

# North Carolina Early Educator Certification (EEC) Renewal Fact Sheet

*Early Educator Certification (EEC) professionalizes the field through the certification of your educational achievements. To maintain your certification, you must continue your education by completing college credits and/or obtaining Continuing Education Units. Your assigned EEC level determines your specific renewal requirements and the amount of time you have to complete them.*

*Below are questions often asked about EEC renewal, along with information to guide your efforts in keeping your Early Educator Certification up to date.*

## **Does my certificate expire?**

Yes, all certificates have an expiration date. Your certificate is valid for three or five years based on your EEC level. Your individual expiration date can be found on the bottom right corner of your certificate. *The EEC team encourages you to apply at least four months prior to the expiration date to guarantee renewal before your certificate expires.*

## **What education or continuing education is required for renewal?**

To maintain EEC, individuals certified on the Early Care and Education Professional Scale (ECE Scale) must continue their professional development by completing three (3) semester hours or four (4) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or a combination of the two within their certification validity period. Those certified on the School Age Professional Scale (SA Scale) must complete two (2) semester hours or three (3) Continuing Education Units (CEUs) or a combination of the two within their certification validity period.

- All courses in general education, school age or early childhood will count for renewal for those who have at least six semester hours focused on the age group for which they are currently certified.
- Early Educators certified at level 4 or 8 with NO focused coursework must take semester hours focused on the age group for which they are currently certified. CEUs will not be accepted for renewal.
- Early Educators assessed with one to five hours of focused coursework within their certification level may take CEUs, but if they choose to take semester hours to meet their renewal requirements, they must take semester hours focused on the age group for which they are currently certified.
- Professionals certified with a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree and 12 semester hours focused on the age group for which they are currently certified may receive credit for teaching a CEU session for a minimum of 5 contact hours (or .5 CEUs) that meet renewal requirements. Each CEU session may be counted toward renewal only once per validity period.
- Professionals certified at levels 12 or 13 may also receive credit for teaching formal coursework that meets renewal requirements. The same course may receive credit toward renewal only once per validity period.

*CEU sessions must be worth at least .5 CEUs (5 contact hours) to count toward renewal.*

The letter included with certification packets gives individualized renewal details. More information about CEU requirements can be found at <http://ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/renewal/>. Please call the EEC office at 919-942-7442 if you would like guidance on courses that will count toward your renewal and help you move to a higher level on the scale.

## **What types of Continuing Education Units (CEUs) are accepted toward renewal?**

If you choose to complete CEUs for professional development, you must make sure that the CEUs meet the following criteria:

- Must fall under one of the Division of Child Development and Early Education's (DCDEE) nine topic areas (<http://ncicdp.org/continuing-education/ceu-guidelines-documents/>)
- Must be offered through a nationally recognized regionally accredited ([www.chea.org/Directories/regional.asp](http://www.chea.org/Directories/regional.asp)) community college or university, the local school systems/LEAs or a member of the International Association for Continuing Education & Training ([www.iacet.org](http://www.iacet.org))

### **How do I document the completion of my renewal requirements?**

Completion of college coursework can be proven with any of the following documents:

1. Official transcripts
2. Official grade reports
3. Access to official transcripts via the Internet Permission Form: [http://ncicdp.org/documents/EEC\\_IPF.pdf](http://ncicdp.org/documents/EEC_IPF.pdf)

Completion of CEUs can be proven with official transcripts or copies of CEU certificates. Documentation must show the name of the course, the date it was completed, the CEU granting body, and the number of CEUs awarded. Each CEU course must be at least five contact hours (.5 CEUs) to count toward renewal.

### **What organizations offer CEUs?**

Early childhood association conferences, child care resource and referral training agencies, the Department of Public Instruction, community colleges and universities are examples of organizations that offer continuing education opportunities in person and online. You can find more information about CEUs at <http://ncicdp.org/continuing-education/continuing-education-sources/>.

### **How do I apply for renewal?**

Submit an updated EEC application along with documentation of your professional development and the required fee (see application for details). Applications are available at [www.ncicdp.org](http://www.ncicdp.org) or request one by calling 919-942-7442.

### **My certificate hasn't expired, but I have achieved a higher level of education. How do I update my certificate?**

To have new coursework assessed against the ECE or SA scale, submit the EEC Request Form along with an official transcript and select "out of cycle education assessment." EEC staff will assess your education and inform you if you have reached a higher level. To have your certificate printed at a higher level, you will need to submit the fee. Your certificate expiration date will not change when you request an out of cycle education assessment.

If you have completed your professional development requirements and you want a new certificate expiration date, submit the EEC Application and follow the directions pertaining to renewal. This is the best option if your certificate is within six months of expiration.

### **Am I required to renew my EEC?**

EEC is a voluntary system. If you choose to maintain your certification, you must complete the renewal requirements.

### **Can I use my EEC for facility licensure?**

EEC is an additional education equivalency option for the Star Rated License. This equivalency option may allow individuals to qualify as Lead Teacher, Teacher, Family Child Care Home Provider and/or Program Coordinator using their current Early Educator certificate. Individuals may contact the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) for more information regarding the process to follow in order to use this education option regarding facility licensure.

### **Where can I get up to date information about EEC?**

Visit our website at [www.ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/](http://www.ncicdp.org/certification-licensure/) for up to date information and to access all EEC forms and documents.

*Early Educator Certification is a Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge supported initiative.*



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