

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS FOR NEW TO MARYLAND MCPS EDUCATORS

(Educators, including school psychologists and social workers, who do not hold a Maryland Educator Certificate.)

Welcome to Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). Congratulations on your new position! We look forward to working with you to ensure success for every student. Now that you are an MCPS professional employee, all of your certificate needs will be handled through the MCPS Certification Unit. Please do not contact MSDE directly. Please use this step-by-step process as a reference and check off list to guide you through the new hire process to access, download and complete all forms applicable to you.

<p>STEP 1. CERTIFICATION http://www.montgomeryschoolsmd.org/departments/personnel/certification/ If you have any questions concerning the certification process, please contact the Certification Unit at 301-279-3112.</p>	<p>PONY ADDRESS: Attn: Certification Unit OHRD/DCS 45 W. Gude, Suite 2300</p>	<p>MAILING ADDRESS: Attn: Certification Unit MCPS – OHRD/DCS 45 W. Gude Drive, Suite 2300 Rockville, MD 20850</p>
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Prior to the first day of your effective date or sooner go to www.mdcert.org to complete the following steps which are required by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE):

- Click the **Educator Portal** link (see page’s top right side) and use these instructions to [create your portal username and password ONLY](#). Do **NOT** complete [the online](#) Application because it does not produce a viewable document (see next checkbox).
- Under **Forms/Resources**, download the digital friendly [Initial Application for Certification](#), complete it, sign/initial it digitally, and submit it to the MCPS Certification Unit email drop box, certification@mcpsmd.org. You can also print it, complete it, and using your original signature/initials. **Submit the completed application ONLY** (no additional documents or fee needed at this time). **If you need instructions for how to use Adobe Reader or similar products to complete, sign, and initial it digitally, see How to Initial and Sign Application Using Adobe Reader** (see it under [Getting Started](#)).

STEP 2. UNDERSTANDING THE GENERAL TIMELINE OF EVENTS RELATED TO THE NEW HIRE PROCESS

The processes outlined below take **most, if not all, of the school year** to complete. The order in which we review files is as follows: conditionally or resident teacher certified educators; educators with expired/expiring certificates; Title I educators; new MD certificate holders; MSBE license holders; and then valid MD certificate holders with certificates expiring in future years.

- ✓ You receive your offer letter and sign your Maryland State Regular Contract or Provisional Contract for Conditional or Resident Teacher Certificate Holders Contract.
- ✓ During your first year with MCPS, you will receive an email from the Certification Unit including your Form 440-24 informing you of your specific certification status and any requirements with corresponding due dates. The Form 440-24 is for your personal certification file.
- ✓ Once the Certification Unit has all of the official documents needed to support your employment/certification file, a certificate fee will be deducted from a future paycheck via automatic fee deduction to request a conditional, resident teacher, standard, or advanced certificate.
- ✓ All documents needed to support our request for your MD certificate will be scanned and uploaded into the MSDE EIS and then a certificate request is entered and approved by MCPS. Then, you will receive an automatic email notification from the MSDE EIS to the email address used to create your portal account so that you will be able to download your digital certificate from the MSDE EIS.

STEP 3. IMPORTANT REMINDERS

Although our unit is here to support you while you are employed as an MCPS educator, we need your help to ensure that you meet any certification requirements needed to maintain permanent employment. As stated on your Maryland Educator Certificate, *“It is the responsibility of the holder of this certificate to know the current certification requirements and to renew this certificate prior to the expiration date.”*

- The [MCPS Certification Unit](#) works directly with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to provide certification services for MCPS professional employees. MCPS handles **ALL** of your certification needs (issuance, renewal, new certifications, and degree updates) via its direct access to the MSDE’s EIS. Do not communicate directly with MSDE.
- For more information about all of our services, please visit our [MCPS Educator Certification website](#). Please contact the [MCPS Certification Unit](#) via email or at (301) 279-3112 with any questions. Information given by any other MCPS office or MCPS employee may not pertain to your specific needs or circumstances.
- Information about Maryland Educator Certificate renewal is available on the [MSDE General Certificate Information](#) MCPS website.
- Once you have been working for MCPS and are seeking salary advancement, please remember that salary advancement is **NOT** automatic. Please review the [Salary Advancement Information](#) pages for details and instructions.
- Keep your own **personal** certification records with any correspondence or documents you receive from our office, a copy of your digital Maryland Educator Certificate, and Form 440-24 for reference, especially if you need to meet requirements or contingencies in the future.

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STEP 4: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Who do I contact if I have a question about my initial salary placement?

A: All questions regarding initial salary placement (salary lane or salary step) should be directed to the staffing coordinator who hired you. Call (301) 279-3920 for Carolina Garcia Ablanque, and Cathrine Shinn; (301) 279-3935 for E. Grace Chesney, Tiffany Goodson, and Maggie Jones; and (301) 279-3010 for Veronica (Ronnie) Matthewson.

Q: I completed the online MSDE Application for Certification. Why am I being asked for another application?

A: The online application does not produce a viewable document; therefore, you must download and complete the digital or paper application including original initials (on the Affirmation Statement page) and original signature.

Q: Why must I sign a Regular Contract?

A: This means that at hire, your documents verified your eligibility for a standard or advanced Maryland Educator Certificate. If after the Certification Unit reviews your records and finds this was an error, you will receive the Provisional Contract for Conditional or Resident Teacher Certificate Holders Contract for signature.

Q: Why must I sign a Provisional Contract for Conditional or Resident Teacher Certificate Holders Contract?

A: This means that at hire, your documents verified that you are not yet eligible for a standard or advanced Maryland Educator Certificate. If after the Certification Unit reviews your records and finds this was an error, you will continue to hold the provisional contract and be issued the regular contract for signature prior to the following school year.

Q: I submitted transcripts in MCPS Careers or to the staffing coordinator who hired me. Why do I have to supply another one?

A: We will only request documents that are needed to obtain your Maryland Educator Certificate and support your employment with MCPS. The information you submitted initially may not have included all the necessary course work and/or the degree conferral or you may have submitted an unofficial transcript. Official transcripts are a contingency of employment.