



# COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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## *Frequently Asked Questions Regarding*

TTEs (Temporary Teacher Eligibility)

SEEs (Special Educator Eligibility)

Authorization: Temporary Educator Eligibility

The demands and expectations of a special education provider employed on the basis of TTE or SEE are high. Not only will you be expected to maintain a challenging work environment, but enrollment in a licensing program can be rigorous. This commitment for success is a collaborative partnership between the individual, the employer and with an Institution of Higher Education (IHE). The process for either TTE or SEE is tied into active employment and is initiated by the employing administrative unit (school district), BOCES or eligible facility.

### **1) Q. What is a TTE?**

**A.** TTE stands for Temporary Teacher Eligibility. Although the name includes the designation of “teacher”, this process may also be used for special service providers, i.e., a school psychologist or a special education administrator (director of special education). Temporary Teacher Eligibility is granted to allow personnel to provide services while completing IHE requirements to become licensed and endorsed in a special education area appropriate for the provider’s assignment. In order for TTE status to be approved, the provider **MUST HOLD** a valid Colorado license **OR** authorization (Educator Licensing form titled Authorization: Temporary Educator Eligibility). Authorization is an annual school year type of license that is required if the provider is not licensed in any other capacity through the Colorado Department of Education (CDE).

#### Example:

- Teacher does not hold any type of CDE license
- is working as a special education teacher in a district elementary school
- is enrolled in a Special Education Generalist program through an IHE
  - Teacher is employed on the basis of TTE
  - Employer (district) must **ALSO** initiate the process for Authorization

#### Example:

- Provider holds a valid CDE teaching license with endorsement in El Ed
- is working as a school psychologist in a district wide position
- is enrolled in a School Psychologist program through an IHE
  - Provider is employed on the basis of TTE

Example:

- Provider holds a valid CDE special services license with endorsement in School Counselor
- is working as a school social worker in a district wide position
- is enrolled in a School Social Worker program through an IHE
  - Provider is employed on the basis of TTE

**2) Q. What is an SEE?**

A. SEE stands for Special Educator Eligibility. The process for SEE is similar to TTE but is **ONLY** used for personnel employed as a special educator (teacher) who **ALSO HOLDS** a valid Colorado educator (teaching) license. Special Educator Eligibility is granted to allow personnel to provide services while completing IHE requirements to become endorsed in the special education instructional area appropriate for the provider's assignment. In order for SEE status to be approved, the provider **MUST HOLD** a valid Colorado educator license.

Example:

- Teacher holds a valid CDE teaching license with endorsement in Sec Math
- is working as a special education resource teacher in a district high school
- is enrolled in a Special Education Generalist program through an IHE
  - Teacher is employed on the basis of SEE

Both TTE and SEE are processes that allow administrative units (school districts), BOCES or eligible facilities to employ personnel who are not yet appropriately endorsed to provide services in a special education field while completing endorsement/licensure requirements. This process can be utilized for a *maximum* of three school years.

**3) Q. Who is eligible to obtain a TTE or SEE?**

A. Only special educators who are not yet appropriately endorsed can apply for a TTE (CDE non-licensed teachers, special service providers and sped administrators) or SEE (CDE licensed teachers only).

**4) Q. What paperwork is required to obtain a TTE or SEE?**

A. Upon employment, your local administrative unit (school district), BOCES or eligible facility special education director will initiate the TTE or SEE process with you. It is the provider's responsibility to obtain individual university program requirements and acquire signature from your IHE advisor on the verification form. Completed TTE or SEE forms (application and verification form) must be submitted to the Special Education Finance and Data Unit at CDE.

If you do not hold a valid CDE license, your local Human Resources department will initiate the process for Authorization: Temporary Educator Eligibility with you.

The authorization form must be submitted to the Educator Licensing Unit at CDE.

