



CHAPTER 115C
ARTICLE 17E - LICENSURE

N.C.G.S. § 115C-270.20.

Licensure requirements.

SOURCE	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT	RETRIEVED	SOURCE FINGERPRINT
General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	No amendment history on record	21 September 2026, 06:38 UTC	ee77ee5265b5d052673108a0 - fd92db0d61fb285e47bed185 - 0e9a2c0333e5b408

§ 115C-270.20(a) Teacher Licenses. - The State Board shall adopt rules for the issuance of the following classes of teacher licenses, including required levels of preparation for each classification:

- (1) Continuing professional license or CPL. - A five-year renewable license issued to a teacher who has at least three years of licensed teaching experience and meets other requirements established by the State Board. A CPL shall remain in effect for five years after retirement.
- (2) Emergency license or EL. - A one-year nonrenewable license issued to an individual who holds a bachelor's degree with coursework relevant to the requested licensure area, but has not successfully completed a recognized educator preparation program and does not qualify for a residency license. An emergency license shall only be requested by the local board of education, and applicants for emergency licenses shall meet all other requirements established by the State Board, including preservice training, prior to teaching.
- (3) Initial professional license or IPL. - A three-year nonrenewable license issued to an individual who has successfully completed a recognized educator preparation program and meets other requirements established by the State Board.
- (4) Repealed by Session Laws 2021-180, s. 7.57(a), effective November 18, 2021.

(4a) Limited license. - A three-year renewable license issued to an individual who meets the requirements of this subdivision. A limited license shall only be requested by the local board of education currently employing or seeking to employ the individual and shall be used for continued employment only in that local school administrative unit. The State Board shall not require individuals to demonstrate preparation through achieving a prescribed minimum score on a standardized examination for a limited license. To receive a limited license, one of the following shall be met:

a. In-state licensee. - Both of the following are met:

1. The individual was issued an IPL or RL, but failed to fulfill examination requirements under G.S. 115C-270.15 after three years of licensure.

2. The local board of education submits to the State Board an affidavit stating that the teacher is currently employed by that local board, is an effective teacher, and will be encouraged to continue to pursue a CPL. The affidavit shall be signed by both the principal and superintendent for the school to which the teacher is currently assigned.

b. Out-of-state licensee. - Both of the following are met:

1. The individual holds current teacher licensure in another state that is in good standing.

2. The local board of education submits to the State Board an affidavit stating that the local board seeks to employ the teacher, that the teacher has been employed as a licensed teacher in another state for at least three years, and that the teacher will be encouraged to pursue an IPL or CPL, as appropriate for that teacher. The affidavit shall be signed by the superintendent for the local board of education seeking to employ the teacher.

(5) Residency License or RL. - A one-year license, renewable twice, that meets both of the following requirements:

a. Is requested by an eligible entity and accompanied by a certification of supervision from the recognized educator preparation program in which the individual is enrolled. For the purposes of this sub-subdivision, an eligible entity is one of the following:

1. The governing body of a public school unit.

2. A nonpublic school that meets all of the following:

1. Meets the requirements of Part 1 or Part 2 of Article 39 of this Chapter.

II. Is approved and monitored by the Department of Public Instruction to provide special education and related services pursuant to a student's IEP.

b. The individual for whom the license is requested meets all of the following requirements:

1. Holds at least one of the following:

I. A bachelor's degree.

II. An advanced degree.

2. Has either completed coursework relevant to the requested licensure area or passed the content area examination relevant to the requested licensure area that has been approved by the State Board.

3. Is enrolled in a recognized educator preparation program.

4. Meets all other requirements established by the State Board, including completing preservice requirements prior to teaching.

(6) Repealed by Session Laws 2019-71, s. 4.2, effective July 1, 2019.

§ 115C-270.20(b)

Administrator Licenses. - The State Board shall establish rules for the issuance of the following classes of administrator licenses, including required levels of preparation for each classification:

(1) Administrator license. - A five-year renewable license issued to an individual who meets all of the following requirements:

a. Holds a bachelor's degree.

b. Has successfully completed an approved administrator preparation program.

c. Has at least four years of experience as a licensed professional educator.

d. Has submitted a portfolio to the State Board for approval that meets criteria adopted by the State Board.

(2) Provisional assistant principal license. - A one-year license to be employed as an assistant principal, renewable twice, issued to an employee of a local board of education if one of the following requirements is met:

a. The local board of education determines there is a demonstrated need for administrators and the employee enrolls in an approved administrator preparation program by the end of the first year of provisional licensure.

b.The employee is participating in an internship required for completion of an approved administrator preparation program.

§ 115C-270.20(b1) Student Services Personnel Licenses. - The State Board shall establish rules for the classification and levels of preparation necessary for issuance of licenses for student services personnel.

§ 115C-270.20(c) Notwithstanding the requirement in subsection (a) of this section that an individual must hold a bachelor's degree with coursework relevant to the requested licensure area for individuals seeking licensure in a career or technical education area, the State Board may establish alternate criteria related to that area to establish competency in lieu of a bachelor's degree.

§ 115C-270.20(d) Lifetime License for Professional Educators. - The State Board of Education shall issue a lifetime license, which shall require no renewal, to an individual currently licensed as a professional educator who has met at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) Completed 30 or more years of creditable service with the Teachers' and State Employees' Retirement System.
- (2) Completed a combined total of 30 or more years of employment as a licensed teacher, administrator, or student services personnel in one or more public school units in North Carolina. (2017-189, s. 3(c); 2019-71, ss. 2.1, 4.1, 4.2; 2019-212, s. 8(b); 2021-130, s. 8(b); 2021-180, s. 7.57(a); 2022-75, s. 1(a); 2023-125, s. 1(b); 2023-134, s. 7.73(a); 2025-38, s. 4(b); 2025-56, s. 3(b); 2025-92, s. 2.6.)

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS II
1 AUTHORITY

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 115C-270.15	(a)	"failed to fulfill examination requirements under"

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-270.20 (2026).

PINPOINT

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 115C-270.20(a) (2026).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

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