

505-2-.18 PARAPROFESSIONAL LICENSE

Nature of Amendment(s):

- Substantive
 Clarification
 Further Definition

Discussion:

It is proposed that GaPSC Rule 505-2-.18 PARAPROFESSIONAL LICENSE, dated June 15, 2016, be AMENDED to clarify coursework to meet the semester hour associate's degree equivalent requirement must be above the remedial level and earned with a grade of "C" or better.

Current/Amended Sections(s):

(Additions are underlined in bold type; deletions are marked through.)

(1) Background.

(a) On January 8, 2002, federal legislation known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) established mandatory federal guidelines for the hiring of paraprofessionals in specified school settings. These guidelines are found in Section 1119 of the federal legislation, and are available on the GaPSC web site at www.gapsc.com. Each local unit of administration (LUA) is responsible for ensuring that all applicable federal requirements are met.

(b) While the federal hiring requirements apply only to designated paraprofessional positions, all Georgia Paraprofessionals must hold a valid state license issued by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GaPSC).

(c) Individuals who hold a valid Professional certificate in a teaching, service or leadership field are in-field to perform assigned paraprofessional responsibilities in grades P-12 and are not required to hold a Paraprofessional license.

(2) Requirements:

(a) The applicant must be employed as a paraprofessional by a Georgia LUA. The request for issuance of the license must be submitted electronically to the GaPSC by the employing LUA utilizing procedures found on the GaPSC web site at www.gapsc.org.

(b) The applicant must meet one of the following requirements:

1. Hold an associate's degree or higher in any subject from a GaPSC-accepted accredited institution; or

2. Have completed two (2) years of college coursework (sixty [60] semester hours) **above the remedial level with a grade of "C" or better** at a GaPSC-accepted accredited institution; or

3. Have passed the GACE Paraprofessional Assessment. If eligibility is established through the assessment, the applicant must also hold a minimum of a high school diploma or GED equivalent.

(c) Completion of a GaPSC-approved Paraprofessional Preparation Program shall also meet certificate eligibility requirements and satisfy ESEA hiring requirements.

(d) Employing LUAs are responsible for ensuring that all applicable federal ESEA hiring requirements are met.

(3) Validity.

(a) The Paraprofessional license is valid for five (5) years, with the beginning date of the first five (5)-year certificate to be the date of employment and the ending date to be June 30 of the fifth certificate year.

(4) Renewal.

(a) To renew the license the applicant must:

1. Be employed as a paraprofessional in a Georgia LUA; and

2. Satisfy renewal requirements as outlined in GaPSC Rule [505-2-.36 RENEWAL REQUIREMENTS](#):

(i) Individuals holding expired paraprofessional licenses issued prior to the implementation of the requirements outlined in section (2), above, must meet those requirements in addition to renewal requirements.

(b) Should a paraprofessional change employing LUA, it is not necessary to issue a new certificate until the expiration of the validity period. Course work taken for renewal credit at the previous LUA may be transferred for renewal at the discretion of the gaining LUA.

(c) At the request of an employing Georgia LUA, a one (1)-year Non-Renewable Paraprofessional license may be issued to individuals holding expired paraprofessional licenses who need to meet renewal requirements.

(d) The request for renewal must be submitted electronically by the employing LUA to the GaPSC utilizing procedures found on the GaPSC web site at www.gapsc.org.

(5) In-Field Statement. Paraprofessional licenses are not issued with specific field designations. Individuals with a Paraprofessional license, as well as individuals who hold a valid renewable professional certificate in any teaching, service, or leadership field, are in-field to perform assigned paraprofessional responsibilities in grades P-12.

Authority O.C.G.A. 20-2-200