



State of California  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing  
1900 Capitol Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95811-4213  
Email: [credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:credentials@ctc.ca.gov)  
Website: [www.ctc.ca.gov](http://www.ctc.ca.gov)

## CERTIFICATE OF CLEARANCE

Fingerprint clearance through the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is required from every applicant prior to the Commission's issuance of any credential, permit, certificate, or waiver.

The Certificate of Clearance is a document issued by the Commission to an individual who has completed the Commission's fingerprint character and identification process, whose moral and professional fitness has been shown to meet the standards as established by law. **The Certificate of Clearance is not related to earning a clear credential. The Certificate of Clearance provides no authorization to provide instruction or services in schools; its sole purpose is to provide verification that the holder has completed a professional fitness review.**

### *You must obtain a Certificate of Clearance:*

- If you are enrolled in a California educator preparation program, prior to beginning your student teaching or practicum/field based experience
- If you are applying for a Variable Term Waiver and you *have not* received fingerprint clearance from the Commission. You will not be allowed in a public school setting until both the Certificate of Clearance and Variable Term Waiver have been issued.
- If required by your employer or program sponsor

### *You do not need to apply for a Certificate of Clearance:*

- If you are an educator applying directly to the Commission for a credential or permit
- If you have previously completed the fingerprint process and have been issued a currently valid document by the Commission

### How to Apply - California Residents

Effective July 1, 2007, California residents must apply for their Certificate of Clearance online. To apply for your Certificate of Clearance using the CTC Online system, follow the steps below:

1. Print three copies of [Live Scan 41-LS form](#) [PDF]. Take these to a location offering Live Scan electronic fingerprint services for submission to the Live Scan operator. ([Click here to view a listing of Live Scan locations](#)). You will be required to pay a processing fee to the Live Scan operator for your prints to be scanned. Retain a copy of the Live Scan form for your records.
2. Navigate to the Commission's [Credential Information page](#); choose "Apply for a New Document"
3. Complete the [Online Application](#)
4. Submit by credit card the transaction fee of \$52.50 (all online transactions are subject to a \$2.50 service fee in addition to the \$50.00 application fee). Immediately following the successful submission of the online application, an email will be sent containing a confirmation number.

## For Those Outside California

Out-of-state and out-of-country residents may apply for a Certificate of Clearance by completing one of the three options noted below (**NOTE: a Certificate of Clearance is not required for out-of-state or out-of-country prepared educators submitting fingerprint information with an initial application for California certification**):

1. Applicants whose residence is outside California and who cannot be fingerprinted in California must submit the following:
  - a. A completed [application \(form 41-4\)](#) [PDF]. Select Certificate of Clearance from the drop-down box in Section 2.
  - b. Application processing fee of \$50.00
  - c. Two completed fingerprint cards (FD-258). Attach these to the application form in lieu of a Live Scan receipt. There is an additional \$49.00 fee to process fingerprint cards, in addition to the application processing fee of \$50.00. To order fingerprint cards, send a request via email to [OutOfStateFPs@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:OutOfStateFPs@ctc.ca.gov) providing your name and address along with “fingerprint cards” noted in the subject line. See [Credential Leaflet CL-271](#) for more information on fingerprint cards and processing.
2. If your residence is outside of California but you are able to complete the Live Scan process in California, then you may follow the same steps noted for a California resident using the online application process, as shown above

## Fee Credit

The Certificate of Clearance fee of \$50.00 becomes a credit to be applied towards issuance of an individual’s initial teaching or services credential. Your fee credit will be applied when you complete the payment process for the credential submitted online by your program sponsor.

## Processing Time

Fingerprint and character identification processing via Live Scan is usually completed within 10 working days. If submitting fingerprint cards, or if an individual’s application requires additional review by the Commission's Division of Professional Practices, the process will take longer. If the application is pending review by the Commission's Division of Professional Practices, the online file will indicate that the application is "pending additional evaluation."

Individuals may view the status of their Certificate of Clearance applications using their [Educator Login](#) on the Commission’s website. Online applications submitted prior to 4:00 p.m. PST will display on the website the following day at approximately 2:00 p.m. PST or later. When requirements for issuance of the Certificate of Clearance are completed, an email will be sent informing the individual that the document has been granted and can be viewed in 48 hours using their [Educator Login](#).

## Period of Validity

Certificates of Clearance are valid for five years. Fingerprint information will be invalidated for individuals who have not held any other type of valid document for more than eighteen (18) months after the expiration date of a Certificate of Clearance. The fingerprint process will need to be repeated when individuals whose fingerprints have been invalidated subsequently apply for certification. See [Coded Correspondence 12-10](#) for more information.

*Reference: California Education Code, Sections 44339 and 44340 and Title 5, California Code of Regulations Sections 80028, 80301, and 80442.*