

Webinar FAQ: Recommending a Probationary Certificate Under the Governor's Waiver

General

Q: Please confirm that the WPRO is good for 365 days - not just until 12/31

Response: Correct, the WPRO certificate is valid for one full calendar year from the effective date on the certificate.

Q: Would students on the WPRO certificate be required to take the STR exam if they do not complete testing & standard certification by 12/31/20?

Response: Yes, the Science of Teaching Reading (STR) exam is statutorily required for issuance of the Core Subjects EC-6, Core Subjects 4-8, ELAR 4-8, and ELAR/Social Studies 4-8 certificates starting 1/1/2021. Candidates who have not completed certification testing and received their standard certificate in one of these certification fields prior to 1/1/2021 will be required to take and pass the STR exam for issuance of their standard certificate. EPPs are encouraged to communicate this information to candidates and to work with candidates to get testing finished in a timely fashion.

Candidate Qualifications

Q: What about CTE candidates without a bachelor's?

Response: Candidates seeking certification in a CTE area that does not require a bachelor's degree would not be expected to have a bachelor's degree to qualify for the WPRO certificate. The CTE candidate would, however, have the required approved SOQ to qualify for issuance of the WPRO certificate.

Q: Is there a date that the finisher status must be met?

Q: We have late hire candidates whose probationary certificates expire in September 2020. Do they qualify for WPRO?

Q: What do we do about a teacher intern who didn't receive a principal recommendation to certify? Can they get a probationary certificate?

Q: What about a candidate who has the educational aide exemption from clinical teaching, and is a finisher? Does that candidate qualify for the WPRO certificate?

Response: The WPRO certificate is available for candidates who successfully completed clinical teaching, internship, or a practicum in Fall 2019 or Spring 2020 and have completed all program requirements and certification requirements except for testing. Candidates who did not successfully complete an internship have not completed all requirements.

Candidates who would have completed clinical teaching but met the clinical teaching or internship requirement through the exemption for educational aides or JROTC instructors as allowed in 19 TAC §228.35(l) are included.

The WPRO is for qualified candidates who have not completed testing to seek or continue employment in a position in a certified role for the 2020-2021 school year. The WPRO certificate is only available as long as the Governor's declaration of disaster is still in effect.

Q: Is Finisher Confirmation on the Rec Report EPPs saying they are Finishers or when Finisher status is uploaded through ASEP?

Response: Finisher status must be updated in ASEP by the EPP. Candidates must be listed with a status of "Finisher" on the Finisher Records List to qualify for the WPRO certificate. Candidates who have not yet met requirements to be a program "Finisher" would not qualify for the WPRO.

Q: We had one candidate who previously used 3 years of probationary certification on the 24/12 rule and completed our program requirements but did not pass certification exams. He now has no certification and did not do an internship or clinical teaching in 2019-2020. He wants to know if he qualifies for the waiver. I assumed the answer was "no" but just want confirmation of this.

Q: If a candidate is currently on an emergency permit for 2019-2020 and is a finisher in practicum and all requirements in May 2020, but lack the content exam, are they eligible?

Response: The Governor's waiver requires the qualified candidate to have finished clinical teaching, internship, or practicum in Fall 2019 or Spring 2020. 19 TAC §230.36(c)(4) and §230.37(c)(4) limit the number of Intern certificates, Probationary certificates, and Permits that an individual can hold without achieving a standard certificate in that class. The Governor has not waived that rule. If the individual has reached the limit of three (3) without achieving a standard certificate, then he/she would not qualify for a WPRO certificate in that certificate class.

Q: Do candidates who have passed PPR, but not their content exam, qualify for the WPRO certificate?

Q: Do candidates who have passed Principal 268, but not PASL, or vice-versa, qualify for the WPRO certificate?

Q: Would a student who hasn't passed any tests be eligible for the WPRO?

Q: Are students eligible for the WPRO even if they have taken/passed no tests?

Q: Where do ESL certification exams fall under this? We are getting this question a lot because many districts require it. Is WPRO just for Core & PPR?

Response: The Governor's waiver has waived passing scores on certification exam(s) as a requirement for issuance of the WPRO certificate. Candidates who have one or more tests that have not been passed may qualify for the WPRO certificate if they meet the other requirements for the certificate. The supplemental certificates are included in this waiver.

Q: Can you please clarify the Post-bac scenario from the webinar – why Gregory qualifies for WPRO?

Response: The Gregory scenario described a Post-bac candidate that completed clinical teaching in Spring 2020 but must complete a required class that was dropped in a previous semester to complete the master's degree and the program requirements. Gregory was identified on the slide as "Not yet" qualified for the WPRO. If the Governor's disaster declaration is still in place when Gregory completes requirements in the summer, then he would qualify for the WPRO certificate at that time. Because testing sites are re-opening, the EPP is encouraged to work with Gregory to get testing completed so that he would qualify for the Standard certificate by the end of the summer.

Q: Under Summary of Key Points, bullet 3 states, “If a candidate holds a valid intern or Probationary certificate already he/she will not qualify for the WPRO.” The majority of the hired candidates are on an Intern certificate at this time - are they not eligible for the WPRO?

Response: The purpose of the WPRO is for candidates completing their internship this spring to get certified if they have completed their EPP requirements but have not yet had the opportunity to test. Your interns completing this spring are the population of candidates that are being served with this option. The distinction we were trying to make was for folks who started their internship mid-year last year. For example, if a candidate started their internship 11/15/2019, they would not be eligible for the WPRO, because their internship is not complete and they have an existing valid certificate to qualify them in that role through the end of the internship.

Candidate Application

Q: Is the waiver probationary the actual type they are applying for? Or just the normal probationary?

