

# Initial Educator License Application Instructions

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**Vermont Department of Education  
Office of Licensing and Professional Standards  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501  
(802) 828-2445**

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Vermont Department of Education  
Office of Educator Licensing and Professional Standards  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Dear Educator:

Thank you for contacting the Office of Educator Licensing. We hope you find the enclosed information useful. Please read all of the information in this packet. It contains important information to guide you through the licensing process. Contact us if you have questions about the application process.

Please keep this information in mind as you continue through your process with our office.

- **The Initial Phase** of all licensing processes (including initial licensure, additional endorsement, renewal, and reinstatement of a license) **has a processing time of 8-10 weeks.** The Initial Phase begins within a few days after we receive your application packet. Your packet is date stamped with the date of receipt, logged onto the computer and placed in a queue to be reviewed by a trained Licensing Specialist. All reviews are conducted according to the date the request is received. The length of the processing time is determined by the number of requests we receive at that time.

If your application is received and you have not submitted ALL required forms and fees, the application may be returned to you in its original packaging.

### **VERY IMPORTANT**

Licensing staff will not give you a status check on your process nor make a determination over the phone during the Initial Phase. In order to receive confirmation that the Licensing Office has received your application, please place a **stamp** and your address on the orange post card provided and submit it with your application.

- **The Second Phase begins when your file progresses to the front of the queue** and is reviewed by a Licensing Specialist. Once the Licensing Specialist has completed an initial review of your file, he/she will notify you of the results in writing. This form of communication is called a “Determination Letter” and will outline any further steps you may need to take to complete the licensing process. You will receive an updated determination letter each time you complete another requirement.

When your application is complete, and a Licensing Specialist determines that you have met all of the licensing requirements, your license will be printed and mailed to you within 10-14 days of the determination. The Licensing Office will not inform you of licensing decisions over the phone.

### **Applications are kept on file for six months**

**All unmet requirements listed in your “Determination Letter” must be completed within six months of receipt of the letter. After six months your file will be closed and you will need to re-submit the entire application.**

## General Licensing Information

There are **two routes** to becoming a licensed educator in Vermont.

1. **Traditional Route (application forms and fees)**
2. **Vermont’s Alternative Route known as Peer Review (educator-developed portfolio and fees)**

### **1. Traditional Route to Licensure**

If you qualify for the Traditional Route, you must complete and submit an “Application for Initial Vermont Educator License”.

The traditional route requires:

- Completion of a state approved educator preparation program at a college or university through a bachelor, post-baccalaureate or master’s degree program, **and** recommendation for licensing from the institution at the time of graduation. *(If the Licensing Office needs clarification on your recommendation for licensure, we will contact your institution.)*

**OR**

- Meeting requirements under the rules of reciprocity.

All candidates who apply through the Traditional Route must also meet other licensing requirements which may include testing, fingerprinting, etc.

### **What is reciprocity?**

Though the term “reciprocity” is used widely across the country, the true meaning of the term is often overlooked. Reciprocity is a system whereby a recommendation for licensure from a state-approved education training program at an accredited college or university or a license in one state is recognized in another state. Reciprocity is governed by the Interstate Agreement developed by the National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC).

### **Reciprocity is frequently misunderstood.**

- Reciprocity does **not** guarantee that a license in one state can be “traded in” for a license in another state.
- Reciprocity does **not** guarantee that an educator license from one state is recognized by another state.
- Decisions of licensure through reciprocity vary from state to state and are not governed by the Interstate Agreement. An educator should contact the licensing office for up-to-date licensure testing requirements.

### **What does it mean to “apply under the rules of reciprocity”?**

Licensing regulations allow the Licensing Office to review the credentials of applicants from other states/countries under these conditions:

- If the candidate has graduated from a state approved educator preparation program in another state and received a recommendation for licensure from that institution for that state.
- Or
- If a candidate has a current, comparable license (teacher, or administrator) from a state with which Vermont has signed the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement, **provided the candidate can PROVIDE OFFICAL DOCUMENTATION on School Letterhead of at least 3 years of successful work in a school within the past 7 years in the licensure endorsement or subject area.**

Those who do not meet this condition can obtain licensure through Vermont’s Alternative Route: The Peer Review process.

