

Obtaining a Temporary Certification Examination Exemption

Texas law allows individuals who are “hearing impaired,” according to the definition stated below, to be issued a Temporary Exemption Certificate to enable them to serve as a teacher without passing certain written tests for educator certification (Texas Education Code, Sections 21.048[b-d]).

You are eligible to obtain the Temporary Exemption Certificate only if you satisfy **both** of the following requirements:

A. You meet the following definition of hearing impaired: **“Hearing impaired means a hearing impairment so severe that the person cannot process linguistic information with or without amplification.”** (TEC §21.048[d][1]);

And

B. You have satisfied all requirements for certification except successful completion of the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) tests. (Note: If successful completion of the TExES ASL test, TASC, and/or TASC-ASL is required, you must pass that test(s) even if you are hearing impaired.)

Please note that you are not required to have satisfied all requirements for certification, as indicated in B above, in order to apply for the exemption (however, you must meet the requirements described in B prior to applying for the certificate). For example, individuals enrolled in an educator preparation program who wish to apply for the exemption (not the certificate) may do so at any time during their preparation program (consult the Certification Officer at your program for guidance and assistance). **The program will be responsible for documenting your training, training hours, and assessments for the exempted test.**

This exemption from testing requirements applies to all Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) tests, except for the TExES American Sign Language (ASL) test. If your certification or assignment requires the TExES ASL test and/or one of the sign-communication performance tests, the Texas Assessment of Sign Communication (TASC) or TASC-ASL, you must pass that test(s) even if you are hearing impaired.

An individual’s Temporary Exemption Certificate will remain in effect until the State Board for Educator Certification determines the tests’ appropriateness, reliability, validity, and passing standards as applied specifically to individuals who are hearing impaired. Individuals granted the Temporary Exemption Certificate will then have one year to pass the (validated) tests to maintain certification.

To Establish Your Testing Exemption With TEA

If you satisfy the definition of hearing impaired that is stated in A above and need to establish your exemption, you must complete the following steps:

1. Read all of the forms to identify which sections require educator preparation program information and signatures for verification.
2. Take a hearing test, have the audiologist complete the **Audiologist Report** form, and mail the report to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Eligibility for this exemption requires that you take a hearing test administered by a licensed audiologist within one year prior to applying for the exemption. The audiologist must complete the enclosed “Audiologist Report” and mail it to the TEA, Educator Standards, 5-100 Floor, 1701 N. Congress Avenue, Austin, TX 78701.
3. Submit the **Applicant Information Form** to TEA. You and your educator preparation program must complete the enclosed “Applicant Information Form” and mail it to TEA at the address indicated in #1 above. TEA will review the results of the hearing test and the audiologist’s findings, and notify you as to whether your testing exemption has been approved or denied.
4. Prior to sending forms into TEA; check applicant signatures, program’s information, and university’s documentation is included and completed for a review of all items.

Prior to Your Testing Exemption Being Approved by TEA

- If you are seeking certification through an educator preparation program:
 - Inform the Certification Officer at your educator preparation program that you are applying for an exemption from the testing requirements. (Note: The exemption does not apply to the TExES ASL, TASC, or TASC-ASL tests.) **The program will prepare verification of training, training hours, and assessments for the exempted area.**
 - After you have finished all your requirements for certification (e.g., coursework, internship or student teaching, and other program requirements) **the program shall submit to TEA verification of training and a recommendation for certification for you.**
 - After you have received notice from TEA that your materials have been reviewed and you have been approved for the exemption under TEC §21.048, depending on your route to certification, you should do the following:
 - You must apply for teacher certification online through TEA Online at www.tea.state.tx.us (log in to TEA Online on the TEA home page; once you are in the application section of the system, click on “Standard Certificate Texas Program”).
 - After you have applied for your certificate online, inform your program that you have completed this step.
 - If you are seeking Texas certification based on a teacher certificate from another state:
 - If you possess a valid out-of-state certificate, you may apply for teacher certification online at www.tea.state.tx.us (log in to TEA Online for Educators on the TEA home page; once you are in the application section of the system, click on “Out of State Certified Applicants”).
- * **If an exemption is applied for and accepted, an individual needs to understand that later certification by exam will not be available without a showing of a change in the individual’s ability to process linguistic information because of TEC §21.048**

Texas Education Code (TEC) §21.048 states:

(b) The board may not administer a written examination to determine the competence or level of performance of an educator who has a hearing impairment unless the examination has been field tested to determine its appropriateness, reliability and validity as applied to, and minimum acceptable performance scores for, persons with hearing impairments.

If you have any questions concerning the hearing impaired testing exemption, please contact the Texas Education Agency, Division of Educator Standards, at (512) 936-8225.