



# PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

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**DATE:**  
April 28, 2020

**NUMBER:**  
20-04

**SUBJECT: COVID-19 Flexibility Provisions for Educator Preparation Programs**

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## **Summary:**

The Commission took several actions at its April 23-24, 2020 meeting to provide flexibility where possible for educator preparation programs during the COVID-19 pandemic. These provisions are organized by program type below.

## **Key Provisions:**

### **For All Candidates Regarding the Basic Skills Requirement/CBEST**

The Basic Skills/CBEST requirement (BSR) will be deferred for up to one year for applicants or candidates using the CBEST examination route to meeting this requirement. The BSR will not be required for program entry. Education Code Section 44252.8 allows the Commission to defer the Basic Skills Requirement due to 'justifiable' reason (such as the COVID-19 pandemic). Those individuals who have the CBEST deferred will have up to one year to satisfy the Basic Skills requirement. By statute, this deferral cannot be granted to candidates who have taken the CBEST previously and failed the examination.

The Commission considers attempting all three subtests of the CBEST in reading, writing, and mathematics as having "taken" the exam. If an individual attempted all three examination subtests, but did not meet the Basic Skills Requirement, they are not eligible for this deferral. Individuals who have only attempted one or two subtests of the CBEST examination but were unable to attempt the remaining subtest(s), can request that the examination be deferred. Individuals who did not take any portions of the CBEST during the period mentioned because of COVID-19 related disruptions would also be eligible for this deferral.

Programs wishing to enroll candidates who need to defer the CBEST exam must notify the Commission via email that the individual will be requesting the deferral. Programs should send an email to [Credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:Credentials@ctc.ca.gov) and should include the educator's first and last name and date of birth, along with a written request to defer the CBEST for one year.

### **Extensions For All Candidates/Document Holders**

The Commission will extend any expiring credentials, including Intern credentials, for one (1) year—all documents except Provisional Internship Permits (PIP) and Short-Term Staffing Permits (STSP)—even if none of the stated requirements were met. Under Title 5, CCR section [80523](#), extensions of one year may be given when an applicant is able to “demonstrate good cause for requesting an extension of time to complete requirements.” This extension of time is available to the following document types:

- **Preliminary Teaching Credentials**, including California, out-of-state, and outside the United States prepared credential holders
- **Preliminary Services Credentials**, including California and out-of-state prepared credential holders
- **Emergency Permits**, including Limited Assignment Permits, English learner and bilingual permits, and Teaching Permits for Statutory Leave
- **Child Development Permits**
- **Intern Credentials**, including teaching and administrative interns

Current practice requires educators to verify the applicant's good cause to request an extension. Flexibility in the regulation allows for Commission staff to consider the current health and safety condition related to COVID-19 as good cause for the extension of time on a qualifying credential or permit. This extension also applies to those who forget to renew their credential.

### **Program Sponsor Requested Variable Term Waiver (PS-VTW)**

The Commission authorized Variable Term Waiver requests for individuals who were in Commission-approved preparation programs which were impacted by the emergency health and safety conditions related to COVID-19. The PS-VTW is only available to credential candidates who were on target to complete a Commission-approved program between March 19, 2020 and September 1, 2020 and is not available to holders of credentials, those just entering a preparation program, or individuals who hold a PIP and/or a STSP.

### **Clear Credential Renewals with no Lapse in Validity**

The Commission also authorized the **renewal of clear teaching or services credentials** where the holder was unable to apply for timely renewal due to a Health and Safety Restriction in place related to COVID-19. Such renewals shall be for the full five-year term of the clear credential as of the date of expiration of the renewed credential, resulting in no lapse in validity.

### **All Commission-approved Educator Preparation Programs**

All Commission-approved programs do not need to update their Course Matrix for the COVID-19 modifications. Instead, each program needs to develop a summary of the program modifications that are made due to the COVID-19 Health and Safety Restrictions. This summary remains at the institution and needs to be available for review during future accreditation activities.

### **For Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject and Education Specialist Teacher Preparation Programs**

The Commission approved waiving the Precondition requirement that student teachers must meet the subject matter requirement prior to daily whole class instruction. Note: this waiver does not waive the subject matter requirement entirely – candidates must still meet this requirement prior to recommendation for the preliminary credential.

For candidates enrolling in Fall 2020, the Commission-adopted Precondition that requires a candidate to have met the subject matter requirement prior to beginning whole class daily instruction has been waived by the Commission. (Agenda item 4A: Recommendation f)

### **For Preliminary Multiple/Single Subject Teacher Preparation Programs**

Regarding Multiple and Single Subject programs- required 600 hours of clinical practice, the Commission approved all of the following:

- Programs have the authority to determine that a candidate has completed sufficient clinical practice hours to address all TPEs even if the candidate has not completed 600 hours of clinical practice.
- Programs may take the passage of a Commission-approved TPA into consideration when determining that a candidate has completed sufficient clinical practice hours.
- Programs have the authority to determine that a candidate has satisfied the formal program evaluation requirement.
- Programs have the authority to determine that a candidate has satisfied the 'solo' teaching experience.

Each candidate's Individual Development Plan, developed by the Preliminary program with the candidate and provided by the candidate to the teacher induction program, shall document any modifications that were made for that specific candidate due to COVID-19. (Agenda item 4A: Recommendations a-d)

### **For Preliminary Education Specialist Preparation Programs**

Regarding the requirement that Education Specialist candidates must have experiences with students across the grade levels and disability categories authorized by the credential as well as experiences across the range of program settings, the Commission approved allowing programs to determine if the candidate has sufficient experience across grade levels and settings. (Agenda item 4A: Recommendation e)

Each candidate's Individual Development Plan, developed by the Preliminary program with the candidate and provided by the candidate to the teacher induction program, shall document any modifications that were made for that specific candidate due to COVID-19.

