

**DIVISION OF HIGHER EDUCATION RULES GOVERNING THE
STATE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM
Effective Date: October 31, 2024**

1.00 PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

- 1.01 “Alternative Educator Preparation Program” means non-traditional licensure program resulting in a valid Arkansas teaching license.
- 1.02 “Approved institution” means a state-supported institution of higher education, a nursing school, or a private nonprofit institution of higher education that:
 - 1.02.1 Maintains its primary headquarters in the state;
 - 1.02.2 Is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid program funds; and
 - 1.02.3 Is approved by the Division of Higher Education as eligible to participate in the State Teacher Education Program;
- 1.03 “Arkansas Resident” means an applicant that has been an Arkansas resident for twelve (12) months prior to the application deadline for the financial aid program.
 - 1.03.1 Further, the recipient may be asked to provide evidence of a permanent connection with the State of Arkansas, in which the division will look to one or more of the following to determine residency:
 - 1.03.1.1 Valid Arkansas Driver’s License;
 - 1.03.1.2 Proof of payment for Arkansas personal or real taxes for previous year;
 - 1.03.1.3 Proof of Arkansas vehicle registration;
 - 1.03.1.4 Proof of Arkansas voter registration; and
 - 1.03.1.5 Other forms of proof of Arkansas residency.
- 1.04 “Award Year” means the year that begins on July 1 of one calendar year and extends to June 30 of the next calendar year.
- 1.05 “Eligible student” means a student who:
 - 1.05.1 Meets the criteria set out in this subchapter; and
 - 1.05.2 Is found to be eligible by rules promulgated by the Division of Higher Education.

- 1.06 “Geographical Areas of the State Designated as Having Critical Shortages of Teachers” means any Arkansas school district designated by the division as having critical teacher shortages.
- 1.07 “Lawful Permanent Resident” means an individual who can provide documentation from the Immigration and Naturalization Service that he or she is in the United States for other than a temporary purpose with the intention of becoming a citizen or permanent resident.
- 1.07.1 Valid documentation is an I-551, I-151, I-181, I-94, or passport stamped with the notation "Processed for I-551, Temporary Evidence of Lawful Admission for Permanent Residence".
- 1.07.2 A completed Form G-641 can also be used to document permanent resident status.
- 1.08 “Subject Matter Designated as Critical Needs in the State of Arkansas” means subject matter shortage areas certified annually by the division based upon the results of surveys obtained from school districts in the state of Arkansas.
- 1.09 “Teach Full-Time” means to teach the same number of hours required of teachers who have full-time contracts, as determined by the institution or agency in which an individual is teaching, for a minimum of one academic term, as defined by the institution or agency in which an individual is teaching.
- 1.10 “Teacher Education Program” means a program administered by the Division of Higher Education that provides loan repayments to a licensed teacher who teaches in a subject area or a geographic area with teacher shortage as determined by the Division of Higher Education in consultation with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- 1.11 “United States Citizen” means persons born or who have become naturalized citizens of:
- 1.11.1 The 50 States;
- 1.11.2 District of Columbia;
- 1.11.3 Puerto Rico;
- 1.11.4 Virgin Islands;
- 1.11.5 Guam;
- 1.11.6 Northern Mariana Islands; or

1.11.7 Trust Territory- Palau.

1.12 "National" means citizens of:

1.12.1 American Samoa; or

1.12.2 Swain's Island.

2.00 ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

2.01 The Division of Higher Education shall administer the State Teacher Education Program within the policies set by the Higher Education Coordinating Board.

2.01.1 All formal communications shall be addressed to or signed by the commissioner of the division or his or her designee.

2.02 When functioning under Act 1215 of 2009, and any subsequent legislation, the division shall follow the provisions of the Administrative Procedures Act.

3.00 ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

3.01 Eligibility Criteria

3.01.1 Applicants must be bona fide Arkansas residents, as defined by the Division of Higher Education, for at least twelve (12) months prior to the application deadline.

