

Types of Minnesota Teaching Licenses

The following tables provide detail on four categories of K-12 teaching licenses authorized in Minnesota Statutes or Minnesota Rules: (1) Professional Teaching Licenses; (2) Substitute Teaching and Intern Licenses; (3) Special Permissions to Teach; and (4) Professional Teaching Licenses No Longer Authorized to be Issued.

Please note: This information was prepared for a legislative audience; teachers, teacher candidates, or others with questions about licensure should contact either the Board of Teaching or the Minnesota Department of Education directly.

Professional Teaching Licenses

The Minnesota State Board of Teaching (BOT) and the Teacher Licensing Division at the Minnesota Department of Education (licensing division) issue five-year renewable professional teaching licenses to Minnesota candidates who successfully complete a BOT-approved teacher preparation program or an alternative teacher preparation program and pass the requisite reading, math, and writing skills and content and pedagogy exams or obtain their license via portfolio and who undergo a criminal history background check. Various shorter-term temporary, limited, and restricted licenses are available to qualified candidates who are: unable to pass the required reading, math, and writing skills exams; participating in an alternative teacher preparation program; filling hard-to-staff teaching positions; teaching in fields in which licenses were not previously issued; teaching in fields where the employing school district faces a shortage of licensed teachers; or eligible for a temporary license as a current or former member of the military. Applicants trained in other states are subject to similar requirements and eligible for similar licenses, consistent with state statutes and rules and BOT criteria.

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
Professional or Standard License	A full five-year renewable teaching license issued by the Board of Teaching (BOT) to educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a BOT-approved teacher preparation program Pass a reading, writing, and mathematics skills exam (MTLE) Pass a test of general pedagogy (MTLE) Pass a test of content knowledge for a specific licensure field (MTLE) Candidates to teach prekindergarten or elementary students must pass test items assessing their ability to provide reading instruction Candidates to teach elementary students in grades 1 to 6 may obtain, with additional preparation, a kindergarten endorsement for their license All candidates must be prepared in English language development and content instruction for English learners Pay \$93.45 for a first-time professional license and \$58.70 to renew a professional license <p>Or</p>	Renewable at five-year intervals; person must complete continuing education requirements to renew license	Minn. Stat. § 122A.09, subd. 4; Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 2, para. (c); Minn. R. parts 8710.0300, subps. 1, 1a, item A, and 2; Minn. R. 8710.0500, subp. 1, item B; Minn. R. 8710.0400

