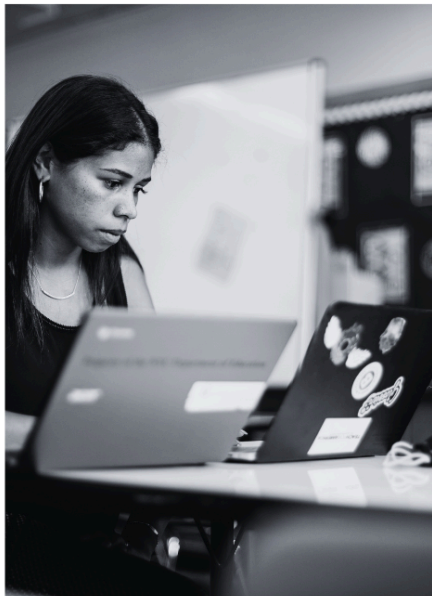


Certification Overview

Teach For America–Nashville–Chattanooga



Corps Member Teacher Certification & Promise to Our Communities

We believe that all students deserve an excellent education in order to have the skills and agency to live the life of their choosing. For our program, this starts by making sure our students engage with and learn with a diverse network of highly qualified teachers. As such, we make a promise to our schools, communities, and families that 100% of our teachers are legally licensed to teach. Not only is it a promise we make to our communities, but it is also a requirement of the schools and networks we place in. We also know that these systems and structures were built upon racist systems and policies. While we have to work within that system to make sure you're licensed, it's on us to advocate for equitable practices that dismantle systems of oppression in education.

