



# Fingerprinting Overview

for  
Educator Preparation Programs

June 2012

- Applicants for Certification & Certificate Holders
  - TEC §22.0831 – obtain & evaluate criminal history record information (CHRI) for all certified holders & applicants

# More Statutory Authority

---

- Other School District and Charter School Employees
  - TEC §22.0832 - obtain & evaluate CHRI for all non-certified charter school employees working in a job that would require certification in a regular school district
  - TEC § 22.0833 - obtain & evaluate CHRI for all non-certified employees hired after 1/1/08
  - TEC § 22.0836 - obtain & evaluate CHRI for all substitute teachers

- The primary function of the Division of Fingerprinting is to facilitate the process by which educators and non-educators submit their fingerprints and other required information to the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) and Texas Education Agency (TEA) in order to comply with statutory criminal history requirements

- **October 1, 2003**
  - Fingerprinting first required for all initial applicants for certification
  - Applicants fingerprinted using card and ink method
  
- **September 1, 2005**
  - Digital fingerprinting first utilized by SBEC
  - Card and Ink method continued to be an option

## May 2007

- The 2007 Texas Legislature passed [Senate Bill 9](#) requiring fingerprint-based criminal background reviews for certain school employees in Texas Public schools.
- Senate Bill 9 expanded fingerprinting to apply to the following:
  - All existing certified employees
  - Non certified employees hired on or after 1/1/08
  - Charter school teachers and other professionals
  - All substitute teachers, whether certified or not

- Implementation of Senate Bill 9 began 1/1/08
  - TEA began facilitating the fingerprinting of all existing certified employees and substitute teachers at school districts on a scheduled basis.
  - All districts and charters were required to begin fingerprinting all newly hired non-certified employees

- All fingerprint results for those printed electronically under Senate Bill 9 were placed in a database called the DPS FACT Clearinghouse
- For educators printed under SB9 after 1/1/08, the Clearinghouse should display the following information for each educator printed electronically:
  - DPS result
  - FBI result
  - A photo of the educator
- Records for anyone printed on cards may or may not appear in the DPS Clearinghouse
  - Many districts began to require that persons not printed electronically be printed again so that their complete results would appear in the DPS Clearinghouse



## Bye-bye fingerprint cards

---

- Therefore, TEA began to require all applicants for certification (excluding out-of-state/out-of-country applicants) to be printed electronically
- Recently, TEA has begun sending “hard card” fast passes to applicants living out of state so that their results can also be included in the Clearinghouse

## How does applicant fingerprinting work today?

---

- Educator applies for certificate
- If educator has not previously been fingerprinted through TEA, system prompts for fingerprinting payment
- Once applicant pays for fingerprinting, educator is e-mailed a Fast Fingerprint Pass
- Educator makes appointment with MorphoTrust USA (formerly L-1 Enrollment Services) and is fingerprinted
- TEA receives results from DPS and FBI
- Fingerprint process completes
- Certification is issued

# Complications to the applicant FP process

---

- Senate Bill 9 fingerprinting may overlap in that many applicants for certification may have previously been fingerprinted as a non-certified employee or substitute
- Applicants who may have previously been printed as a non-certified school district employee or substitute are prompted to fingerprint again
  - Applicant should NOT pay for fingerprinting again
  - Results will transfer to educator's file within 48 hours of application submission

## Where can I find an educator's fingerprinting status?

---

- An EPP can find the fingerprint status in the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS)
  - Choose “Educator Information” in the left margin, then “Educator Search”, then enter the SSN or TEA ID for the educator.
- An educator can also find their fingerprint status in the ECOS by logging in to their account
  - Choose “Fingerprint Status” from the left margin; a window will display the FP status
- For both the EPP and Educator status look-ups, the system will display only a “Fingerprint in Progress” or “Fingerprint Complete” status

# Fingerprint statuses defined

---

- **Fingerprint in Progress** - Payment has been submitted to begin the fingerprint process. This does not reflect that fingerprinting has taken place or that fingerprint results have been received.
- **Fingerprint Complete** - Fingerprint results have been received and the fingerprint process is complete. Be aware that the FP Complete status does not necessarily mean the educator has been cleared by Investigations.
- **Do not rely on the fingerprint icon on your recommendation list screen as an indicator of fingerprinting status!**

- Beginning 9/1/11, ALL applicants who have not been previously fingerprinted (not just initial applicants) are required to do so before their credential is issued.
- Effective March 19, 2012, the fee for fingerprinting through TEA decreased from \$42.25 to \$39.50

- Breakdown of \$39.50 fee
  - \$6.00 to TEA
  - \$15.00 to DPS
  - \$16.50 to FBI (reduced from \$19.25)
  - \$2.00 to Texas Online
  
- The name of the DPS contracted fingerprinting vendor has changed from L-1 Enrollment Services to Safran MorphoTrust USA.

- Under TEC §22.0835, student teachers are required to undergo a name-based criminal history check only
- Many districts are choosing to fingerprint student teachers as substitutes of the district before allowing them on their campuses
- Since the onset of Senate Bill 9 fingerprinting, statistics have shown a decline in the number of applicants for certification being fingerprinted



- Applicants fingerprinted since 1/1/08
  - 1/1/08 – 8/31/08                      25,918      (partial year)
  - 9/1/08 – 8/31/09                      35,911
  - 9/1/09 – 8/31/10                      29,242
  - 9/1/10 – 8/31/11                      16,760
  - 9/1/11 - 6/4/11                      11,383      (year-to-date)

- Jeannie Tomasek, Manager
  - [jeannie.tomasek@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:jeannie.tomasek@tea.state.tx.us) 512-463-5415
- Baerbel Cleveland, Program Specialist
  - [Baerbel.cleveland@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:Baerbel.cleveland@tea.state.tx.us) 512-463-9370
- Rosemary Rocha, Program Specialist
  - [Rosemary.rocha@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:Rosemary.rocha@tea.state.tx.us) 512-463-2725
- Pamela Coy, Customer Service Representative
  - [Pamela.coy@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:Pamela.coy@tea.state.tx.us)
- Customer Service 512-936-8400, Option 3