



PROGRAM SPONSOR ALERT

DATE:
December 17, 2021

NUMBER:
21-13

SUBJECT: COVID Flexibilities Extended

Summary:

On December 9, 2021, the Commission extended three specific COVID flexibilities and clarified which candidates are eligible to use COVID flexibilities currently in place.

Extension of Flexibilities:

Assembly Bill (AB) 130 (Chapter 44, Statutes of 2021) provided the Commission with the authority to extend three COVID flexibilities from December 31, 2021, to a date no later than June 30, 2022, if it determined that credential candidates were unable to complete the requirements relevant to each flexibility due to testing center closures or capacity issues related to COVID-19. The Commission took the following action to extend the flexibilities as follows:

1. Deferred the requirement to complete the RICA prior to earning a Preliminary Credential if the candidate is unable to complete it between March 19, 2020, and June 30, 2022, due to testing center closures or capacity issues related to COVID-19.
2. Deferred the requirement to complete the basic skills proficiency test (CBEST exam) prior to enrollment in a teacher preparation program if the candidate is unable to complete the CBEST between March 19, 2020, and June 30, 2022, due to testing center closures or capacity issues related to COVID-19.
3. Deferred the requirement to complete a subject matter examination (CSET exam) for Interns if the candidate was unable to complete the CSET between March 19, 2020, and June 30, 2022, due to testing center closures or capacity issues related to COVID-19.

The Commission extended the above COVID flexibilities after examining statewide data that indicated that COVID continues to impact testing availability and capacity in certain areas of the state. The Commission also provided clarification as to which candidates are eligible for COVID

flexibilities given the dates that each flexibility is set to expire. This information is available in Appendix A.

In addition to the above flexibilities, AB 130 had already allowed for the deferral of the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA) and Administrator Performance Assessment (APA) to the clear credential through August 31, 2022 for those candidates who were not able to complete the assessment based on four specific conditions related to COVID-19 (see Appendix A and [PSA 21-12](#) for more information).

Important Message for Programs

At this time, it is essential for programs to communicate to candidates that it is in the candidate's best interest to make every effort to complete all requirements as expeditiously as possible. Candidates cannot be recommended for the preliminary credential without completing the basic skills and subject matter requirements. Delaying attempts to complete these requirements could impact their ability to earn the preliminary credential. Additionally, candidates should be strongly encouraged to take the RICA examination while they are receiving support and assistance from their preliminary program. Delaying this exam may be necessary for a limited number of candidates under extraordinary circumstances where they are unable to access the exam, but the vast majority of candidates in preliminary programs should take the RICA exam during their preliminary program. Likewise, given that nearly all schools in the state are back to in-person learning, candidates in preliminary programs should complete the TPA or APA in their preliminary program clinical placements in order to utilize the robust supports that their preliminary programs provide.

Candidates should also be made aware of the variety of ways that the required examinations may be taken. Online proctoring is available for the RICA, CBEST, and some CSET exams. For a one-week period each month, online proctoring allows candidates to take exams remotely at any time of the day or night convenient to the candidate. Please see the [California Educator Credentialing Assessments](#) website for more information on the availability of new options for taking required licensing exams.

Additionally, many candidates may not be required to take the CBEST and/or CSET exams now that new options for meeting [basic skills](#) and [subject matter](#) requirements have been implemented. In addition to previous alternatives, the basic skills requirement may now be met by verification of completed coursework. The subject matter competence requirement may now be met by verification of an appropriate degree major or completed coursework. Programs will need to assist individuals in determining whether they qualify for one of these options for meeting basic skills and subject matter.

Programs should closely monitor their candidates' progress on all requirements and determine whether the candidate was unable to take the required exam due to testing center closures or capacity issues. Programs may want to require candidates to provide documentation to show that they have attempted to complete the requirements at particular benchmarks throughout the program in order to reduce the number of issues faced by candidates at the end of their

programs and to reduce the number of candidates who have additional requirements to fulfill after they have completed their program.

It is important to remember that these flexibilities were approved based on the unique circumstances caused by COVID. The current situation is now vastly different than it was in 2020 as testing centers are open and numerous other options are in place for meeting these requirements. While there may be some limited number of candidates who are unable to complete these requirements due to testing center closures and capacity issues, those who are able to complete these requirements should do so at their earliest convenience.