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Certification Overview

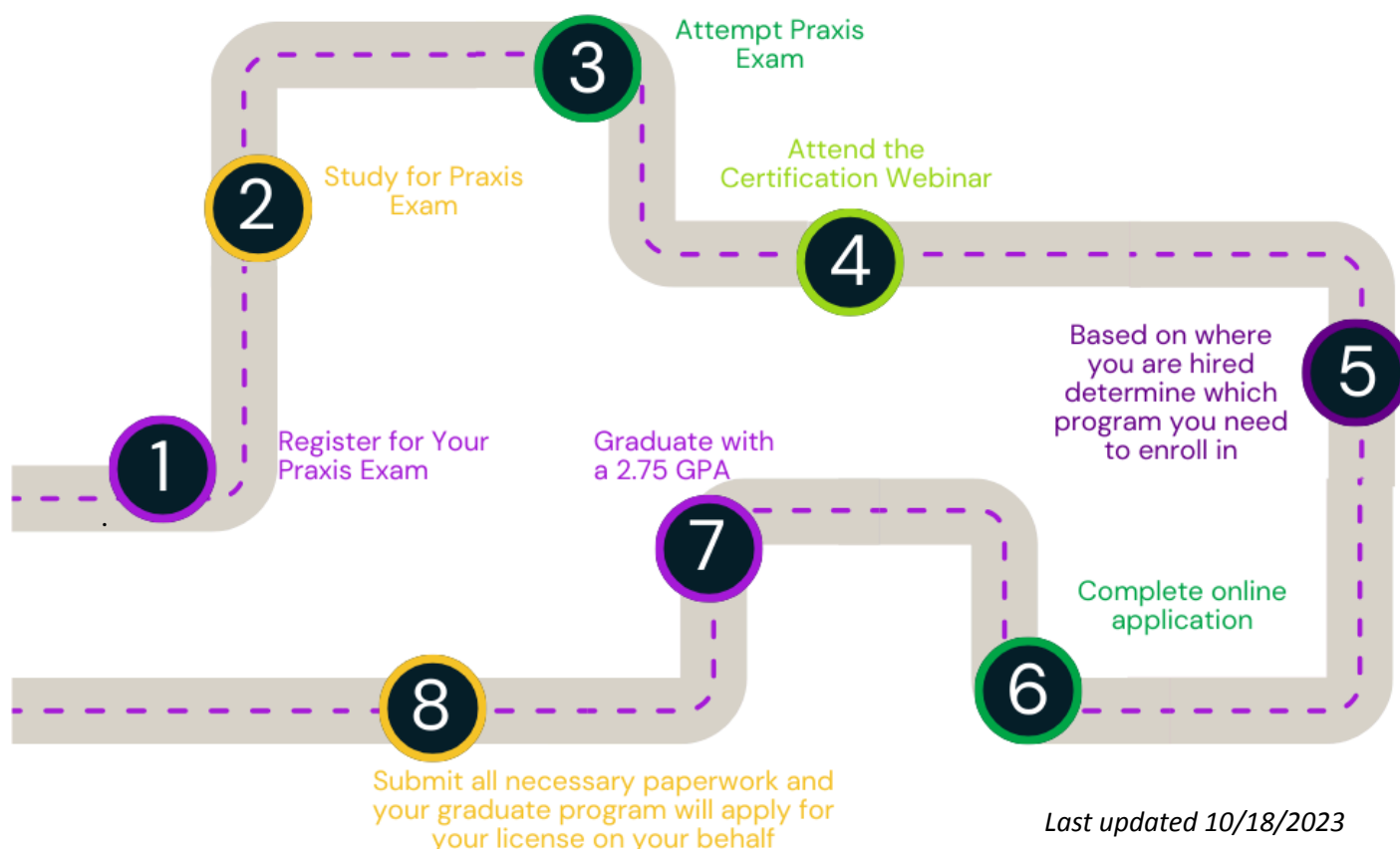
Summary

State Requirements to be Certified by the First Day of School

To begin teaching with a Tennessee Practitioner's License on the first day of school, corps members must complete the Praxis II Exam corresponding with your subject assignment, hold a bachelor's degree and enroll in a certification program. In order to qualify for the practitioner's license, you must be enrolled in one of two certification programs: Relay Graduate School of Education and Lipscomb University. The certification program that you need to enroll in is determined by the school where you are hired. You will teach on a practitioner's license while you are enrolled in your certification program. Any additional actions or requirements that need to be met to maintain, renew, or upgrade your license will be previewed at the end of this document.

Process to be Certified by First Day of School

Being Certified by the First Day of School



Last updated 10/18/2023

Certification Testing

The Praxis II is required for every teacher in Tennessee to become certified. As a teacher that will be completing an “alternative certification route” to testing, you are still required to take the Praxis II test to become certified. Teachers take the Praxis II content tests that align with their content areas/the subject area they teach.

We strongly encourage you to register for the earliest possible test date that allows you enough time to study. Taking your exam as early as possible will allow time to retake your exam, if necessary. Keep in mind that you must register for your tests several weeks prior to the actual testing dates if you are testing in person (often, you can register closer to the test date if you are taking an online test.) If you do not meet the registration deadline or you mistakenly sign up for the wrong tests, you may be subject to late registration fees and change request fees, for which you are financially responsible.

Corps members from October–March acceptance windows should have their **Praxis II Exam(s) completed by May 24, 2024**. If your exam is not completed by this date you will need to engage in a conversation with your leadership coach. From here you will work with your coach to make a strategic plan. ***Please note, if you do not pass your exam before the beginning of the school year, this could impact your pay or job status.***

In order to support you in working toward the deadline of completion we have created Praxis registration and attempt deadlines based on when you were accepted into Teach For America. Please review the table carefully below so you are clear on your specific expectations.

	October	December	March	April
Deadline to Register	1/26	2/2	4/12	5/10
Deadline to Attempt	2/28	2/28	5/5	6/1

Step 1– Registering to Test

1. Register to the appropriate Praxis based on your assigned subject area (see table below) or see the [list of exams here](#).
2. When registering for your exams, please send the official scores (free registration) to the following entities.
 - a. It is imperative that you add scores during registration to avoid further costs.

