

## 8VAC20-23-90. Alternate Routes to Licensure.

A. Career switcher alternate route to licensure for career professionals - Provisional (Career Switcher) License. An alternate route is available to career switchers who seek teaching endorsements preK through grade 12 with the exception of special education.

1. An individual seeking a Provisional (Career Switcher) License through the career switcher program shall meet the following prerequisite requirements:
  - a. An application process;
  - b. An earned baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
  - c. The completion of requirements for an endorsement in a teaching area or the equivalent through verifiable experience or academic study;
  - d. At least three years of successful full-time work experience or its equivalent; and
  - e. Virginia qualifying scores on the professional teacher's assessments as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education.
2. The Provisional (Career Switcher) License is awarded at the end of Level I preparation for an initial validity period of one school year. All components of the career switcher alternate route for career professionals shall be completed by the candidate.
3. The Level I requirements shall be completed during the course of a single year and may be offered through a variety of delivery systems, including distance learning programs. If an employing agency recommends extending the Provisional (Career Switcher) License for a second year, the candidate will enter Level III of the program. Career switcher programs shall submit program documentation as set forth by the Virginia Department of Education for review and be certified every seven years by the Virginia Department of Education.
  - a. Level I preparation. Intensive Level I preparation includes a minimum of 180 clock hours of instruction, including field experience. This phase includes human development and learning; curriculum and instruction, including technology; language and literacy; specific course content relating to the Virginia Standards of Learning; foundations of education and the teaching profession; classroom and behavior management; and assessment of and for learning.
  - b. Level II preparation during first year of employment.
    - (1) Candidate seeks employment in Virginia with the one-year Provisional (Career Switcher) License.

(2) Continued Level II preparation during the first year of employment with a minimum of five seminars that expand the intensive preparation requirements listed in subdivision 3 a of this subsection. The five seminars will include a minimum of 20 cumulative instructional hours. A variety of instructional delivery techniques will be utilized to implement the seminars.

(3) One year of successful, full-time teaching experience in a Virginia public or accredited nonpublic school under a one-year Provisional (Career Switcher) License. A trained mentor shall be assigned to assist the candidate during the first year of employment. Responsibilities of the mentor include the following:

(a) Collaborate with the beginning teacher in the development and implementation of an individualized professional development plan;

(b) Observe, assess, coach, and provide opportunities for constructive feedback, including strategies for self-reflection;

(c) Share resources and materials;

(d) Share best instructional, assessment, and organizational practices; classroom and behavior management strategies; and techniques for promoting varied and effective methods of communication with and among students; and

(e) Provide general support and direction regarding school policies and procedures.

(4) Upon successful completion of the Levels I and II preparation requirements of the career switcher alternate route to licensure program and submission of a recommendation from the employing Virginia educational agency, the candidate will be eligible to apply for a five-year, renewable license. Renewal requirements for the regular license will be subject to current regulations of the Virginia Board of Education.

c. Level III preparation, if required.

(1) Post preparation, if required, will be conducted by the employing Virginia educational agency to address the areas where improvement is needed as identified in the candidate's professional improvement plan; and

(2) Upon successful completion of Levels I, II, and, if required, Level III of the career switcher alternate route to licensure program and submission of a recommendation from the employing Virginia educational agency, the candidate will be eligible to receive a five-year renewable license.

4. Verification of program completion will be documented by the certified program provider and the division superintendent or designee.

5. Certified providers implementing a career switcher program may charge a fee for participation in the program.

B. An alternate route is available to individuals employed by a Virginia educational agency who seek teaching endorsements preK through grade 12. The employing Virginia educational

agency may request a nonrenewable Provisional License on behalf of the individual if the individual has completed an allowable portion of professional studies and endorsement requirements. An employed teacher may demonstrate meeting the teaching endorsement requirements by passing a rigorous academic subject test for endorsements in which a test is prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education. This testing option does not apply to individuals (i) who are seeking an early/primary education preK-3 or elementary education preK-6 endorsement, special education endorsements, or a reading specialist endorsement or (ii) who hold a Technical Professional License, Vocational Evaluator License, Pupil Personnel Services License, School Manager License, or Division Superintendent License. This route also is available to individuals who are employed by a Virginia public school, a Virginia accredited nonpublic school, or an accredited virtual school or program and who are seeking the Online Teacher License that is issued to teachers who teach only online courses. The Provisional License will be issued for a validity period not to exceed three years. The Provisional License is a nonrenewable teaching license valid for a period not to exceed three years. Individuals shall complete all licensure requirements to become eligible for the five-year, renewable license.

