

In Washington State, full-time K–12 paraeducators must meet specific employment, certification, and renewal requirements. Here's an overview: [Professional Educator Standards Board](#)

✓ Minimum Employment Requirements

To be employed as a paraeducator, you must:

- Be at least 18 years old.
- Hold a high school diploma or equivalent.
- Meet **one** of the following criteria:
 - Earned an associate degree or higher from an accredited college or university.
 - Completed 72 quarter credits or 48 semester credits at the 100 level or higher.
 - Passed a state-approved assessment demonstrating knowledge and ability to assist in instruction.
 - Completed a registered paraeducator apprenticeship program.

These requirements ensure paraeducators are prepared to support instructional activities effectively

📋 Certification Pathway

Washington's Paraeducator Certificate Program includes the following components:

1. Fundamental Course of Study (FCS)

- Consists of 28 clock hours covering paraeducator standards of practice. Must be completed within the first year of employment. Training is provided by the employing school district.

2. General Paraeducator Certificate

- Requires completion of the 28-hour FCS plus an additional 70 clock hours of professional development
- Must be completed within three years of finishing the FCS.
- Once earned, this certificate does not expire.

3. Optional Certificates

- **Subject Matter Certificates** (e.g., English Language Learner, Special Education):
 - Require 20 clock hours of training.
 - Valid for five years and renewable with 20 continuing education credit hours during the validity period.
- **Advanced Paraeducator Certificate:**
 - Requires 75 clock hours of training related to advanced paraeducator duties.

- Valid for five years and renewable with 30 continuing education credit hours during the validity period. [Washington State Legislative Website](#)

Certificate Renewal

- The **General Paraeducator Certificate** is a lifetime certificate and does not require renewal.
- **Subject Matter Certificates** and the **Advanced Paraeducator Certificate** require renewal every five years by completing the respective continuing education credit hours mentioned above.
- Professional Growth Plans (PGPs) can be used to earn or renew certain certificates:
 - Up to one PGP can be completed to help earn the General Paraeducator Certificate
 - One PGP can be completed to renew a Subject Matter Certificate.
 - Up to three PGPs can be completed to earn the Advanced Paraeducator Certificate, and one PGP to renew it.

Application Process

- Paraeducators apply for and manage their certifications through the [Washington State Educator Electronic Certification \(E-Certification\) system](#).
- It's essential to coordinate with your employing school district, as they are responsible for providing required training and may have additional procedures. [ESD 112](#)