### **For Teacher and Administrator Induction Programs**

The Commission approved designating the 2019-20 year as a complete program year. Candidates do not need to participate in an additional 2-4 months of Induction to complete the 2019-20 year. (Agenda item 4A: Recommendation g)

The Commission also approved amending the Precondition that requires the candidate entering Induction to hold a Preliminary credential to allow all new teachers and administrators who have completed almost all of the Preliminary preparation program, were impacted by COVID-19, and hold either a PS-VTW or an Intern extension to begin an induction program. (Agenda item 4A: Recommendation h)

### **For Specialized Services Credential Programs in Pupil Personnel Services and Speech-Language Pathology**

The Commission affirmed that the specialized services programs should consult the national association guidelines related to flexibility due to COVID-19 and that programs have the authority to determine when a candidate has met the clinical practice requirement as long as the candidate's clinical practice has satisfied the appropriate Title 5 section:

- School Counseling-[Title 5 Section 80632.2\(b\)](#)
- School Psychology-[Title 5 Section 80632.4\(b\)](#)
- School Social Work-[Title 5 Section 80632.3\(b\)](#)

(Agenda item 4A: Recommendations i-j)

### **For the Administrator Performance Assessment (APA)**

The Commission approved postponing the planned additional standard setting study and extended the current passing standard for the APA. (Agenda item 4A: Recommendation k)

### **Important Dates:**

The above flexibility provisions will become effective as of the date of Commission approval, April 23, 2020.

### **Background:**

On March 19, 2020, Governor Newsom issued the first stay at home order in the nation for the state of California. In the days just prior, numerous school districts had closed schools and colleges and universities sent students back to their homes to await information on continuing the remainder of the semester or quarter through on-line coursework. The Commission's best estimate is that over 80,000 candidates in California were enrolled in preparation programs across the spectrum of credential areas at the time the COVID-19 Health and Safety Restrictions were initially implemented - most of whom have been impacted in some manner by the current situation. Approximately 26,000 of the enrolled candidates are in the final year of their preparation. A good portion of these candidates were in the process of fulfilling their final

clinical practice, performance assessment (if applicable to their credential area), and/or program requirements with the intention of completing their program and being credentialed and employed for the upcoming academic year. Staff has heard from many programs that a good portion of the candidates will be ready to be recommended for their credential.

When the scope of the COVID-19 crisis in California started to become clearer, and schools began to move to an online environment for instruction, Commission staff began developing and posting guidance for Commission-approved programs. The posted information on the Commission's COVID-19 webpage identifies where programs have the authority to modify their coursework, clinical practice, and program-embedded assessments, and which credential requirements cannot be modified by the program. While this initial guidance provided programs with some clarity, the ongoing extent of the crisis now requires further consideration and potential Commission action to address the multiple areas of program, candidate, and stakeholder COVID-19 concerns stemming from statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements.

Requirements that are in statute may not be modified by the Commission. Only two types of actions may modify a statutory requirement — either through legislative action or an executive order enacted by the Governor. Regulations often clarify or further interpret statute and they are adopted by action of the Commission. As such, regulations may be changed by promulgating new regulations or may be superseded by an act of the legislature or Governor. Requirements or policies that have been put in place by the Commission, such as the educator preparation program standards, can be modified through formal action of the Commission.

It is possible that, depending on any future action by the Governor and/or the Legislature, that additional flexibility options may become available. The Commission will continue to update stakeholders regarding any additional updates and/or changes to the information provided in this PSA.

### **Sources:**

Commission agenda items April 2020 Meeting:

[3A: Consideration of Actions to Assist Applicants, Educators, and Credential Candidates Impacted by Emergency Health and Safety Conditions Related to COVID-19](#)

[4A: Flexibility for Commission-Approved Educator Preparation Programs Due to the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

### **References:**

1. The authority to defer the state basic skills proficiency test requirement in specific cases is outlined in EC section 44252.8;
2. The authority to extend or renew a credential or permit when the holder was unable to complete requirements for renewal/reissuance due to circumstances outlined in Title 5 CCR sections 80496 and 80523;

- The authority to issue VTW documents to allow candidates additional time to complete requirements for a credential, is outlined in EC section 44225, subdivision (m), subsection (2) and Title 5, CCR sections 80120 – 80125. The Commission has the authority to grant waiver requests that “Provide other temporary exemptions when deemed appropriate by the commission,” (Education Code section 44225, subdivision (m), subsection (5)).

### Further Information and Questions

Commission staff will post additional guidance documents focusing on each type of educator preparation program. Four program update webinars have been scheduled, two performance assessment webinars, and one employer webinar. During the webinars staff will present the flexibility information and staff will respond to questions. The recordings from the webinars will be available on the Commission website for reference.

Updates	Date/Time
<a href="#">CalTPA Program Coordinator Update</a>	Tuesday, April 28th, 3 – 4:30 pm
<a href="#">CalAPA Program Coordinator Update</a>	Wednesday, April 29, 1:30 – 3pm
<a href="#">Teacher Induction programs</a>	Thursday, April 30, 1 – 2:30 pm
<a href="#">Administrator Induction programs</a>	Friday, May 1, 1 – 2:30 pm
<a href="#">Preliminary Multiple Subject, Single Subject, and Education Specialist programs</a>	Monday, May 4, 10:30 – noon
<a href="#">PPS and SLP Programs</a>	Monday, May 4, 1:30 – 3 pm
<a href="#">Employers</a>	Wednesday, May 6, 10 am – noon

### Contact Information:

Contact Information for the Professional Services Division is available at the [Professional Services Contact webpage](#).