3.01.2 Applicants must be a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident.

3.01.3 Applicant must have graduated from a teacher education program after April 2004; or

3.01.3.1 Earned a teaching license upon completion of an alternative educator preparation program.

3.01.4 Applicant must have outstanding federal student loans.

3.01.5 Applicant must hold a valid Arkansas teacher's license.

3.01.6 Applicants must teach full-time at a public school district in Arkansas during the award year and meet one of the additional criteria:

3.01.6.1 Teach in a subject area with a teacher shortage, as identified by the division in consultation with the Division of Elementary and Secondary-Education; or

3.01.6.2 Teach in a geographic area with a teacher shortage, as identified by the division in consultation with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education.

3.02 Continued Eligibility

3.02.1 Recipients shall re-apply for the State Teacher Education Program annually and continue to meet the eligibility criteria set forth above.

3.02.1.1 A recipient may receive an annual award for a maximum of three (3) years.

4.00 SELECTION PROCESS

4.01 Applications.

4.01.1 Solicitation of Applicants

4.01.1.1 Program information will be mailed to the following:

4.01.1.1.1 K-12 school administrators and other interested personnel;

4.01.1.1.2 Colleges, Schools, and Departments of Education;

4.01.1.1.3 Financial Aid Directors and Officers;

4.01.1.1.4 Other college campus personnel, such as advisors, who express an interest in disseminating information to prospective applicants; and

4.01.1.1.5 Information is also available upon request from the Division of Higher Education.

4.01.1.2 The division staff will disseminate program information through workshops, meetings, press releases, the division newsletter, and other means deemed appropriate.

4.01.2 An online application will be available at the division's website.

4.01.2.1 The application deadline shall be stated on the application form each year.

4.01.2.2 The division shall have the authority to extend the deadline as needed to ensure a quality applicant pool so long as sufficient public notice is provided.

4.01.3 Upon receipt by the division, applications are reviewed to ensure that all pertinent data is included.

4.01.3.1 Each applicant will receive confirmation of the receipt and completeness of the application.

4.01.3.2 For those whose application is either incomplete or ineligible, a notification will be made identifying the reason for incompleteness or ineligibility.

4.01.3.3 The applicant will then have the opportunity to provide the missing information or correct any inaccurate information.

4.01.3.4 Before an applicant can be considered for an award, the corrected or missing information must be received by the division by the deadline indicated in the incomplete or ineligible notice.

4.02 Selection and Notification of Recipients

4.02.1 The division shall review applicants and select recipients based on the eligibility criteria for the State Teacher Education Program.

4.02.2 Selected recipients will receive award notices stating their eligibility for the program and the conditions of their award.

4.03 Ranking of Applicants

4.03.1 Priority for the State Teacher Education Program Repayment grants is as follows:

4.03.1.1 First priority is Arkansas teachers teaching in both subject and geographic shortage areas.

4.03.1.2 Second priority is Arkansas teachers teaching in subject shortage areas.

4.03.1.3 Third priority is Arkansas teachers teaching in geographic shortage areas.

4.03.1.4 Fourth priority is Arkansas public school teachers who have completed an alternative educator preparation program.

4.04 Disbursement of Award

4.04.1 The award will be disbursed in one (1) disbursement to the federal student loan holder indicated by the applicant.

4.04.1.1 If the award amount is larger than the outstanding loan balance, the award amount will be reduced to the amount of the loan balance.

5.00 LIMITATIONS OF LOAN REPAYMENT

5.01 The State Teacher Education Program shall be used to provide:

5.01.1 A loan repayment for federal student loans in the amount of six thousand dollars (\$6,000) per year, for a maximum of three (3) years for each year a licensed teacher who graduated from a teacher education program after April 2004 and teaches in a public school in this state or successfully completed an alternative educator preparation program after April 2004 and teaches in a public school in the program:

5.01.1.1 In a subject matter area designated by the Division of Higher Education, in consultation with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, as having a critical shortage of teachers; and

5.01.1.2 Located in a geographical area of the state designated by the Division of Higher Education, in consultation with the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education, as having a critical shortage of teachers.

5.01.2 A licensed teacher who is given intensive support status under the Teacher Excellence and Support System, Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2801 et seq., shall be ineligible for receipt of funds under the program for the school year.

6.00 RECIPIENT RESPONSIBILITY

6.01 It is the recipient's responsibility to notify the Division of Higher Education of any change in status within twenty-one (21) days.

6.01.1 This will include:

6.01.1.1 Change in name; or

6.01.1.2 Change in residence.

6.01.2 Failure to notify the division of a change in status will affect future eligibility or collection status.