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An out-of-state candidate who completes a state-approved teacher preparation program at a regionally accredited institution in another state and meets Minnesota’s teacher licensure requirements for out-of-state candidates is eligible to receive a Minnesota professional teaching license 		
First Professional License	The first professional license issued by the BOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A candidate must complete an approved program leading to teacher licensure in a Minnesota institution approved by the BOT to prepare persons for licensure and meet all applicable requirements in statute and rule A license becomes valid on the date the personnel licensing division issues the license 	Five year	Minn. R. 8710.0300, subs. 1, 1a, 2
Temporary, One-Year Teaching License	BOT may issue up to four temporary, one-year teaching licenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOT may issue up to four temporary, one-year teaching licenses to a candidate who successfully completes all requirements for an initial teaching license but has not yet passed the board-adopted reading, writing, and mathematics skills exam 	One year; annually renewable for up to three additional years	Minn. Stat. § 122A.09, subd. 4, para. (b)
Licensure via Portfolio	Eligible candidates may obtain an initial license or add a licensure field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eligible candidate may use licensure via portfolio to obtain an initial licensure or to add a licensure field Candidate for initial license must submit to MDE’s Educator Licensing Division one portfolio demonstrating pedagogical competence and one portfolio demonstrating content competence; candidate seeking additional licensure field must submit one portfolio demonstrating content competence Candidates must pay \$300 to the BOT for the first portfolio submitted and \$200 for a subsequent portfolio 	Consistent with the professional/standard license	Minn. Stat. § 122A.21, subd. 2
Restricted License	License available to a teacher employed in a district or charter school who has not passed the reading, writing, and mathematics skills exam (MTLE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to an otherwise qualified candidate who successfully completed all teacher preparation requirements and exams but has not yet passed the board-adopted reading, writing, and mathematics skills exam, received four temporary, one-year teaching licenses, and is employed by a district or charter school to teach a particular subject or content Employing district or charter school may ask the BOT to issue a restricted license to allow the person to continue to teach the particular subject or content in the district or charter school License is limited to the district or charter school requesting the restricted license 	Unknown	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 2, para. (b)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOT must explain its reasons for denying a request for a restricted license 		
Limited-term License	Temporary two-year license for alternative teacher preparation program candidate preparing to acquire a standard license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must have bachelor's degree with minimum 3.0 GPA unless GPA requirement is waived under BOT criteria • Must pass reading, writing, and mathematics skills exam (MTLE) • Must obtain qualifying scores on board-approved pedagogy and content tests • BOT must issue a standard license to a candidate who successfully completes alternative preparation program requirements, passes all board-required exams/tests, and receives a positive recommendation from a local site team • Candidate who completes an equivalent alternative preparation program in another state may apply to BOT for a standard license 	Two year; renewable one time for additional one year	Minn. Stat. § 122A.245, subd. 7b
Temporary Limited License	Temporary license allows districts to hire a person to fill a hard-to-staff teaching position without requiring the person to hold a professional teaching license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator in the employing school district or charter school must request the license • Administrator certifies in writing that (1) no licensed applicant can fulfill the requirements of the position, (2) a one-half time or more position was advertised statewide, (3) the school will provide a mentor to support and assist the temporary license holder, (4) the temporary license holder has a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university, and (5) the license holder has at least a minor in the subject area for which the license is requested • Temporary limited licenses for career and technical fields are exempt from item (4) above • Applicants prepared in Minnesota teacher preparation institutions may renew the license two times • Teacher may hold up to three temporary limited licenses; five if the license is in a career and technical field 	One year; annually renewable up to three years (includes applicants who did not pass the skills exam), except an applicant in a career and technical field may renew up to five years	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7b; Minn. R. 8710.0300, subp. 1a, item D; Minn. R. 8710.1250
Limited Provisional License	Provisional license for new licensure fields or for licensure fields in a district where teacher shortage exists	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licensure fields in which licenses were not issued previously • Licensure fields where a district has a shortage of licensed teachers in a particular field and notifies and applies to the BOT for a provisional license for the district's licensed staff • US Department of Education designates Minnesota's teacher shortage areas 	Two year	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7;

Temporary Military License	A temporary license available to active military members, their spouses, and veterans honorably or generally discharged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BOT must establish standards under Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7c and Minn. Stat. § 197.4552, subd. 2, which may involve rulemaking, to expedite issuing a temporary license to a qualified current or former member of the military and to the spouse of an active duty member • A qualified veteran must apply within two years of leaving the service • Person must hold a valid license in another state without any disciplinary action by the regulatory authority in that state and must undergo a criminal history background check • Person must complete the full Minnesota application process during the licensure period • Person must pay \$87.90 for online application and \$86.40 for paper application 	BOT must determine length of temporary license period	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7c; Minn. Stat. § 197.4552, subd. 2
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Substitute Teaching and Intern Licenses

Substitute teaching licenses allow qualified individuals, including retired teachers, among others, to replace a classroom teacher either for a period of time not to exceed 15 consecutive school days (short-call substitute) or for 15 or more consecutive school days (long-call substitute). The limited intern license allows student interns enrolled in a BOT-approved teacher preparation program for at least three years to provide classroom instruction under the supervision of a licensed teacher.

