



PARA EDUCATOR LICENSURE

In order to work as a Para Educator (Teacher Assistant) you need to have ONE of the following credentials:

- Professional Educator License (PEL) with any type of endorsement; or
- Substitute Teaching License (**NOT** a Short Term Substitute License); or
- Educator License with Stipulations (ELS) with a Paraprofessional (PARA) endorsement (also know as a Para Educator License or ELS-PARA).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I have a bachelor's degree, what license should I apply for?

- Our recommendation is that you apply for a Substitute Teaching License.
 - This will also allow you to work as a substitute teacher when needed.
 - You qualify for a Substitute Teaching License if your degree is from a regionally accredited college/university.
 - If the institution is not regionally accredited you need to meet the requirements for the Para Educator License by taking one of the acceptable tests.

If I have an associate's degree, what license should I apply for?

- You qualify for a Para Educator License if your degree is from a regionally accredited college/university.
- If the institution is not regionally accredited you need to meet the requirements for the Para Educator License by taking one of the acceptable tests.

If I have 60 or more semester hours of college credit but no degree, what license should I apply for?

- You qualify for a Para Educator License if your coursework is from a regionally accredited college/university.
- Course work must be at the 100 level or higher. Remedial and developmental course work can not be counted.
- Grades for all course work must be "C-" or higher.
- If the institution is not regionally accredited you need to meet the requirements for the Para Educator License by taking one of the acceptable tests.

I graduated from a college/university outside of the United States (U.S.). What license should I apply for?

- You will need to get your transcripts/diploma evaluated by a professional evaluation company. This company can determine the equivalent semester hours and degree(s) in the U.S. educational system.
- If you have the equivalent of 60 semester hours of coursework from an equivalent of a regionally accredited institution in the U.S. then the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) can issue a Para Educator License.
- If you don't have at least 60 semester hours of equivalent course work or the institution outside of the U.S. is not equivalent to a regionally accredited institution in the U.S. then you'll need to take the acceptable tests to qualify for a Para Educator License.
- See this list of the foreign evaluation companies that have been approved by ISBE: <https://www.isbe.net/Documents/foreign-cred-eval-svcs.pdf>.
- If you have the equivalent of a U.S. bachelor's degree or higher we recommend that you apply for a Substitute Teaching License instead of a Para Educator License.

How do I know if my college or university is regionally accredited?

- Check the website of the institution to verify the accreditation.

What are the acceptable regional accrediting bodies?

- ISBE accepts accreditation from these regional accrediting bodies:
 - The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.
 - Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.
 - New England Association of Colleges and Schools.
 - Northwest Association of Colleges and Schools.
 - Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
 - Western Association of Colleges and Schools.

Can I use courses taken at a technical or trade school/college?

Probably not because most technical or trade institutions only have national or career/vocational accreditation. But do check the website of the institution to verify the accreditation.

I only have a high school diploma. What do I need to do to obtain a license?

Complete one of the acceptable tests.

I only have a GED. What do I need to do to obtain a license?

Complete one of the acceptable tests.

Is there a minimum age requirement to get a license?

Yes, you need to be at least 19 years old to obtain a license from ISBE.

I did not graduate from high school. Can I still become a Para Educator?

Yes, but you will need to obtain your GED first.

I need to test. What test(s) do I need to take?

You may take the ETS Para Pro Assessment or two specific Work Keys tests.

What material does the ETS Para Pro Assessment cover?

See the ETS Para Pro Assessment website for more information on this exam:

<https://www.ets.org/parapro/about>.

Where can I take the ETS Para Pro Assessment?

The nearest test center is at the Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) located at 28 N. 1st St., Geneva, IL 60134. Contact the ROE for more information at 630-208-3143.

How do I register for the ETS Para Pro Assessment?

- Click here to register for the test: <https://kaneroe.org/testing-center/>
- Click on the “Parapro Test” link on the right part of the screen to get a list of the open test sessions.
- Click on the “Number” link on the next screen to get info on the available testing sessions.
- The next screen shows details about the test.
- Click on the “register” button to register for the test.

What score do I need to pass the ETS Para Pro Assessment?

The passing score is 460.

Is there a study guide to help me prepare for the ETA Para Pro Assessment?

See this website for test preparation materials: https://www.ets.org/parapro/test_prep/materials.

How much does the ETS Para Pro Assessment cost?

The registration fee is \$65.00.

What Work Keys tests do I need to take and what is the passing score?

- Applied Mathematics/Applied Math exam with a score of at least a 4; **AND**
- Reading for Information, **OR**, Workplace Documents with a score of at least a 4.

Where can I take the Work Keys tests?

Many local community colleges offer Work Keys testing. If you live in the Elgin area you may be able to take these tests at Elgin Community College (ECC).