Score Recipients	
Tennessee Department of Education	8190
Lipscomb University	1161
RELAY Graduate School of Education	2981
Teach for America Nashville–Chattanooga	1815

To register for the exam:

1. Go to www.ets.org/praxis and click "Register for the Praxis".
2. Create a username and password.
 - a. You will need your Social Security number.
3. **Search for and select the test numbers (as well as passing scores for each test) aligned to your subject area**
4. Register and pay for your tests.
5. You will receive an admission ticket via e-mail when you complete your registration. On the test day, bring your photo ID and your admission ticket document with you to the test center.
6. *If your teaching area changes for any reason, you are responsible for ensuring that you have passed Praxis II in that subject.*

Table of Praxis Exam(s) by Subject Placement

Praxis II Test Name	Test Number	Passing Score
Science		
Description: Secondary Science certification in grades 6–12. This will allow Corps Members to teach specific science: Biology, Chemistry, or Physics, in grades 6–12. *Depending on placement, CM may be eligible to teach 5th grade* Corps Member must take ONE of the following exams based on placement (ex: If teaching Biology, only take Bio Content)		
Biology: Content Knowledge	5236	Qualifying Score: 154
Chemistry: Content Knowledge	5246	Qualifying Score: 146
Physics: Content Knowledge	5266	Qualifying Score: 145
MS Science		
Description: Middle Grades, 6th–8th, certification in science. *Depending on placement, CM may be eligible to teach 5th grade as well *		
Middle School Science	5442	Qualifying Score: 152
Elementary:		

Description: Elementary Certification in grades K-5 for all. This will allow Corps Members to teach Elementary, grades K-6. English as a Second Language (ESL) for Nashville ONLY. In Nashville, all Elementary Corps Members are required to obtain an ESL endorsement		
Elementary Education: Multiple Subjects AND	5001	Qualifying Score Reading/ Language Arts (5002): 157 Math (5003): 157 Social Studies (5004): 155 Science (5005): 159
English to Speakers of Other Languages * NASHVILLE ONLY *	5362	Qualifying Score: 155
Secondary English		
Description: English Language Arts certification in grades 6-12. *Depending on placement, Corps member may be able to teach 5th grade *		
English Language Arts: Content Knowledge	5038	Qualifying Score: 167
Secondary History		
Description: U.S. & World History certification in grades 6-12. *Depending on placement, Corps member may be able to teach 5th grade *		
World and U.S. History: Content Knowledge *This should be the exam that corps members register for first to see how they do to determine if other exam instead	5941	Qualifying Score: 157
Description: U.S. & World History certification in grades 6-8.		
Middle School Social Studies	5089	Qualifying Score: 146
English as a Second Language		
Description: English as a Second Language certification, grades Pre-K - 12. English Language Arts, grades 6-12. *Depending on placement, Corps member may be able to teach 5th grade *		
English to Speakers of Other Languages	5362	Qualifying Score: 155
English Language Arts: Content Knowledge	5038	Qualifying Score: 167
Secondary Math		
Description: Math certification in grades 6-12. This will allow Corps Members to teach various mathematics courses (algebra, integrated math, calculus, etc.) in grades 5-12		
Mathematics (Grades 6 -12) *This should be the exam that corps members register for first to see how they do to determine if other exam instead	5165	Qualifying Score: 159
Middle School Math:(Grades 5-8 Only)	5164	Qualifying Score: 165
Middle School Math:(Grades 5-8 Only) AND	5164 and 5162	Qualifying Score: 165 Qualifying Score: 157

Algebra		
Special Education		
Description: Special Education certification in grades K-8 or 6-12. This will allow Corps Members to serve as Special education interventionists in K-8 or 6-12		
Special Education: Core Knowledge and Mild to Moderate Applications	5543	Qualifying Score: 158
Spanish		
Description: Spanish certification in grades 6-12/ This will allow Corps Members to serve as Spanish teachers in grades 6-12.		
Spanish	5195	Qualifying Score: 163

Step 2- Studying for your Test

The Praxis II exam can be difficult, especially depending on your comfort with the content and your recent experiences taking standardized tests. However, we believe that with a suite of support and dedication on your end to consistent studying, that these exams are manageable and you have the skills to overcome them! We strongly urge you to take the earliest possible exam to give yourself time to retake tests as needed. Teach For America will be providing study materials that all corps members will be able to access. Look out for more information on these supports in November.

To help you get started:

- Understand what the test covers
- Diagnose how well you know the test material
- Gather study materials
- Plan and organize your time
- Practice explaining the key concepts
- Learn how questions will be scored

Step 3- Taking Your Test & Sharing Results with TFA

After you put in all of that preparation studying, you're ready to take your exam! Make sure you get a good night's sleep, eat a meal, drink water, and show up to your testing site early just in case something comes up. One week to a month after your exam (it depends on the specific exam you are taking) you'll receive an email with your official score report that breaks down your performance for each section and your final score. You can find the exact date you'll receive your score report on the testing website here. After you receive your score report, please reach out to your MDLD to let them know how you did and upload your print-out and score report to the **assigned action item in Docebo**.