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
Limited Intern License	Temporary teaching license for student interns in BOT-approved teacher preparation program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrator of the employing district or charter school requests the license • Administrator certifies in writing the intern will (1) not replace a licensed teacher, (2) assist a licensed teacher, (3) use the position as a learning experience leading to Minnesota licensure, and (4) serve under the direct, day-to-day supervision of a licensed teacher • Board-approved college or university certifies in writing the intern is currently enrolled in a Minnesota-approved teacher preparation program and has completed at least three years of preparation and the college or university will help design the learning experience and supervise the intern 	One year; renewable one time if intern must complete additional one-year internship	Minn. R. 8710.0300, subp. 1a, item E; Minn. R. 8710.1050

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
Long-Call Substitute Teacher	Five-year renewable professional teaching license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Long call substitute teacher replaces the same teacher for 15 or more consecutive school days Must hold a Minnesota teaching license valid for the assignment 	Five year; renewable	Minn. R. 8710.1000, subp. 1
Five-Year Short-Call Substitute Teacher License	Five-year substitute teaching license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant must have completed a teacher preparation program leading to full licensure “in the governmental jurisdiction in which the teacher preparation program was completed” Short-call substitute teacher teaches on a day-to-day basis not to exceed 15 consecutive school days replacing the same teacher Short-call substitute teacher may hold a Minnesota teacher license or a short-call substitute license valid at all grade levels in all fields 	Five year; renewable	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7a, para. (b) ; Minn. R. 8710.0300, subp. 1a, item F ; 8710.1000, subp. 3
Temporary Limited Short-Call Substitute Teacher License; Two-Year, Short-Call Substitute Teacher License	Two-year substitute teaching license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrator in employing district or charter school requests a temporary limited short call substitute teacher license Administrator certifies in writing the district or charter school is experiencing hardship in securing a sufficient number of licensed teachers to meet the need for short call substitute teachers Applicant holds a baccalaureate degree from a United States college or university, or the equivalent <p>Or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrolled person making satisfactory progress in a board-approved teacher program who successfully completes student teaching may be employed as a short-call substitute teacher 	Two year; renewable	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7a, para. (a) ; Minn. R. 8710.1000, subp. 4
Lifetime Qualified Short-Call Substitute Teaching License	Short-call substitute teaching license available to retired educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant receiving a teacher retirement annuity must have held a continuing five-year teaching license while teaching in a Minnesota public or nonpublic school or hold an out-of-state teaching license and have had teaching experience Pay \$57.00 licensure fee 	Lifetime; renewable at five-year intervals	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18, subd. 7a, para. (b)

Special Permissions to Teach

School districts and charter schools may ask the BOT to permit a licensed teacher to teach out-of-field or to allow the district or school to hire a nonlicensed person to teach American Indian language and cultural education programs, part-time vocational or career and technical education programs, or other courses or subjects for which licensed teachers are unavailable.

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
Nonrenewable License	Allows a professionally licensed individual to teach out-of-field in a subject while he or she works toward full licensure or licensure in that field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District or charter school administrator requests a nonrenewable license Administrator certifies in writing that (1) reasonable efforts were made to assign the position to existing staff, (2) no applicant can fulfill the requirements of the position, (3) the position was advertised, and if the position is one-half time or more, the position was advertised statewide, (4) the administrator, on the licensed teacher's behalf, will use the "High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation" (HOUSSE) and those criteria demonstrate subject matter competence in the nonlicensed area, (5) the district will provide the teacher with a high quality professional development plan, and (6) the teacher is in an approved course of study and will complete the approved program by the end of the third school year The teacher holds a current valid Minnesota entrance or professional license granted by the BOT The teacher understands the assignment criteria and is in or is applying for an approved course of study Not available to a person holding a temporary limited license 	Three year	Minn. R. 8710.0300, subp. 1a, item C; Minn. R. 8710.1410
Personnel Variance	For fully licensed teachers to teach in related subjects or fields for which they are not currently licensed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District or charter school administrator requests personnel variance Administrator certifies in writing that (1) reasonable efforts were made to assign existing staff to fill the position with a fully licensed teacher, (2) no applicant holding a teaching license in a subject or field for which a personnel variance is requested can fulfill the requirements of the position, and (3) the position was advertised, and if the position is one-half time or more, the position was advertised statewide The teacher for whom the request is made holds a current valid Minnesota entrance, professional, or nonrenewable license The teacher for whom the request is made is aware of the assignment BOT must issue or deny the personnel variance within 30 days of receiving the complete application 	One year; up to three variances allowed	Minn. Stat. § 122A.18 subd. 7b(b); Minn. R. 8710.1400