This rule includes candidates who have been issued licenses in foreign countries. These candidates must also demonstrate they meet the equivalent degree requirements specified in the endorsement competencies via an official document credentialing organization. Please contact the Licensing Office for more information if you obtained your education or educator license in a foreign country.

### **What is NASDTEC?**

The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification (NASDTEC) was organized in 1928 to facilitate educator licensing from state to state, and to encourage communication between state educator licensing offices, federal agencies, national organizations, and professional educators. To learn more about NASDTEC, please visit [www.nasdtec.org](http://www.nasdtec.org).

### **What is the Interstate Agreement?**

The Interstate Agreement was originally developed by NASDTEC to assist teachers and other educators who completed state approved teacher education programs to obtain an educator license in another state. This Agreement represents the conditions under which interstate reciprocity will occur between member states. Not all states have signed the Agreement, and not all states participate in all educator categories. To read more about the NASDTEC Interstate Agreement, please visit [www.nasdtec.org/agreement.tpl](http://www.nasdtec.org/agreement.tpl)

### **What states do not participate in the Interstate Agreement?**

Two states do not participate in the Interstate Agreement and, consequently, do not have reciprocity with Vermont. Those states are Iowa and Minnesota.

### **Does Vermont participate in all educator categories of the Interstate Agreement?**

The Interstate Agreement is divided into four categories: Teacher, Support Services, Administrator and Vocational.

**Vermont participates only in the categories of teacher and administrator. There is no reciprocity for School Counselor, School Nurse, School Psychologist or Library Media Specialist.** Those applying for categories not covered under the agreement may apply for Vermont licensure through a Transcript Review process.

**Which states have signed the Interstate Agreement with Vermont?**

Vermont participates with 47 other states (plus the District of Columbia) as well as Guam and Puerto Rico in the teacher category, and 30 states plus the District of Columbia in the administrator category. **Vermont does not participate in the support services and vocational categories.**

The following states and territories are members of the Interstate Agreement and have signed an agreement with Vermont regarding reciprocity for **teachers**.

|                      |                |                |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama              | Kentucky       | Ohio           |
| Alaska               | Louisiana      | Oklahoma       |
| Arizona              | Maine          | Oregon         |
| Arkansas             | Maryland       | Pennsylvania   |
| California           | Massachusetts  | Puerto Rico    |
| Colorado             | Michigan       | Rhode Island   |
| Connecticut          | Mississippi    | South Carolina |
| Delaware             | Missouri       | South Dakota   |
| District of Columbia | Montana        | Tennessee      |
| Florida              | Nebraska       | Texas          |
| Georgia              | Nevada         | Utah           |
| Guam                 | New Hampshire  | Virginia       |
| Hawaii               | New Jersey     | Washington     |
| Idaho                | New Mexico     | West Virginia  |
| Illinois             | New York       | Wisconsin      |
| Indiana              | North Carolina | Wyoming        |
| Kansas               | North Dakota   |                |

The following states or jurisdictions are members of the Interstate Agreement and have signed an agreement with Vermont regarding the reciprocity for **administrators**.

|                      |                |                |
|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
| Alabama              | Louisiana      | Rhode Island   |
| Alaska               | Maine          | South Carolina |
| Arizona              | Maryland       | South Dakota   |
| Colorado             | New Jersey     | Tennessee      |
| Delaware             | New Mexico     | Texas          |
| District of Columbia | New York       | Utah           |
| Florida              | North Carolina | Virginia       |
| Georgia              | Ohio           | Washington     |
| Illinois             | Oklahoma       | Wyoming        |
| Indiana              | Oregon         |                |
| Kansas               | Pennsylvania   |                |

**Will I qualify for a Vermont educator license via reciprocity?**

The Licensing Office can make this determination after we receive a completed application packet from you. Determinations for reciprocity are not made via phone or emailed inquiries.

