Arkansas Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
and
Arkansas Department of Education

Rules Governing the Requirements and Procedures for Obtaining an Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential
Act 187 of 2009

1.0 Regulatory Authority

1.01 These rules are enacted pursuant to the authority of the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education under Arkansas Code § 20-78-801 et seq.

1.02 The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Arkansas Department of Human Services, shall coordinate and administer the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential fulfilling the requirements of Ark. Code § 20-78-205 (b) and 20-78-801 et seq.

2.0 Purpose

2.01 The purpose of these rules is to establish the requirements and procedures for obtaining an Arkansas Birth-Pre Kindergarten Teaching Credential. The Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential is a competency-based credential created to provide an additional professional pathway for individuals wishing to pursue a more advanced level of knowledge and skill in working with young children and their families. The credential provides an alternative route to the existing Arkansas Department of Education Prekindergarten through Grade Four Teaching License for the preparation of teachers for all children, birth through age five, including children with special needs, but shall not be utilized in lieu of the P-4 teaching license issued by the State Board of Education when it is required for a public early childhood education program. Professionals working in a variety of early care and education settings including Head Start, Arkansas Better Chance, Developmental Day Treatment Clinic Service or other inclusive programs, home visiting programs, and various community-based early care and education services will find this credential supportive of their professional development needs.

2.02 In addition, the credential will strengthen the infrastructure in Arkansas which will improve the quality of programs and experiences available for all children, birth to age five, regardless of setting. The Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential reflects the Traveling Arkansas' Professional Pathways (TAPP) Key Content Areas and Competencies as well as best practices as identified by the Council for Professional Recognition, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children, the Arkansas Curriculum Frameworks, the Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI), and the state supported institutions of higher education (Arkansas Early Childhood Cohort).

3.0 Definitions

For the purpose of these rules, the following definitions shall apply:

3.01 *Birth through Prekindergarten* refers to children from birth through age four or five.

3.02 *Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential* is a credential based on attainment of specified competencies. These competencies can be found in a core of college credit hours at either the two year or four year level.

3.03 *Competency* is knowledge or skill which has been identified as critical to the Birth through Prekindergarten teaching credential.

3.04 *Core course* is a course designed by higher education to include specified early childhood competencies.

3.05 *Designated Assessment* is a knowledge or skill assessment for the Birth through Prekindergarten teaching competencies.

3.06 *Minimum Educational Level* is defined as 18-27 college credit hours in early childhood development and early childhood education focused specifically on infants, toddlers, and preschoolers with no course grade below a "C".

3.07 *Public Early Childhood Education Program* means an education program which is all or partially funded with state or federal funds, and serves children from Birth through Prekindergarten.

3.08 *Qualifying Assessment Score* refers to the score determined by the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission/Early Learning Council as qualifying for teaching Birth through Prekindergarten.

4.0 Requirements for Obtaining an Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential

4.01 A person applying for Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential is not required to pay a fee for submitting the application or obtaining the credential.

4.02 A person must meet the minimum educational level as determined by the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credentials which are embedded in 18-27 college credit hours in early childhood development and early childhood education focused specifically on infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

4.03 A person must complete the content knowledge of a specialty area assessment designated by the Arkansas Early Childhood Commission/Early Learning Council with a score equal to or greater than the Arkansas Qualifying Assessment Score.

4.04 A person may obtain the *Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential* by the following pathways:

(a) Complete 18-27 college credit hours in early childhood development and early childhood education focused specifically on infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

(b) Complete an associate or bachelors degree which includes the Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten teaching Competencies which appear in 18-27 college credit hours in early childhood development and early childhood education focused specifically on infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

(c) Add the Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten teaching Competencies to an existing two or four year degree.

(d) A person coming from another state within the United States may be issued the Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential by fulfilling §§ 4.01, 4.02, and 4.03 and need not have an associate degree.

(e) A person outside the United States may be issued the Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential by fulfilling §§ 4.01, 4.02, and 4.03 and need not have an associate degree.

5.0 General Policies and Procedures Relating to the Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential

5.01 The Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential shall become effective upon the date of issue and shall be valid for five (5) years. The Credential shall expire five (5) years from the effective date as reflected on the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential.

5.02 The procedure for applying for a Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential is as follows:

(a) Complete the application form.
(b) Complete the non-criminal background check or show verification of completion.
(c) Complete Child Maltreatment Central Registry check or show verification of completion.
(d) Attach an official college transcript(s) of college hours with course objectives.
(e) Attach course objectives and Competencies for each course.
(f) Attach a report showing the designated Qualifying Assessment Score.
(g) Send a cover letter, application, and transcript(s) to:
Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential
Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education
P O Box 1437 Slot 160
Little Rock, AR 72201-1437

5.03 A person holding the Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential shall complete a minimum of thirty (30) hours of professional development annually in early childhood development or early childhood education. At least 10 of the 30 hours should be in the areas of Special Populations, English as a Second Language, Nutrition, Health and Safety of Infants and Toddlers. This professional development shall be approved and documented by the Arkansas Department of Education or the Traveling Arkansas Professional Pathways Registry.

6.0 Monitoring and Assessment Requirements

6.1.1 The Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education will verify the annual professional development hours of the applicants upon renewal of certification. Verification of hours can be completed one of the following ways:

6.1.1.1 Applicants may submit transcript of professional development hours
6.1.1.2 Applicants may grant access to DCCECE to verify hours within Traveling Arkansas Professional Pathways Registry.

6.2 A person shall complete the assessment designated by DCCECE with a Qualifying assessment score.

7.0 Requirements for the renewal of an Arkansas Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential

7.01 A Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential shall be automatically renewed upon the person meeting the following requirements:

(a) Complete the renewal application form.

(b) Attach a copy of a valid Birth through Prekindergarten Teaching Credential.

(b) Attach documentation which verifies the annual 30 hours of professional development in early childhood development or early childhood education.