

PLU Requirements for Certificate Renewal: 7/1/15-6/30/17

During the 2015 legislative session, the General Assembly voted to extend for two years the suspension of PLU requirements for certificate renewal. Through this legislative action, possible confusion about the certificate renewal process was eliminated. Following a five-year period where PLUs were not required for certificate renewal, it does not make sense to have a two-year period using PLUs only to then implement a new certificate renewal rule, effective July 1, 2017, that abolishes PLUs as a renewal requirement. Consequently, educators (certified teachers, leaders, service field educators, and paraprofessionals) whose certificates expire in 2016 and 2017 will renew as educators have for the past five years: complete and process an application for certificate renewal meeting all renewal requirements minus the no longer required PLUs.

The General Assembly's action does not suspend professional learning. Educators will continue to engage in professional learning designed to improve teaching and learning, and will follow school district requirements regarding professional learning. The legislation simply suspends the accumulation of PLUs for certificate renewal. The position of GaPSC to temporarily modify renewal requirements during this period is separate and apart from districts who wish to continue their own requirements for continued professional development of the personnel employed in their districts.

Certificate Renewal Requirements Summary Expiration Date	PLU Requirement	Comments
June 30, 2016	NO	Renewal is the same as it has been for the past five years. Contact school district HR Office or follow instructions on the GaPSC website.
June 30, 2017	NO	Renewal is the same as it has been for the past five years. Contact school district HR Office or follow instructions on the GaPSC website.
June 30, 2018, and thereafter	NO	<p>Beginning July 1, 2017, educators employed in a Georgia local unit of administration (LUA) will engage in continuous job-embedded professional learning in their schools, school districts, education agencies, or universities. Workshops beginning in October 2015 will prepare professional learning directors, principals, education agency staff, and universities for implementation of new certificate renewal requirements.</p> <p>Beginning July 1, 2017, educators not employed in a Georgia local unit of administration (LUA) at the time of renewal will have several options to meet renewal requirements. A complete list of renewal options are outlined in Rule 505-2-.36 with the primary options listed in a paragraph below.</p>

Guidance for renewal of professional educator certificates and paraprofessional certificates that expire between July 1, 2015-June 30, 2017, is:

1. Educators (employed or unemployed) renewing their Professional certificates from July 1, 2015-June 30, 2017, do not need to submit professional learning units with their applications. Though professional learning units are not required for certificate renewal from July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2017, an application including Verification of Lawful Presence and fee (if not employed with a LUA) **must** be submitted to initiate the renewal process.
2. School districts and private schools using Expresslane for renewal will continue to renew certificates via Expresslane at www.gapsc.org.
3. Private schools not using Expresslane for renewal will continue to submit paper applications and Employer Assurance Forms.
4. Educators not employed in Georgia public or private schools will continue to submit paper applications and pay application fees.
5. The validity period for certificates issued between July 1, 2015, and June 30, 2017, will be for the standard period of five years.
6. Paraprofessionals must be employed to renew their certificates because the LUA applies for the certificate electronically. Paraprofessionals whose certificate validity ends June 30, 2016, or June 30, 2017, will be renewed without PLUs whenever the employer submits the application during the specified time period.

Renewal for Educators Not Employed Beginning July 1, 2017:

Educators not employed in a LUA at the time of renewal may complete any combination of six (6) semester hours of college course work; ten (10) Georgia Professional Learning Units (PLUs) awarded prior to January 1, 2016; or one hundred (100) clock hours of Bright from the Start (BFTS)-approved training. Educators also have an additional option to re-take and pass at the Professional level the GACE content assessment approved by the GaPSC at the time of renewal for the field(s) being renewed. Please note that a new version of the Renewal Requirements rule (effective July 1, 2017) will be initiated in October 2015 to allow for acceptance of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) for renewal purposes. If adopted, ten (10) continuing education units will be included in the options to meet renewal requirements.

For **retired Georgia educators**, a proposed rule is under development and will be initiated as a proposed rule in October 2015. If the Commission adopts this rule, effective January 15, 2016, retired educators will be able to apply for a retired educator certificate. Holders of this certificate will be eligible to work as substitute teachers, but will not be required to meet the professional learning requirements for certificate renewal.