**Can I qualify for a Vermont educator license if I graduated from a college/university in one of the two states that do not participate in the Interstate Agreement?**

Yes.

| <b><u>If you are a(n)</u></b> | <b><u>and</u></b>   | <b><u>This is your next step:</u></b>   |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Teacher or administrator      | attended a state-approved teacher preparation program in a state that has not signed the Interstate Agreement with Vermont  | Contact the Office of Educator Licensing and request application materials. Complete a Vermont Educator Licensing Application. The Office of Educator Licensing will evaluate your application via a transcript review. |
| Administrator                 | have a masters degree and have met the Vermont educational requirements, <b>but did not attend</b> a state-approved preparation program in a state that has signed the Interstate Agreement | Contact the Office of Educator Licensing and request application materials. The Office of Educator Licensing will evaluate your application via a transcript review.  |

**You may also download an application at:**

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/forms/initial\\_license.html](http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/forms/initial_license.html)

**Can I qualify for a Vermont license if I am seeking licensure in a category not already listed like “Non-Instructional Support Personnel”, Guidance Counselor, or School Nurse?**

Yes.

| <b><u>If you are a</u></b>   | <b><u>and</u></b>   | <b><u>This is your next step:</u></b>  |
|--|---|--|
| Support services professional such as School Counselor, School Nurse, School Psychologist, etc., or are seeking licensure in a vocational/technical area | Vermont has not signed this category on the Interstate Agreement. | Contact the Office of Educator Licensing and request application materials. The Office of Educator Licensing will evaluate your application via a transcript review. |

**Can I apply for an educator license if I have completed a college degree (bachelor or masters), but did not attend a state-approved educator preparation program?**

| <b><u>If you are a</u></b>          | <b><u>and</u></b>  | <b><u>This is your next step:</u></b>  |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Graduate of a college or university | have the required level of degree (bachelor or masters in the content area or a related field) for the license <b>but did not complete the licensure program</b> <u>or</u> did not receive a recommendation for licensure <b>and do not have a license from another state with the required 3 of the past 7 years of experience</b> , you may complete Vermont’s Alternative Licensing Route called <b>Peer Review</b> . | Read about Peer Review, <u>Vermont’s Alternative Route to Licensing</u> at <a href="http://www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/licensing/alternate.html">www.state.vt.us/educ/new/html/licensing/alternate.html</a><br><br>or ask for information by calling (802) 828-0449. |

## **2. Alternative Route to Licensure: Peer Review**

Most individuals wishing to become licensed as teachers or administrators have graduated from state approved preparation programs and received a recommendation for licensure from their institution. Vermont has created an “alternative route to licensure” for those who wish to become licensed educators **but have not** completed a traditional educator preparation program at a college or university. Vermont’s alternate route is called “License by Evaluation” or “Peer Review.” “Peer Review” is for individuals who have acquired the knowledge and skills needed to meet the 16 *Principles for Vermont Educators* and the *endorsement competencies and requirements* through coursework and life experience.

Acceptance into the Peer Review process requires a baccalaureate degree. If you would like more information on the Peer Review process call the Peer Review Assistant at (802)828-0449 or e-mail your request to [David.Hough@state.vt.us](mailto:David.Hough@state.vt.us). More information and the “Peer Review Handbook” are available by visiting, <http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/licensing/alternate.html>

### **How do I get more information?**

The Office of Educator Licensing at the Vermont Department of Education can guide you through the educator licensing process. Please e-mail your request to [doe-licensinginfo@state.vt.us](mailto:doe-licensinginfo@state.vt.us) or call the Licensing Help Line at (802)828-2445 to request application information.

## FINGERPRINTING AND CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK REQUIREMENT

All applicants for Vermont educator licensure must complete a criminal record check via fingerprinting.

### **Why do I have to be fingerprinted?**

It's the law.

