

S.C. Public Education Guidelines

**Title of
Guidelines:** **Guidelines for the South Carolina Teach for America
Program**

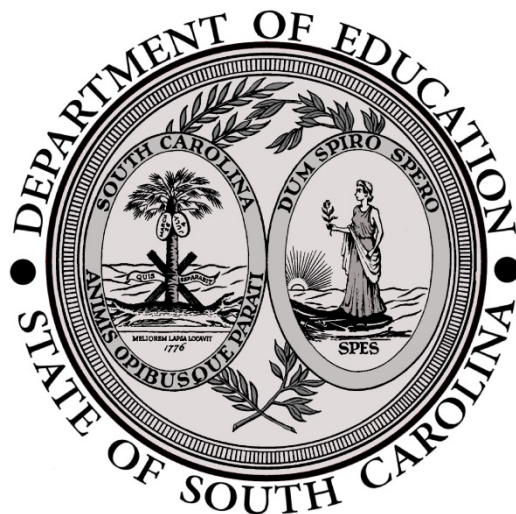
Approved by: **S.C. State Board of Education**

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**Under
Regulation:** **NA**

**Related
Statutes:** **NA**

SCDE Office: **Office of Educator Services**



GUIDELINES FOR THE SOUTH CAROLINA TEACH FOR AMERICA PROGRAM

To address the goal of recruiting, retaining, and distributing highly effective teachers throughout South Carolina, especially in rural school districts, the State Board of Education adopted a resolution on October 13, 2010, to implement the TEACH FOR AMERICA (TFA) program in South Carolina. This program is designed to bring our nation's most promising future leaders into classrooms, by recruiting and training top college graduates who commit to teach for two years in the public schools and become lifelong advocates of educational excellence and equity.

Eligible candidates will be granted a one-year, alternate-route license in their teaching field, with an option for a second year, based upon verification of successful performance. Individuals who wish to continue as teachers in the South Carolina public schools beyond the two-year commitment to TFA will be provided an option to qualify for professional licensure by completing additional South Carolina requirements.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

In order for the TFA candidate to be eligible to receive a South Carolina alternative-route teaching license, the candidate must submit the following documentation to the Office of Educator Services:

1. An official transcript verifying an earned bachelor's degree (or higher) from a regionally accredited college or university or an institution with a teacher education program that has been approved by the South Carolina Board of Education for licensure purposes.
2. Official verification of a passing score on the content area examination(s) adopted by the South Carolina Board of Education for the licensure area desired.
3. Verification of candidacy by TFA.
4. Verification from a South Carolina public school district of an offer of employment as a full-time teacher in the qualifying content area.
5. Verification of successful completion of the South Carolina Department of Education–approved TFA pre-service training institute and the regional orientation to the schools and communities in which the individual will be teaching.
6. An Application for South Carolina Teacher Licensure.
7. Electronic fingerprints. (Note: The results of the subsequent background check must meet the state's eligibility criteria for licensure.)
8. The application fee for a South Carolina teaching license.
9. Completion of the Darkness to Light Stewards of Children Child Abuse Prevention Training Program.

TEACHING ASSIGNMENT

Teachers with alternative program licensure must be assigned to teach in their designated subject area on a full-time basis. In compliance with No Child Left Behind (20 U.S.C. 56301 et seq., 2002) requirements, out-of-field permits are no longer issued. Candidates who qualify for TFA in more than one subject area at the time of admission must select and teach in one content area for the duration of the alternative license. Additional licensure areas can be added after the individual receives a professional license.

TFA corps members are eligible for alternative licensure in all classroom-based content areas.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Full-time TFA instructional coaches will observe corps members and engage them in joint problem-solving to improve their practice and accelerate student learning. Corps members will receive toolkits that include sample assessments, standards, and teaching resources customized for their grade level, subject, and district; meet periodically in content-area and grade-level learning teams; and have access to TFANet, the corps member and alumni Web site that hosts online resource exchange and knowledge sharing.

TFA corps members must also participate in all district directed professional development.