Key Provisions:

[Assembly Bill 130 \(Chap. 44, Stats. 2021\)](#)

[Commission Agenda Item 2E \(December 2021\)](#)

[Commission Agenda Item 4E \(June 2021\)](#)

[Commission Agenda Item 4H \(April 2021\)](#)

Contact Information:

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

Appendix A

COVID Flexibilities (Revised December 2021)*

	Summary of Flexibility	Eligible for Use	Authority and Conditions
TPA/APA	<p>Move performance assessment requirement (TPA/APA) to the Clear Credential if impacted by COVID. The performance assessment must be passed prior to recommendation for the clear credential.</p> <p>Eligible Candidates Any candidate <u>recommended for a preliminary credential</u> on or before August 31, 2022, who was unable to complete the TPA/APA between March 19, 2020, and August 31, 2022, due to impacts of COVID-19. All of the following four conditions must be met in order for a candidate to qualify for this deferral.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The candidate was placed or employed at a local education agency impacted by school site closures related to COVID-19. 2. The candidate was in the process of completing the TPA/APA at the time of school closure; 3. The candidate was unable to complete the performance assessment due solely to school closures; and 4. The candidate successfully completed all other preliminary credential requirements. <p>No other reasons are allowable for the deferral.</p> <p>Ineligible Candidates Any candidate in placements at schools that were not impacted by school closures due to COVID. Any candidate recommended for a preliminary credential after August 31, 2022. This flexibility does not follow candidates. That is, all candidates recommended for the credential after August 31, 2022, must have taken and passed a TPA/APA regardless of when they were enrolled or completed their program in order to receive the preliminary credential.</p>	March 19, 2020- August 31, 2022	<p>Authority: EO N-66-20 and SB 820 (Chap. 110, Stats. 2020)</p> <p>Extended with AB 130 (Chap. 44, Stats.2021)</p>

	Summary of Flexibility	Eligible for Use	Authority and Conditions
RICA	<p>Move RICA requirement to the Clear Credential if unable to take the exam due to testing center closures or capacity due to COVID. The assessment must be passed prior to recommendation for the clear credential.</p> <p>Eligible Candidates Any Multiple Subject or Education Specialist candidate enrolled in a program on or prior to June 30, 2022, who was unable to complete the RICA due to testing center closures or capacity issues related to COVID-19 between March 19, 2020, and June 30, 2022. This flexibility would follow eligible individuals through the completion of their program, even if that is after June 30, 2022.</p> <p>Ineligible Candidates Any individual who was admitted, but not yet enrolled by June 30, 2022.</p>	March 19, 2020- June 30, 2022	<p>Authority: EO N-66-20 and SB 820 (Chap. 110, Stats. 2020)</p> <p>Extended with AB 130 (Chap. 44, Stats.2021), and extended by Commission action on 12/9/2021</p>

	Summary of Flexibilities	Eligible for Use	Authority and Conditions
CBEST	<p>Suspends requirement of CBEST for Program Entry and the requirements for programs to use the CBEST data to support candidates. Basic Skills must be met prior to recommendation for the credential.</p> <p>Eligible Individuals Any individual who applied to a credential program on or before June 30, 2022, and who was unable to complete the basic skills proficiency test due to testing center closures or capacity issues related to COVID-19 between March 19, 2020, and June 30, 2022.</p> <p>Ineligible Individuals Any individual who applies to a credential program after June 30, 2022, who has not been deemed to be exempt from CBEST based on Education Code Section 44252 (b).</p>	March 19, 2020- June 30, 2022	<p>Authority: EO N-66-20 and SB 820 (Chap. 110, Stats. 2020)</p> <p>Extended with AB 130 (Chap. 44, Stats.2021), and extended by Commission action on 12/9/2021</p>

	Summary of Flexibility	Eligible for Use	Authority and Conditions
Subject Matter - Student teaching	<p>Waive Subject Matter Requirement prior to Daily Whole Class Instruction. All candidates must still satisfy the subject matter requirement prior to recommendation for the preliminary credential.</p> <p>Eligible Candidates Any candidate enrolled before the end of the 2021-22 academic year is eligible. This flexibility would follow these individuals through the end of their program, even if beyond the end of the 2021-22 academic year. Candidates admitted in spring 2022 for 2022-23 student teaching placements may also be eligible at the program’s discretion. Programs may require candidates to meet subject matter before final student teaching if a candidate is not impacted by COVID and related testing center closures or capacity issues.</p> <p>Ineligible Candidates Any individual who enrolls or is admitted after the end of the 2021-22 academic year.</p>	2021-22 academic year, and for candidates admitted before the end of 21-22 academic year	<p>Authority: Commission action, April 2021, Agenda item 4H, and clarified during Commission meeting on 12/9/2021</p>