In order to help prevent the victimization of children by caregivers, Vermont law requires that applicants for certain positions which provide care or service to children must participate in a **Vermont Criminal Information Center** record check which includes a FBI national criminal record check. Since record checks based on the name and date of birth of an applicant can result in misidentification, fingerprints are used as the basis for the record check process. Fingerprinting is a cost-effective and non-intrusive way to protect applicants from false reports since no two individuals have ever been shown to have the same fingerprints.

### Vermont Education Law Book

#### Title 16: Education

#### *Chapter 5: COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION*

#### 16 V.S.A. § 255. Public and independent school employees; contractors

#### ***§ 255. Public and independent school employees; contractors***

*(a) Superintendents, headmasters of recognized or approved Vermont independent schools and their contractors shall request criminal record information for the following:*

*(1) The person a superintendent or headmaster is prepared to recommend for any full-time, part-time or temporary employment.*

*(2) Any person directly under contract to an independent school or school district who may have unsupervised contact with school children.*

*(3) Any employee of a contractor under contract to an independent school or school district in a position that may result in unsupervised contact with school children.*

*(4) Any student working toward a degree in teaching who is a student teacher in a school within the superintendent's or headmaster's jurisdiction.*

## **LIVESCAN Electronic Fingerprinting**

The Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC) has informed the Department of Education Office of Educator Licensing that *LIVESCAN* is available in Vermont.

This electronic fingerprint process is designed to:

- increase security
- reduce processing time
- reduce rejections due to folded, stapled or damaged fingerprint cards, and
- prepare for electronic submission of fingerprint cards from VCIC to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)

### **What is the process?**

*If you are an educator applying for your first Vermont educator license:*

Applicants for an educator license will complete all application forms including the Criminal Record Check Forms. After your **FINGERPRINT AUTHORIZATION CERTIFICATE** is returned to you from the Department of Education, you must bring it with you to the agency that takes your fingerprints.

After the fingerprints are taken, the agency that took the fingerprints must send the *LIVESCAN prints* to the **Vermont Criminal Information Center, 103 S. Main Street, Waterbury VT 05671.**

*If you are a student teacher or teacher working under a temporary license (Provisional, Emergency or Apprenticeship):*

Educators working under a temporary license will begin their process at the supervisory union office. After receiving the appropriate forms, applicants visit one of the Vermont Identification Centers to have their fingerprints taken. **The Office of Educator Licensing strongly recommends that applicants take advantage of the *LIVESCAN* process at one of the eleven centers listed on page 15.**

After the fingerprints are taken, the agency that took the fingerprints must send the *LIVESCAN prints* to the **Vermont Criminal Information Center, 103 S. Main Street, Waterbury VT 05671.**

If the supervisory union processes your criminal record check, they will receive the completed criminal record report. The educator must sign an “Authorization to Release Criminal Record Report” (available from the Licensing Office or from the school district) allowing the supervisory union office to share your report with the Office of Educator Licensing.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT FINGERPRINTING

### How do I get fingerprinted in Vermont?

You must **include** with your application:

1. Your notarized **Request for Criminal Record Check** form,
2. Your completed **Fingerprint Authorization Certificate**, and
3. \$ 19.25 fee payable to the **Vermont Department of Public Safety**.

We will validate the “Fingerprint Authorization Certificate” and return it to you. You must bring the certificate with you when you have your fingerprints taken.

The Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC) and the Vermont Department of Education Licensing Office strongly recommend applicants use the **LIVESCAN** process for fingerprinting.

Please read the enclosed blue **LIVESCAN** brochure for information on how and where **LIVESCAN** can be accessed in Vermont.

If you do not wish to use the **LIVESCAN** process in Vermont, you will need to go to a local law enforcement agency and have your fingerprints taken. You must bring the validated **Fingerprint Authorization Certificate** with you. The agency must use a “**FD-258**” **Federal Applicant Fingerprint Card**.

### What happens if my fingerprints cannot be read?

**The Office of Educator Licensing strongly recommends that applicants take advantage of the LIVESCAN process at one of the eleven centers with this equipment to minimize the chance of returned prints.** If either the VCIC or FBI rejects your fingerprints because they cannot be read, you must have your fingerprints retaken.

