

## Guidance for Principals: Maintaining a Valid Teaching Certificate

Some districts require their principals to maintain valid teacher certification which may be challenging, particularly for those with residency teacher certificates. PESB and OSPI have developed the following guidance for folks in this situation.

**Step 1:** Determine the type of Washington teacher certification you have - it will be “residency,” “professional,” or “continuing.”

**Step 2:** Maintain a valid teaching certificate through the renewal process:

- If you hold a **residency** teacher certificate, skip to Step 3.
- If you hold a **professional** teacher certificate, you can maintain it by completing 4 annual [Professional Growth Plans for Certificate Renewal](#) (PGPs) over the 5-year validity period. If you earned your professional teacher certificate prior to September 1, 2014, you have the option of renewing through PGPs or by completing 150 clock hours. Renew your professional certificate through [eCert](#).
- If you hold a **continuing** teacher certificate, you can maintain it by completing 4 annual [Professional Growth Plans for Certificate Renewal](#) over the 5-year validity period or by completing 150 clock hours. Renew your continuing certificate through [eCert](#).

**Step 3:** This section is only for those with residency teacher certification who are not working in a teacher position - see [Residency Teacher Certificate Timeline](#).

- Determine if your residency teacher certificate has an expiration date or if it is undated. (After 1.5 years of teaching in Washington, the certificate is reissued with an expiration date - valid for 3 years.) If your certificate is undated and you are not in a teacher position, then it will remain valid without further action.
  - If you have a dated residency teacher certificate, you *may be eligible* for up to two opportunities to request a 2-year renewal.\*
- **Recommended:** If you have a dated residency teacher certificate, save the 2-year renewal until you return to a teaching position and apply for a [lifetime substitute teacher certificate](#) before your residency certificate expires. You will then have a valid teacher certificate while you are working as a principal or in a

role other than as a teacher. Should you, in the future, accept a full-time teacher position, then apply for the 2-year renewal of your residency teacher certificate.

- ★ If you use the 2-year renewal and do not complete and submit ProTeach or National Board Certification, your residency teacher certificate will expire for 5 years.
- ★ If you use the 2-year renewal, complete, and submit ProTeach or National Board Certification but do not pass, you are allowed to apply for a second, 2-year renewal.



If you use the second, 2-year renewal and do not complete, submit, and pass ProTeach or National Board Certification, your residency teacher certificate will expire for 5 years.