FIRST-YEAR TEACHING

During their initial TFA year, teachers who are employed on or before the 28th student attendance day must be employed under an Induction 1 contract. All State Board of Education Induction and Mentoring requirements apply to TFA teachers during their initial year of employment.

ANNUAL RENEWAL

The alternative-route license for TFA is valid for one school year and may be renewed for one additional year upon recommendation by an employing school district and TFA.

During their second full year of employment, TFA teachers must be employed under an Induction 2 contract and must participate in a formative evaluation process based upon identified performance strengths and areas for growth as indicated in the teacher's Professional Growth and Development Plan. This evaluation process may include all or selected components of a state-approved summative evaluation model. However, the results of this summative evaluation process may be used only for formative purposes and may not be applied toward license advancement.

PROGRAM FUNDING

Private funding is the primary source of financial support for the launch of TFA in South Carolina. The South Carolina Department of Education or State of South Carolina will not incur any costs for the initiation of this initiative. Any costs to participating districts will be delineated in separate memorandums of agreement between TFA and the participating district.

ELIGIBILITY FOR PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE

TFA participants who wish to continue teaching in South Carolina beyond the two-year corps commitment may qualify for professional licensure by meeting the following requirements:

1. Candidates must complete a minimum of three continuous years of full-time teaching, including the two years as a participant in the TFA program.
2. During their third year of teaching, candidates must be employed under an annual contract and must be summatively evaluated in accordance with the ADEPT Guidelines. Consistent with the ADEPT regulation (R. 43-205.1), TFA participants must not receive a continuing contract until they have completed all requirements for professional licensure.
3. Candidates must earn a passing score on the pedagogy examination adopted by the State Board of Education for the licensure area and level.
4. Candidates must complete nine semester hours of graduate-level coursework from a list of core courses approved for licensure purposes by the South Carolina Department of Education on behalf of the South Carolina Board of Education. Courses identified for individual teachers will be based on the individual's experience, knowledge, and skills. Courses must be completed while an active participant in TFA or in subsequent years while meeting requirements for the professional license.
5. Candidates who do not complete the above requirements for professional licensure within three academic years may apply for a one-academic-year extension of their alternate-route license, provided they remain employed and have the support of a South Carolina public school.
6. A TFA candidate who fails to complete the professional license requirements as specified above, and later desires professional licensure in South Carolina, will be required to meet all initial licensure requirements that are in effect at the time of reapplication. These individuals are not eligible to enter any other alternative-route programs.

INELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUED LICENSURE

A TFA candidate who has his or her alternate-route license suspended or revoked by the South Carolina Board of Education will be dismissed from the program and will not be allowed to pursue a South Carolina professional teaching license.

CORPS MEMBER PLACEMENT

The State Board of Education will designate approved regions and districts for the placement of TFA corps members in South Carolina. The State Board of Education Chairperson may approve district partnerships with TFA if there is not sufficient time for the approval to be presented to the full State Board.

TFA representatives will work directly with each participating school district superintendent to determine potential TFA placements. TFA placements may be made only at the request of the district superintendent.

Building on its math and science initiative, TFA will provide math and science teachers to rural schools in South Carolina.

The number of TFA Early Childhood and Elementary Education teachers employed in South Carolina may not exceed 30 percent of the total number of TFA teachers employed in the State during a given academic year.

The number of TFA Special Education teachers employed in South Carolina may not exceed 20 percent of the total number of TFA teachers employed in the State during a given academic year. Districts are encouraged to limit Special Education placements to settings serving students with mild to moderate disabilities.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The South Carolina Department of Education will monitor TFA implementation and will provide an annual report to the State Board of Education on the program's success. Measures of success shall be the number of participants provided to rural school districts in South Carolina, the retention of the TFA teachers during their two-year TFA commitment, the satisfaction of principals regarding the performance of TFA teachers, and evidence of the impact of TFA teachers on student achievement in their classrooms and schools.

EXCEPTIONS

Exceptions to the above stated guidelines must be initiated by the employing school district superintendent. Exceptions can be approved by the SCDE Deputy Superintendent for the Division of School Effectiveness (DSE). Exception decisions made by the DSE Deputy may be appealed to the State Board of Education.