



**State of California  
Commission on Teacher Credentialing**

1900 Capitol Avenue  
Sacramento, CA 95811-4213  
Email: [credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:credentials@ctc.ca.gov)  
Website: [www.ctc.ca.gov](http://www.ctc.ca.gov)

## **CERTIFICATE OF CLEARANCE**

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### **Summary:**

Fingerprint clearance through the California Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) is required from every applicant prior to the Commission's issuance of any credential, permit, certificate, or waiver.

The Certificate of Clearance (COC) is a document issued by the Commission to an individual who has completed the Commission's fingerprint character and identification process, whose moral and professional fitness has been shown to meet the standards as established by law. The COC is not the same as a clear teaching or services credential. The COC does not authorize the holder to provide any instruction or services in schools; its sole purpose is to provide verification that the holder has completed a professional fitness review.

### ***You must obtain a COC:***

- If you are enrolled in a California educator preparation program, prior to beginning your student teaching or practicum/field based experience
- If you are applying for a Variable Term Waiver and you have not received fingerprint clearance from the Commission. You will not be allowed in a public school setting until both the COC and Variable Term Waiver have been issued.
- If you are employed by a charter school to provide classroom instruction or other school services on or after July 1, 2020 and do not already hold a document issued by the Commission
- If required by your employer or program sponsor

### ***You do not need to apply for a COC:***

- If you are an educator applying directly to the Commission for a credential or permit
- If you have previously completed the fingerprint process and have been issued a currently valid document by the Commission

### **How to Apply - California Residents**

Effective July 1, 2007, California residents must apply for their COC online using the CTC Online system. Follow the steps below:

1. Print three copies of the Live Scan 41-LS form [PDF]. Take these to a location offering Live Scan electronic fingerprint services for submission to the Live Scan operator. (Click here to view a listing of Live Scan locations). You will be required to pay a processing fee to the Live Scan operator for your prints to be scanned. Retain a copy of the Live Scan form for your records.

2. From the Commission's Home page, use the blue Educator Login button to complete the online application. If you need help completing your online profile and application, see the Login Help page for directions.
3. Submit by credit or debit card the transaction fee of \$52.50 (all online transactions are subject to a \$2.50 service fee in addition to the \$50.00 application fee). Immediately following the successful submission of the online application, an email will be sent containing a confirmation number.

### **For Those Outside California**

Out-of-state and out-of-country residents may apply for a COC by completing one of the three options noted below (NOTE: a COC is not required for out-of-state or out-of-country prepared educators submitting fingerprint information with an initial application for California certification):

1. Applicants whose residence is outside California and who cannot be fingerprinted in California must submit the following:
  - a. A completed application (Form 41-4) [PDF]. Select "Certificate of Clearance" from the drop-down box in Section 2.
  - b. Application processing fee of \$50.00
  - c. Two completed fingerprint cards (FD-258). Attach these to the application form in lieu of a Live Scan receipt. There is an additional \$49.00 fee to process fingerprint cards, in addition to the application processing fee of \$50.00. To order fingerprint cards, send a request via email to [OutOfStateFPs@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:OutOfStateFPs@ctc.ca.gov) providing your name and address along with "fingerprint cards" noted in the subject line. See Credential Leaflet CL-271 for more information on fingerprint cards and processing.
2. If you reside outside California but are able to complete the Live Scan process in California, then you may follow the same steps noted for a California resident using the online application process.

### **Fee Credit**

The COC fee of \$50.00 becomes a credit applied towards issuance of an individual's initial teaching or services credential. Your fee credit will be applied when you complete the payment process for the credential application submitted online by your program sponsor.

### **Processing Time**

Fingerprint and character identification processing via Live Scan is usually completed within 10 working days. If submitting fingerprint cards, or if an individual's application requires additional review by the Commission's Division of Professional Practices, the process will take longer. If the application is pending review by the Commission's Division of Professional Practices, the online file will indicate that the application is "pending additional evaluation."

Individuals may view the status of their COC applications using their Educator Login on the Commission's website. Online applications submitted prior to 4:00 p.m. PST will display on the website the following day at approximately 2:00 p.m. PST or later. When requirements for issuance of the COC are completed, an email will be sent informing the individual that the document has been granted and can be viewed in approximately 48 hours using their Educator Login.

**Period of Validity**

The COC is valid for five years. Fingerprint information will be invalidated for individuals who have not held any other type of valid document for more than eighteen (18) months after the expiration date of a COC. The fingerprint process must be repeated when individuals whose fingerprints have been invalidated subsequently apply for certification. See Coded Correspondence 12-10 for more information.

**Reference:**

California Education Code, Sections 44339, 44340, and 47605; and Title 5, California Code of Regulations Sections 80028, 80301, and 80442.