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOT may not grant a personnel variance to a person holding a current valid temporary Minnesota teacher license unless the licensee satisfied all teacher preparation requirements for licensure except the teacher exam requirements 		
Variances	For school districts implementing experimental programs in learning or management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variance to BOT's rules upon application by a school district for purposes of implementing experimental programs in learning or management BOT may permit a licensed teacher teaching in an alternative education program to instruct students in a content area for which the teacher is not licensed 	One year; renewable	Minn. Stat. § 122A.09, subd. 10
Nonlicensed Community Expert Variance	Allows districts and charter schools to hire a person with expertise to teach a particular course or subject area for which licensed teachers are unavailable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In approving or disapproving a district or charter school application for a community expert, the BOT shall consider: (1) the qualifications of the community person, (2) the reasons for needing a variance, (3) the employer's efforts to obtain licensed teachers, who are acceptable to the school board, for the particular course or subject area, (4) the amount of teaching time for which the community expert would be hired, (5) the extent to which the district or charter school uses other nonlicensed community experts, (6) the nature of the community expert's proposed teaching responsibility, and (7) the proposed level of compensation BOT must approve or disapprove an application within 60 days School district or charter school must confirm to the BOT that criminal background checks were completed for the nonlicensed community expert 	Unspecified	Minn. Stat. § 122A.25
American Indian Language and Cultural Education Teacher	Allows school districts and schools to hire a nonlicensed person to teach American Indian language and cultural education programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School district or school may ask BOT to exempt American Indian Education teacher from licensure requirements BOT must grant exemption if imposing licensure requirements would create a hardship School district or school must request exemption School district or school may request exemption in any school year 	One year	Minn. Stat. § 124D.75

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
Technical Education Instructors	Allows school boards to hire a nonlicensed person to teach vocational or career and technical education part-time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local employer school board must approve exemption Nonlicensed person must teach only part-time in a vocational or career and technical education program 	Unspecified; authority for exemption expires June 30, 2020	Minn. Stat. § 122A.30

Professional Teaching Licenses No Longer Authorized to be Issued

Existing law prohibits the BOT from issuing a two-year entrance license after October 15, 2000, and allows the BOT to issue a lifetime license only to experienced classroom teachers who taught in any one of the three years before 1970.

License	Description	Requirements	Length	Authority
Entrance License	Initial, two-year license issued by the BOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BOT may issue a two-year entrance license, which expires two years from the June 30 nearest the date the license is issued An applicant with a current or expired entrance license who did not complete one year of teaching while holding an entrance license may renew the license for one additional, two-year period, after which the applicant must be granted a professional license. The BOT must not issue an entrance license after October 15, 2000 School hiring authority may decide not to request a criminal history background check on a person who holds an initial entrance license issued by the BOT within 12 months of when the school hiring authority offers the person employment 	Two year	Minn. Stat. § 123B.03, subd. 1, para. (a) ; Minn. R. 8710.0300, subp. 1a item B; subp. 6
Life License	Lifetime teaching license	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issued to classroom teachers with at least five years of teaching experience in Minnesota who taught in any one of the three years before 1970 Must pay BOT processing fee 	Lifetime	Minn. R. 8710.0300, subp. 1a, item H ; Minn. R. 8710.0600