### How long will the Criminal Record Check take?

It may take as long as 16 weeks to process a criminal record check through the FBI **once a good set of fingerprints is received by VCIC**. The FBI receives thousands of sets of fingerprints each day. Because of this volume, special arrangements or priority service is NOT AVAILABLE from the FBI. Applicants must factor this time requirement in when submitting their application form to the Office of Educator Licensing.

**The Office of Educator Licensing cannot issue a license until a completed criminal record check has been received from the FBI via VCIC.**

### What if an applicant has a criminal record?

If VCIC or the FBI discover that an applicant has a criminal record, VCIC will return the request packet to the requesting agency (the Superintendent’s Office or Licensing Office) for review.

**I don't live in Vermont. Do I still have to be fingerprinted?**

**Yes.**

**Do I have to go to Vermont to be fingerprinted?**

**No**, however you must be fingerprinted on a “**FD-258**” **Federal Applicant Fingerprint Card**. This card is available at state fingerprinting sites. (Contact your state police for a listing of sites near you).

**What does the “FD-258” Federal Applicant Fingerprint Card look like?**

This card is a white card with blue lettering. A description of how to take a proper set of fingerprints is found on the back. The card is clearly marked “**FD-258**” **Federal Applicant Fingerprint Card**.

**NOTE TO OUT-OF-STATE APPLICANTS:**

When the Vermont Crime Information Center (VCIC) receives a FD-258 card, the “Out of State Agency ORI (Agency Identifier)” on the fingerprint card will be changed to the VCIC number. The results will be sent to VCIC and not to any other agency.

**Do not contact VCIC or the Vermont Department of Education Licensing Office for a fingerprint card.**

VCIC and VT DOE Licensing Office can never under any circumstances send a blank card to any person or any law enforcement agency. It is the responsibility of the “out of state” applicant to find a law enforcement agency in their state that is willing to provide this customer service.

**Call for an appointment today!**

***LIVESCAN* is available at:**

|                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Bennington County Sheriff's Office | (802) 442-4900 |
| Burlington Police Department       | (802) 658-2700 |
| Chittenden County Sheriff's Office | (802) 863-4341 |
| Hartford Police Department         | (802) 295-9425 |
| Rutland Police Department          | (802) 773-1838 |
| St. Johnsbury Police Department    | (802) 748-2314 |
| Stowe Police Department            | (802) 253-7126 |
| Swanton Police Department          | (802) 868-4100 |
| Washington County Sheriff's Office | (802) 223-3001 |
| Williston Police Department        | (802) 878-6611 |
| Windham County Sheriff's Office    | (802) 365-4942 |

**TESTING REQUIREMENTS**

**PRAXIS I**

All candidates seeking initial educator licensure in Vermont and who are not exempt (§5247 of the Licensing Regulations), are required to meet the passing scores established by the State Board of Education on the Praxis I examinations in reading, writing, and mathematics.

**PRAXIS II**

All candidates seeking an initial license or an additional endorsement in Mathematics (7-12), Social Studies (7-12), English (7-12), Science (7-12), Elementary Education (K-6), Art (PK-12), Music (PK-12), Middle Grades (English, Mathematics, Science, and/or History/Social Science), Physical Education (PK-12) and Modern & Classical Languages (French, German, Latin and Spanish) must achieve passing scores on the required Praxis II Subject Assessments unless exempt under §5247 of the Licensing Regulations.

A copy of “Vermont’s Testing Requirements for Educator Licensure” is included in this packet. You can also find this information on our web site at the address listed below. Please read these requirements carefully.

