for more information on certificate programs and requirements.

Requirements for the Preliminary Level I Credential

Applicants must satisfy **all** of the following requirements:

1. Obtain a baccalaureate or higher degree, except in professional education, from a regionally-accredited college or university
2. Satisfy the [basic skills requirement](#). See Commission leaflet [CL-667](#), entitled [Basic Skills Requirement](#) for additional information.

3. **One** of the following requirements must be satisfied:

- a. Provide verification of subject-matter competence by either passing the appropriate subject matter examination(s) as specified in Verifying Subject-Matter Competence by Examination (Multiple Subject) leaflet [CL-674M \[pdf\]](#) or Verifying Subject-Matter Competence by Examination (Single Subject) leaflet [CL-674S \[pdf\]](#)
 - b. Complete a Commission-approved subject-matter program of course work or its equivalent and obtain certification of completion from the authorized person in the education department of a California college or university with an approved program. However, the availability of subject matter programs at California colleges and universities may be limited as they continue to phase out programs. (Applicants may be required to pass the appropriate subject matter examinations based upon specification of this requirement in their university's professional preparation program**.)
 - c. For Specialized Science subjects only, individuals may take and pass the appropriate subject matter examinations or obtain verification of completion of subject-matter course work from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Information, including requirements and procedures, can be found in [Coded Correspondence 03-0010](#)
4. Pass the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA). Applicants who complete their teacher preparation on or after January 1, 2000 are required to pass RICA. (RICA is not required for the area of Early Childhood Special Education, nor is it required of individuals who hold a valid California teaching credential which was issued based upon possession of a bachelor's degree and completion of a teacher preparation program including student teaching. Visit the National Evaluation Systems (NES) website at www.rica.nesinc.com for more information.)
 5. Complete a [Commission-approved Education Specialist Credential program](#) in an education specialist category resulting in formal recommendation by the college or university through which program requirements are completed. Contact the institution for specific program requirements
 6. Receive an offer of employment from a California school district, non-public school or agency, or county office of education, verified by submitting form [CL-777.1 \[pdf\]](#) with your application for the credential (If you don't have an offer of employment, a Certificate of Eligibility may be issued verifying completion of the Level I requirements.)

** Verification of subject-matter competence is **not required** for the area of Early Childhood Special Education, nor is it required of individuals who hold a valid California clear, life, or professional clear teaching credential based upon possession of a bachelor's degree and completion of a professional preparation program, including student teaching.

- *The Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential is valid for **five years** from the date of issuance.*

Requirements for the Clear Level II Credential

Applicants must satisfy **all** of the following requirements:

1. Complete an individualized induction plan designed in collaboration with your employer and a California college or university with a Commission-approved education specialist program in the disability area listed on your Preliminary Level I credential and obtain the formal recommendation for the credential by the college or university where the individualized induction plan was completed

2. Complete a course in Health Education, including but not limited to, nutrition; the physiological and sociological effects of alcohol, narcotic and drug abuse; and the use of tobacco. This requirement must include training in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) that covers infant, child, and adult CPR skills.
3. Complete a course in Computer Education, including instruction in general and specialized skills in the use of computers in educational settings.
4. Provide verification of a minimum of two years of successful full-time special education teaching experience in a public school, nonpublic school, or private school with equivalent status while holding the Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential, verified by your employer

National Board for Professional Teaching Standards Certification

Individuals who earn [National Board for Professional Teaching Standards](#) Certification in the area of *Exceptional Needs/Early Childhood through Young Adulthood* after the issuance of their California Preliminary Level I Education Specialist Instruction Credential will be issued a Clear Level II Credential. Individuals meeting this criteria must submit an application ([form 41-4 \[pdf\]](#)), full application [processing fee \[pdf\]](#) and a photocopy of their National Board Certification directly to the Commission office.

Reference: California Education Code, Sections 44225 and 44265, and Title 5, California Code of Regulations, Section 80046.5 through 80048.6