1. An individual seeking a license through this alternate route shall have met the following requirements:
  - a. Entered the teaching field through the alternate route to licensure upon the recommendation of the employing Virginia educational agency. For the Online Teacher Provisional License, individuals shall be employed by a Virginia public school division, a Virginia accredited nonpublic school, or an accredited virtual school or program;
  - b. Earned a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university with the exception of individuals seeking the Technical Professional License;
  - c. Have met requirements for the endorsement area; and
  - d. Need to complete an allowable portion of professional studies and licensure requirements.
2. The professional studies requirements for the appropriate level of endorsement sought shall be completed. A Virginia educational agency may submit to the Superintendent of Public Instruction for approval an alternate program to meet the professional studies requirements. The alternate program shall include training such as seminar, internship, or coursework in human development and learning; curriculum and instruction, including technology; assessment of and for learning; classroom and behavior management; foundations of education and the teaching profession, including legal status of teachers and students, federal and state laws, and teacher evaluation as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education's guidelines for performance standards and evaluation criteria established pursuant to § 22.1-253.13:5 B of the Code of Virginia and language and literacy.
3. One year of successful, full-time teaching experience in the appropriate teaching area in a Virginia public or an accredited nonpublic school shall be completed. For the Online Teacher License only, one year of successful online teaching experience in the

endorsement area in a public school division, an accredited nonpublic school, or an accredited virtual school or program may be accepted in lieu of the supervised teaching experience. A fully licensed experienced teacher shall be available in the school building to assist the beginning teacher employed through the alternate route.

C. Alternate route in special education. The Provisional (Special Education) License is a nonrenewable teaching license issued for a validity period not to exceed three years to an individual employed as a special education teacher in a public school or a nonpublic school in Virginia who does not hold the appropriate special education endorsement. The Provisional (Special Education) License will be issued only with endorsements in special education. The Provisional License is a nonrenewable teaching license valid for a period not to exceed three years. This alternate route to special education endorsement is not applicable to individuals seeking the Online Teacher License. To be issued the Provisional (Special Education) License through this alternate route, an individual shall:

1. Be employed by a Virginia public or accredited nonpublic school as a special education teacher and have the recommendation of the employing educational agency;
2. Have earned a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
3. Have an assigned mentor with an active Virginia teaching license with an endorsement in special education; and
4. Have a planned program of study in the assigned endorsement area, make progress toward meeting the endorsement requirements each of the three years of the license, and have completed at least three semester hours of coursework in the competencies of foundations for educating students with disabilities and have an understanding and application of the legal aspects and regulatory requirements associated with identification, education, and evaluation of students with disabilities. A survey course integrating these competencies would satisfy this requirement.

The Provisional (Special Education) License issued through this alternate route shall not be issued without the completion of these prerequisites.

D. Alternate programs at institutions of higher education or Virginia school divisions. Alternate programs developed by institutions of higher education (i) recognize the unique strengths of prospective teachers from nontraditional backgrounds and (ii) prepare these individuals to meet the same standards that are established for others who are granted a license through an alternate route.

E. Experiential learning. Individuals applying for an initial teaching license through the alternate route as prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education shall meet the following criteria to be eligible to request that experiential learning satisfy the coursework for the endorsement (teaching) content area:

1. Have earned a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university;
2. Have at least three years of documented successful full-time work experience that may include specialized training related to the endorsement sought; and

3. Have met the Virginia qualifying score on the content knowledge assessment prescribed by the Virginia Board of Education.

Experiential learning does not apply to individuals seeking special education and preK-3 and preK-6 endorsements or endorsements in which there is no Virginia Board of Education - prescribed content or subject assessment.

**Statutory Authority**

§§ 22.1-298.1 and 22.1-299 of the Code of Virginia.

**Historical Notes**

Derived from Virginia Register Volume 34, Issue 24, eff. August 23, 2018.