***Fingerprints and annual fees apply to the authorization process.***

For 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year approval status, the provider must submit:

- the TTE or SEE verification form, that has been verified and signed by your IHE advisor AND, if needed,
- the Authorization: Temporary Educator Eligibility (for non CDE-licensed providers), *including applicable fees*
- forms are due at CDE by August 15<sup>th</sup> annually

**5) Q. It is specified that the TTE/SEE application and verification needs to be sent to the Special Education Data and Finance Unit at CDE and the Authorization: Temporary Educator Eligibility needs to be sent to Educator Licensing at CDE. Why two separate departments?**

A. These processes are independent of each other and must be submitted to the appropriate governing office at CDE. TTE/SEE approval process is governed by special education rules and the Authorization process is governed by Educator Licensing. Educator Licensing is the only department at CDE that is authorized to approve and issue Colorado educational licenses and authorizations. Both departments work at CDE to ensure that personnel hold appropriate licenses/authorizations and, if required, TTE/SEE approval status.

**6) Q. What is the duration of a TTE or SEE?**

A. TTEs or SEEs are approved for a *maximum* of three school years. 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> year approval status is contingent upon the provider 1) obtaining the signature of their IHE advisor who has *verified* that “satisfactory” progress has been made toward completion of the endorsement program in accordance with their IHE’s policy and program requirements and 2) maintaining a valid CDE license or authorization for the full 3 year approval cycle.

Prior to the beginning of the 4<sup>th</sup> year of employment, the provider is required to have completed all IHE program requirements and be eligible for CDE licensure in the special education area.

**7) Q. What happens if the TTE or SEE cannot be completed within the three years? Is there an extension process?**

A. NO, the state does not offer an extension process beyond the 3 year approval cycle.

All IHE program and licensure requirements must be completed within the 3 year approval cycle. Failure to complete these requirements within the 3 years may impact the provider’s employment status. Keep in mind that TTE/SEE approvals are granted for “school years” – even if you are hired mid year, this will count as the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the 3 year cycle. TTE/SEE approvals are not granted per “semester”.

**8) Q. If I am employed on the basis of an approved TTE, does that make me Highly Qualified under IDEA and NCLB?**

A. No. Special education teachers employed on a TTE are *not* considered to be special education qualified (IDEA) or Highly Qualified (NCLB) until the appropriate endorsement and licensure requirements are satisfied.

**9) Q. Similarly, if I am employed on the basis of an approved SEE, does that make me Highly Qualified under both IDEA and NCLB?**

A. Not necessarily. SEE educators *are* considered special education qualified (IDEA) if the endorsement program they are completing is appropriate for the majority of their student population. These teachers have already completed a prior teacher education program and hold a current Colorado Educator License. However, in order to be Highly Qualified (NCLB) as a sole deliverer of a core content area, a teacher on an SEE will need to meet the state requirements in that specific core content area, e.g., secondary english, secondary science, etc.

**10) Q. When the TTE or SEE verification is completed annually, it asks whether “satisfactory progress” has been made toward completion of the endorsement program. What is considered to be “satisfactory progress” and what are the implications if this requirement is not met?**

A. “Satisfactory progress” is determined by the IHE advisor in accordance with the total number of credits required by the IHE for completion of the endorsement program.

As a general rule: Divide the number of credits required to obtain your endorsement by three (3) to determine the minimum number of credits per year you’ll need to complete to document annual “satisfactory progress.” Current IHE program requirements range from 30 semester hours to over 60 semester hours. For example, if you need to complete 45 credits to obtain the IHE recommendation for endorsement,  $45 / 3 = 15$  credits per year to meet “satisfactory progress.” *In addition*, the special education assessment and practicum/internship must *also* be completed within the 3 year approval cycle.

For individuals *not making* “satisfactory progress”, according to your IHE advisor, the TTE/SEE approval status becomes invalid and the individual’s employment contract will be compromised and very likely non-renewed.

**11) Q. Can I still teach with an expired TTE or SEE (past the 3 year approval cycle) if I only need to take the PLACE assessment and complete my practicum/internship?**

A. No. You must fulfill *all* IHE requirements of the endorsement program which includes a passing score on the PLACE assessment and practicum/internship completed with a passing grade.

**12) Q. If I have further questions regarding the TTE/SEE process, who may I contact?**

A. You may contact your local special education director, your IHE academic advisor, or Lauren Rossini at CDE at 303-866-6688.