What happens if you fail? It happens! While we know you studied hard, sometimes it takes a couple attempts to get comfortable taking the exam in such a high-stakes environment or sometimes life just happens! If you fail, you will meet with your MDLD to go over your score report, create a study plan, and identify what study resources you need to focus on. **For Praxis tests, you must wait 28 days before you can retest.**

University Partner Enrollment

Unless you already hold a valid Tennessee teaching license, or an out-of-state license you can transfer to Tennessee, **you will be required to engage in one of our two certification programs.** Which certification program you enroll in will be determined by the school where you are hired. The certification program can be completed in 1-2 years depending on subject placement with an optional masters program

Once hiring concludes, you will enroll in either Relay Graduate School of Education or Lipscomb University. The program you enroll in will be determined by the school/district where you are hired.

In the spring, the region hosts a certification webinar where members from both Relay and Lipscomb University attend to share more information about their respective programs, the enrollment process and answer questions. Each program will support you directly with the enrollment process. In order to apply you will need to:

1. Complete a TFA specific online application
2. Submit a degree conferred transcript
3. Pay an application fee

Lipscomb University

- Program Length: 1 Year (2 years for SPED)
- Setting: Mostly in-person on campus
- Master Degree Option: Yes, optional. Masters in Education– required for SPED
- Costs: \$595 per credit
- Schools: 1 Charter network and 2 district schools who prefer Lipscomb AND all Chattanooga CM attend Lipscomb University

Relay Graduate School of Education

- Program Length: 1 Year (2 years for SPED)
- Setting: Virtual synchronous sessions
- Master Degree Option: Yes, optional. Masters in Education– required for SPED
- Costs: \$850 per credit
- Schools: We currently have 3 charter schools that prefer Relay

State Licensure Actions

Your graduate program will apply for your practitioner's license on your behalf over the summer once you are enrolled. In order to do this you will need to supply them with:

1. Passing Praxis II official score reports
2. Official Degree Conferred Transcript

[You can learn more about the license here.](#)

If you do not have passing Praxis II scores, you will not qualify for a practitioner's license. This can impact your pay and job status.

During Corps Commitment

Maintaining Your License

In order to stay compliant with your license you must stay enrolled in your certification program and meet all of the requirements.

Tennessee Professional License:

Your practitioners license is good for three years. You have the option to take steps to upgrade your license to a professional license if you wish. The teacher license may be advanced to the Professional License if educators meet the following criteria: Three years of experience, AND the recommendation of the Director of Schools -OR- documentation of 30 Professional Development Points (PDPs)



Frequently Asked Questions

Why was I given the subject placement I was given?

We look to assign your subject placement based on a balance of your preferences in your application, the hiring need in our landscape, and your experience with the courses you took in college as an indicator of preparedness for the Praxis II subject exam. For example, we know that in our hiring landscape there is a high need for STEM teachers and a lower need for Humanities teachers. We can't field an entire corps of Humanities teachers even though there may be a high preference from applicants, so we look to balance subject assignments to meet the needs of our school partners and ensure a smooth hiring process for you. In addition, we know that passing the Praxis II can be a barrier given comfort with the content. We look to assign you to a subject where you have previous experience to help ease that transition and give you a strong foundation for your studying.

What are the different grade levels and/or subjects I can teach under my certification area?

1. Elementary
2. Secondary Biology
3. Secondary Chemistry
4. Secondary Math
5. Secondary Science
6. Secondary Physics
7. Secondary English
8. Secondary History
9. Special Education
10. Spanish
11. English as a Second Language

What are the current corps members in Nashville–Chattanooga certified in?

The 2023 corps subject assignments are below:

1. Biology–2%

2. Chemistry-2%
3. Elementary-33%
4. English-14%
5. ESL-14%
6. History-5%
7. Math-23%
8. Spanish-4%
9. SPED-4%