Response: The candidate will apply for the normal probationary certificate. We use the word “waiver” in front of the word “probationary” to designate it as a certificate that has been allowed to issue without passing scores on one or more required tests per the Governor’s waiver. Note that the term “WPRO” is an internal reference for TEA and EPPs, used for communication purposes. The actual certificate that is issued using the IPS test bypass option will appear in the candidate’s record as a Probationary certificate and not as a “WPRO” certificate.

Q: Is there any flexibility in the May 15 deadline for candidates to apply? I have some people testing in the next two weeks. I’d hate to have them apply and not need the special prob cert. Likewise, how flexible is the 7/1 recommendation date?

Response: Candidates may apply at any time. The Priority Recommendation Window is the window of time from May 15-July 1 in which the EPP may make the recommendation using the automated test bypass process in ECOS. If a candidate has applied for the WPRO certificate, and the EPP has not recommended, then the EPP may remove the application if/when the candidate passes the remaining test(s). The candidate would then apply for the standard certificate and contact TEA to have fees rolled over to the new application. Candidates testing through early June should have time to get scores returned before the Priority Recommendation Window closes.

Q: Several WPRO applicants indicate they have not been prompted for fingerprinting upon submitting the application. Is the application/fee for fingerprinting different? If an applicant did not apply for fingerprinting with the WPRO application, how can they apply/pay a fee later?

Response: The candidate will have to complete fingerprinting prior to receiving any certificate. That requirement has not been waived for the WPRO certificate. It is possible the candidate completed fingerprinting at some earlier time before applying for the WPRO certificate. If this is true, ECOS will apply those fingerprint records to the WPRO application and the candidate should not have to pay for, or complete, additional fingerprints. Concerns or issues with fingerprinting should be submitted to TEA through the Help Desk using the blue and white tile called “Fingerprinting and Do Not Hire Registry.” EPPs should share this information with qualified candidates.

EPP Recommendation

Q: When will the spreadsheet be sent out?

Q: Will the spreadsheet be posted in the COVID section on the website?

Q: Where do we find the spreadsheet?

Q: Is the WPRO spreadsheet on the TEA website or will it be sent to us?

Q: Is the spreadsheet for reporting on the COVID webpage or will TEA be sending it to us?

Q: Where can EPP's find/access the spreadsheet? When will this be available?

Q: The presenter made reference to a recommendation report we were going to be expected to complete, however, I don't recall having received this template. I checked in the COVID-19 Support page, however, I don't see anything there either.

Response: The spreadsheet is posted in the COVID-19 Related Forms and Documents section at the bottom of the [Program Provider Resources](#) page on the TEA website. EPPs should submit one completed copy of the spreadsheet to TEA via the ocean blue tile called "Educator Testing and Preparation Programs" in the Help Desk. Open a ticket directed to the Preparation Programs group. The spreadsheet document should be sent securely via the Help Desk and should not be emailed.

Q: Many districts may follow recent TEA calendar guidance and adopt an Aug. 1 - late July school calendar, thus may a late July or August date be used as the effective date of the WPRO so that the individuals can complete the school year?

Response: The Internship Begin Date field on the recommendation page in the green screen will accept a future date. The date placed in this field will be reflected as the Effective Date on the Probationary certificate.

Q: If the governor extends the emergency declaration (or if it expires early) does that change the window of when candidates can apply and be recommended for WPRO certification? Just to make sure I am interpreting this correctly. The June 15th deadline for applying is no longer applicable? It is an option until the Governor ends the emergency declaration?

Q: Am I interpreting correctly that candidates can apply for the WPRO beyond the June 15th deadline we were given? That it will still be an option up until the Governor's emergency declaration ends, even if it is after June 15th?

Q: I want to confirm that Lorrie said recommendations can be done by EPPs through the end of the day on July 1? Also, what time does TEA define as "end of the day"?

Response: Candidates may apply for the WPRO certificate at any time. The Priority Recommendation Window has been expanded from May 15-June 15 to May 15-July 1 to allow EPPs more time to complete recommendations. This is the window when EPPs will have an automated process to recommend the WPRO certificates. WPRO certificate recommendations must be made before the end of the business day, or 5:00 pm Central Time, on July 1. Issuance of the WPRO certificate is subject to the Governor's emergency declaration. EPPs are encouraged to get candidates processed efficiently.

Q: Will this special probationary certificate require a bachelor's degree to be posted before becoming valid? I know we can enter future dates. But let's say a candidate who completed CT in spring has to take an IP and can't graduate until December. Will the probationary cert issue in December?

Q: Bachelor's degree conferred- we can future date it, correct?

Response: The candidate must have completed clinical teaching, internship, or practicum in Fall 2019 or Spring 2020 and be a program finisher to qualify for the WPRO certificate. As required in 19 TAC §230.37(b), the candidate must have a conferred bachelor's degree, at minimum, to hold a probationary certificate. This requirement was not waived by the Governor. The effective date on the WPRO certificate cannot be before the degree conferred date because the Governor did not waive the degree requirement. For candidates who are expected to complete requirements in the summer, programs should not forecast that a candidate will eventually complete requirements, graduate, and hold the required degree. If future dates are used to issue WPRO certificates, the certificates are at risk for being inactivated by TEA if the candidate does not achieve the required qualifications.

Q: I want to confirm that Lorrie said if fingerprints aren't complete by July 1 but EPPs have made the WPRO recommendation on or before July 1 the candidate's WPRO certificate will issue after July 1 once their FP status is complete?

Response: If a candidate meets requirements for a certificate, the EPP may recommend the certificate even if fees and / or fingerprints are still pending. Once the pending item(s) is/are complete, the certificate will issue.