[http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/licensing/forms/educ\\_licensing\\_praxis\\_brochure.pdf](http://education.vermont.gov/new/pdfdoc/licensing/forms/educ_licensing_praxis_brochure.pdf)

For more information on the Vermont testing requirement  
contact the Vermont Department of Education’s

Praxis Testing Specialist, David Hough

Email: [David.Hough@state.vt.us](mailto:David.Hough@state.vt.us)

Telephone: (802)828-0449

**INITIAL EDUCATOR LICENSE  
APPLICATION CHECKLIST**

**Checklist: A Complete Application Includes All Of These Items.**

- APPLICATION FOR VERMONT INITIAL EDUCATOR LICENSE.** Completed and signed.
- OATH** (*notarized*)
- COMPLETED (PINK) Mandatory “Good Standing” Declarations Form**  
*You must complete all sections and sign the statement regardless of whether or not you have children, pay taxes in Vermont, were an employer or subject to any judicial fines or fees.*
- CURRENT RESUME**
- OFFICIAL DOCUMENTATION, on School Letterhead, of educational employment (only if you are requesting reciprocity based on experience)**
- SCORES FOR REQUIRED PRAXIS I AND PRAXIS II (CONTENT) TESTS MUST BE SENT DIRECTLY FROM EDUCATIONAL TESTING SERVICE TO THE LICENSING OFFICE. You must complete all testing prior to application.** (See instructions on page 13 for more information)
- OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS** Your application must contain official transcripts in unopened envelopes sealed by the university or college. Request official transcripts in sealed envelopes from your college or university. **Do not open these transcripts at home.** Application packets received with opened transcript envelopes will be returned to the applicant. **Include transcripts from all colleges you have attended.**
- CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK REQUIREMENTS: You must complete either Process # 1 or # 2**
  - Process # 1 (If you have not had a Vermont Educational Criminal Record Check)**
    - Complete the **REQUEST FOR CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK FORM** (*Notarized*)
    - Complete the **FINGERPRINT AUTHORIZATION CERTIFICATE FORM**
    - Check or money order for \$19.25** payable to the VT Department of Public Safety  
We will validate the “Fingerprint Authorization Certificate” and return it to you. You must bring the certificate with you when you have your fingerprints taken. **You must submit the forms and payments with your application.**

or

  - Process # 2 (If you have had a Vermont Educational Criminal Record Check)**

Please read the instructions on the **Authorization** form carefully to see if you qualify.

    - Complete the **AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE CRIMINAL RECORD CHECK INFORMATION FORM** if you have been fingerprinted in Vermont for employment in a school in the past. This form must be sent to the Vermont supervisory union where your criminal record check was completed.
    - You **MUST** enclose a copy of this completed form with your application packet.
- CHECK OR MONEY ORDER FOR \$160.00** (Level I review and licensing fee) made out to the Vermont DOE - Licensing Office
- Copy of out-of-state educator license (Submit educator licenses from other states if applicable)**
- Copy of VT RN license (for School Nurse and Associate School Nurse only)**
- Copy of mental health or MSW licenses (for School Social Worker only)**

## Important Information

### Contacting the Licensing Office:

**E-mail:** [doe-licensinginfo@state.vt.us](mailto:doe-licensinginfo@state.vt.us)

**Write to:** Office of Educator Licensing and  
Professional Standards  
Vermont Department of Education  
120 State Street  
Montpelier, Vermont 05620-2501

**Web page:**

<http://education.vermont.gov/new/html/maincert.html>

### **Request an application or information**

#### **Licensing Help Line**

Telephone: (802)828-2445

Fax: (802)828-5107

*Monday through Friday*

*8:00 AM – 4:15 PM*

### **Information about Vermont educator jobs**

[www.schoolspring.com](http://www.schoolspring.com)

### **For salary information**

[www.vtnea.org](http://www.vtnea.org)

### **Types of Licenses and Fees**

#### **Level I Licenses (3 years) \$160.00**

Issued to beginning educators and valid for three years.

#### **Level II Licenses (7 years) \$320.00**

Issued to experienced educators and valid for seven years. The Licensing Office will determine if you qualify for a Level II license.

#### **Duplicate Copy of a Vermont license \$10.00**

Requests for a copy of an issued educator license must be made in writing. There is a \$10.00 replacement fee.

**It is your responsibility to notify the  
Office of Educator Licensing  
of any name and address changes.**

**Renewal information will be sent to the last  
address on file in the Licensing Office.**