



**REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIAL MARYLAND TEACHING CERTIFICATION:**

The Maryland State Department of Education (ph: 410-767-0412) grants teachers Professional Eligibility Certificate (PEC) in six general teaching areas: Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education, Middle School, Secondary, Special Education, and Specialty Areas. Each of these teaching areas has specific education requirements that must be met in order to earn the PEC. It is important to note that if you are pursuing the PEC in Secondary, Special Education, or one of the Specialty Areas, you will be certified in a specific academic content area.

**Education Requirements:**

The education component of the certification process is satisfied when you complete a Maryland approved teacher preparation program leading to a PEC in one of the teaching areas previously listed. If you are pursuing the PEC in Secondary, Special Education, or one of the Specialty Areas, the undergraduate degree you earn will be specific to the academic content area you'll be certified in.

Many of Maryland's approved teacher preparation programs are post-graduate education-focused master's programs that will build on your content-focused undergraduate degree. Others are five-year combined baccalaureate and post baccalaureate programs leading to teacher certification, but do not award a master's degree. Some of the approved schools offer full six-year programs that lead to teacher certification as well as a master's degree.

Attending one of the in-state pre-approved programs is not required to earn Maryland teacher certification. You will be eligible for the PEC if you earn a bachelor's degree, master's degree, or doctorate through a non-approved in-state school, out of state school, or online school so long as you meet the course work, experience, and testing requirements as detailed by the State of Maryland.

## **Examination Requirements:**

An overview of Maryland testing requirements is available through The Praxis Series website.

### **Basic Skills Testing:**

As a candidate for Maryland teaching certification, you will be required to demonstrate proficiency in math, reading, writing, and comprehension through Academic Skills Assessment testing that consists of the Praxis I, SAT, GRE or ACT. This involves passing one of the required exams or exam combinations by achieving passing scores:

- Praxis 1: Reading (score of 177), Writing (score of 173), Math (score of 177)
- SAT: Math and Verbal, combined score of 1000 (pre-April 1995)
- SAT: Math and Verbal, combined score of 1100 (post-April 1995)
- GRE: Math and Verbal, combined score of 1000
- ACT: Score of 24

### **Content Area Assessment Testing:**

After passing the basic academic skills assessment, you'll want to prepare for your specific content area assessment exam, known as Praxis II. If you are pursuing an Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle School, or Special Education certificate, you will take the exam specific to the respective certification. If you are pursuing Secondary Education or Specialty Area certification, you will take the exam specific to the content area you have majored in and will be teaching. You must pass the Praxis II exam specific to each area in which you wish to become certified. (You'll take the ACTFL if you are a prospective foreign language teacher).

### **Experience Requirement:**

If you are a conventional applicant who is pursuing certification through the completion of a Maryland-approved teacher preparation program, your program will involve a practicum component. Your practicum will take place in a public or accredited nonpublic school. You'll be assigned to a classroom specific to the age or grade level and subject area in which you are pursuing certification.

During your practicum you will work with a mentor teacher and observe as your mentor presents lessons in the classroom. You will also have the opportunity to develop and implement lesson plans of your own under the supervision and guidance of your mentor.

Your teacher preparation program determines the length and specific requirements of the practicum you participate in.

### **Document and Application Requirements:**

As part of the Maryland teacher certification process, you will be required to establish a new user account so as to apply online. You can also submit the following documents by postal mail directly to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE), Certification Branch, 200 W. Baltimore St., Baltimore, MD 21201:

- Official, unopened transcript from your Maryland approved teacher preparation program or transcripts showing required coursework was completed
- Proof of passing basic skills testing and the Praxis II exam specific to your content area
- Completed Maryland State Department of Education Initial Application for Certification
- Cover letter including your name, address, social security number, telephone number, email and the area of certification you seek
- If you already hold a bachelor's degree or higher without educator preparation courses, have been previously certified in Maryland, hold certification or attended school in another state or country, have certification and wish to add additional certification, or are interested in alternative certification, review your document requirements before applying.

### **Criminal History Background Check:**

As the final step in the hiring process with the Maryland school system, you'll be required to submit to a criminal history background check. This will involve completing an Application for Criminal History Records Check from the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, which provides a Livescan Pre-registration Application online, Submitting to a background check also involves signing a complete Disclosure Statement with regard to any criminal history.

You'll also need to submit to fingerprinting through any of these approved Maryland fingerprinting locations and pay the associated fees. Your application will be processed through the Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services, and the results will be forwarded to the Maryland State Department of Education.

Additional questions about Maryland teacher certification can be answered by contacting the Maryland State Department of Education's Certification Branch at 410-762-0412 or 866-772-8922, or by visiting the MSDE website.