

Certification of Speech Language Pathologists

Effective July 1, 2020, the State Board of Education (SBE) approved issuance of educator certificates in the certification field of Speech Language Pathologist (SLP).

Individuals with an Educator Certificate in the Field of Speech-Language Therapist

Individuals currently certified in the field of Speech-Language Therapist may continue to maintain and renew that credential and serve in their current roles. To maintain the certificate in the field of Speech-Language Therapist, the educator must meet standard certificate renewal requirements every five years.

An SLP who holds an educator certificate in the field of Speech Language Therapist may request an evaluation to determine eligibility for the certification field of Speech Language Pathologist by submitting a Request for Change/Action form and a copy of a valid SLP license issued by the South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulation (LLR).

Steps for an SLP to Apply for Educator Certification

For issuance of an educator credential, the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) accepts approved master's level programs for the preparation of SLPs. Acceptable programs include those accredited by the Council on Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the American Speech Hearing Association (ASHA) as well as programs admitted to candidacy by the CAA-ASHA.

An SLP applying for an educator certificate must

- Complete an online application through the SCDE Educator Portal prior to all other steps.
- Submit the non-refundable \$105 processing fee online through the Educator Portal.
- Complete the fingerprinting and criminal history review process.
- Submit official transcripts from each college or university attended. The undergraduate transcript determines the earliest date for which an applicant may receive educator experience credit; the transcript for the SLP program is necessary to determine if the certificate will be issued at the Master's or Master's +30 class level for compensation purposes.
- Submit a legible copy of a current, valid SLP or SLP Intern license issued by LLR.
 - Note: An applicant who submits a legible copy of a current, valid SLP Intern license issued by LLR *must* also document a qualifying score on the required Praxis assessment by requesting an official score report from ETS.
- *If applicable*, submit Experience Verification Form(s) to receive educator experience credit for work as an SLP providing services to children and/or to document experience as an SLP or teacher working in a public school setting (either as an employee of a school district or a third-party provider).
- *If applicable*, submit a legible copy of any valid out-of-state educator certificate.

First-time Applicants and Certificate Types

Professional Certificate

- An individual who has successfully completed an ASHA-approved SLP program that includes an educator certification track will be eligible for an educator certificate at the Professional level.
- An individual who has successfully completed an ASHA-approved SLP program without an educator certification track but presents documentation of at least one year of employment as an SLP in a public school setting will be issued a Professional certificate.

Internship Certificate

- *SLP License Issued by LLR.* An individual who has successfully completed an ASHA-approved SLP program that did not include an educator certification track and does not have employment experience as an SLP in a public school setting will be issued an Internship certificate in the field of Speech Language Pathologist. The Internship certificate will be issued for up to one school year and may be extended at the request of the employer. With subsequent documentation of one year of employment as an SLP in a public school setting, the Internship certificate will be converted to a Professional credential and will be issued for the remaining years of a five-year validity period.
- *SLP Intern License Issued by LLR.* An individual who has successfully completed an ASHA-approved program and has been issued the SLP Intern license by LLR in order to complete clinical hours will be issued an Internship educator certificate in the field of Speech-Language Pathologist—Intern. The Internship certificate will be issued for a period of up to one school year and may be extended, if needed, by submitting a renewed SLP Intern license from LLR. With subsequent documentation of a valid SLP license issued by LLR and one year of employment as an SLP in a public school setting, the Internship certificate will be converted to a Professional credential and issued for the remaining years of a five-year validity period.

SLPs with Expired South Carolina Educator Certificates

Professional Certificates Expired Less than Ten Years

An SLP with a South Carolina Professional certificate that has been expired less than 10 years is eligible to renew the educator certificate by submitting the following documentation:

- updated contact information in the SCDE Educator Portal;
- a Request for Change/Action form;
- a copy of a valid SLP license issued by LLR;
- official transcript(s) of any additional graduate degrees or coursework; and
- verification of any additional relevant experience.

Once all items indicated above are submitted, the SCDE will renew the Professional educator certificate based on the valid LLR license. Documentation submitted previously remains on file. The renewed certificate will be issued for a five-year period.

Professional Certificates Expired More than Ten Years

If an SLP previously held a South Carolina Professional educator certificate that has been expired for more than 10 years, the individual must:

- submit an application for certification online through the SCDE Educator Portal;
- submit the non-refundable \$105 processing fee through the Educator Portal;
- complete the fingerprinting and criminal history review process;
- submit a copy of a valid SLP license issued by LLR;
- submit an official transcript of any additional graduate degrees or coursework; and
- submit verification of any additional relevant experience.

Once all required documentation listed above is submitted, the SCDE will issue a Professional educator certificate to eligible individuals. Documentation submitted previously remains on file. The certificate will be issued for a five-year period.

Expired Initial Certificates

If an SLP previously held a South Carolina Initial educator certificate that is expired, the individual must:

- submit an application for certification online through the SCDE Educator Portal;
- submit the non-refundable \$105 processing fee through the Educator Portal;
- complete the fingerprinting and criminal history review process;
- submit a copy of a valid SLP license issued by LLR;
- submit an official transcript of any additional graduate degrees or coursework; and
- submit verification of any additional relevant experience.

Once all required documentation is submitted, the SCDE will issue a Professional educator certificate to eligible individuals.

ADEPT Evaluation Process

SLPs Employed Directly by a School District

- SLPs employed directly by a school district will participate in the district's ADEPT evaluation process using the appropriate model and follow the same contract levels as other educators.
 - SLPs on an Internship certificate must participate in the district's induction program and be assigned a mentor.
 - SLPs on a Professional certificate must successfully complete the ADEPT summative evaluation process at the annual contract level in order to be eligible for a continuing contract.

Contracted SLPs

- SLPs employed through a third-party vendor will be evaluated using the employer's protocols. An employer may choose to use the state's ADEPT evaluation model for SLPs in conjunction with a school district but is not required to do so.

Certificate Renewal

SLP Educator Certificate Only

- To renew the SLP educator certificate, the individual must submit a Request for Change/Action and a current, valid LLR license to the SCDE.
- If not met previously, the individual will need to document completion of the Read to Succeed Requirement at the time of renewal.

SLP and Classroom Teaching Certificates

- To renew the SLP educator certificate, the individual must submit a Request for Change/Action and a current, valid LLR license to the SCDE.
- If not met previously, the individual will need to document completion of the Read to Succeed endorsement associated with the position in which the educator is employed.
- To renew the classroom teaching certificate, the individual must earn the required 120 renewal credits. The CEUs or other credits used to renew the LLR license and SLP certificate may be applied toward the 120 renewal credits.