How do I register for the Work Keys tests?

- To register for the Work Keys tests at ECC, see this website: <https://www.elgin.edu/admissions/testing-services/proctored-exams/>.
- Scroll down to the section on Work Keys to register.
- If you live in another area outside of Elgin, contact your local community college for information on these tests.

Is there a study guide to help me prepare for the Work Keys tests?

Yes, contact the ECC Career Development Services office at 847-214-7399 for more information.

How much does the Work Keys tests cost?

The total fee that ECC charges is \$49.00; which includes:

- A \$12.00 fee for each exam. The total fee for both exams is \$24.00.
- ECC charges an additional \$25.00 administrative fee.
- The fees may differ at other community colleges.

How do I apply for a Para Educator License?

You'll need to create an account in the ISBE Educator Licensure Information System (ELIS) website; which can be accessed here: <https://sec3.isbe.net/IWASNET/login.aspx>.

NOTE: This system is best viewed with Internet Explorer.

- See this ISBE video for instructions on how to create your ELIS account: <https://vimeo.com/180601205>.
- See this ISBE video for instructions on how to apply for a Para Educator License: <https://vimeo.com/172960970>.
- There is an application fee of \$100.00 that is paid online.

I am having problems with the ISBE website. Who can I contact for help?

- Beth Gehringer, HR Educator Licensure Manager at 847-888-5000, ext. 5370 or certification@u-46.org.
- Vicki Rissinger at the Kane County ROE at 630-232-5955 or vrissinger@kaneroe.org.
- ISBE Technical Support at 217-558-3600.

Where do I send my transcript(s) for the license?

Have an official transcript sent to the Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE). The ROE can get your transcript scanned into your ELIS account much faster than if they are sent to ISBE in Springfield.

My college/university mails official transcripts. Where should they be sent?

Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE), 28 N. 1st St., Geneva, IL 60134.

My college/university offers electronic transcripts. Where should they be sent?

Address them to Vicki Rissinger at the ROE at vrissinger@kaneroe.org.

I completed the Para Pro Assessment or the Work Keys tests. What materials need to be sent to the ROE to support my Para Educator License application?

- A copy of your high school diploma/transcript or GED; and
- A copy of the official score report from the testing session(s).
- You can bring this info to the ROE, mail it or email it to Vicki Rissinger at the ROE.

I don't have a copy of my high school diploma or transcript. What can I do?

Contact your high school registrar/school district records office to request your transcript. An unofficial transcript or copy is acceptable.

How long will it take for the license to be issued?

- It could take up to a few weeks for the license to be issued.
- If an administrator in the District is interested in hiring you the District can request a RUSH for your evaluation.
- You need to have applied for the license and all the required documentation needs to be scanned into your ELIS account before a RUSH request can be sent.
- Once your license is issued you will receive an email from ISBE letting you know that your file has been updated and you should log into your ELIS account.

Do I need to do anything else once my Para Educator License is issued?

- Yes, the license needs to be registered in Kane County (31-KANE ROE) for it to be considered valid for employment in our district.
 - The District has buildings in three counties (Kane, Cook and DuPage); but we are considered a Kane County School District.
- You'll register your license in your ELIS account.
 - Click on the "registration" link in the "action center" box on your home page.
 - There is an additional \$60.00 registration fee that is due.
- See this ISBE video for instructions on how to register your license: <https://vimeo.com/180604307>. This video references a Professional Educator License (PEL) but the steps are essentially the same for the Para Educator License.
- Click on the "My Credentials" tab near the top left part of the screen to see your license. Print this screen for an official copy of your license. ISBE no longer issues paper credentials.

Is there any reimbursement available for the fees I have paid to apply for the license?

- Yes, after you are employed as a Para Educator and are a member of the DUEA union you can request reimbursement of \$50.00 for the fees that you paid for the license.
- You need to request reimbursement through Munis Self-Service. See this website for instructions: <https://www.u-46.org/cms/lib/IL01804616/Centricity/Domain/6449/Tyler%20enterng%20expense%20reimbursements.pdf>.
- Be sure to print out the "fees" screen in your ELIS account for proof of the fees you paid for the license and registration.
 - Hover over the "Educator" tab in the upper left part of the screen in your ELIS account and click on the link for "fees."
 - Print a copy of this screen.
 - Scan this document and attach it to your expense claim.
- Contact the Payroll Department if you have questions about this process. Call them at 847-289-2177 or email them at payroll@u-46.org.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this process?

Contact Beth Gehringer, Educator Licensure Manager in HR at School District U-46, at certification@u-46.org or 847-888-5000, ext. 5370.

You can also contact Vicki Rissinger at the Kane County ROE at vrissinger@kaneroe.org or 630-232-5955.