COLORADO
Department of Education

ERR Financial Assistance Application Guidance

When to Complete the Application

The purpose of Educator Recruitment and Retention (ERR) program application is to receive financial assistance toward a program participant's educator preparation program tuition costs in an amount up to $7,500 per state board action in April 2026. Program participants must commit to teach in a shortage area for three years as a condition of receiving this financial assistance. As an applicant, you must already be enrolled in either an alternative or traditional educator preparation program or courses to advance an initial CTE authorization to a professional CTE authorization. You must be enrolled in the academic year for which you are seeking financial assistance. Only current and future academic year program fees can be covered. The application will be open during the following windows in the 2026-27 academic year:

1. July 1, 2026, through August 20, 2026
2. December 1, 2026, through January 15, 2027 (this window will only open if there are remaining funds after the first window)

Applications are processed on a first-come, first-served basis. So, applying as early as possible is important as funds do run out each year.

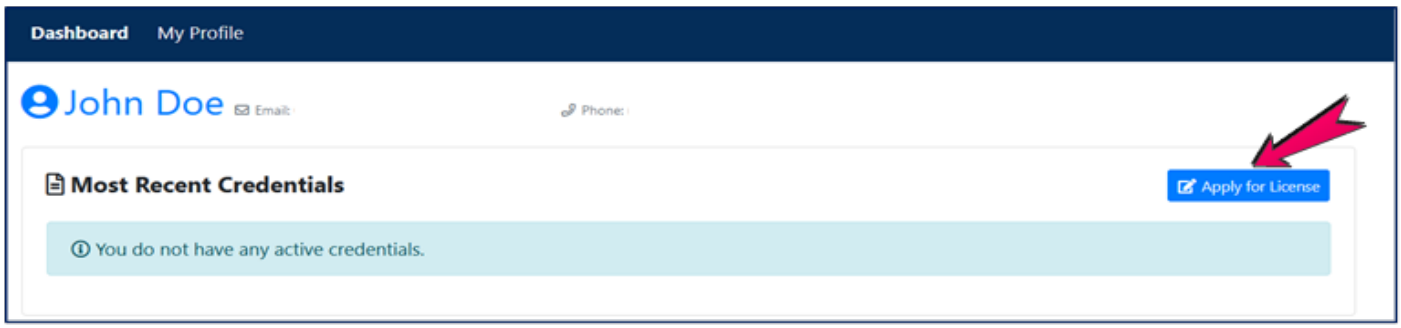
How to Complete the Application

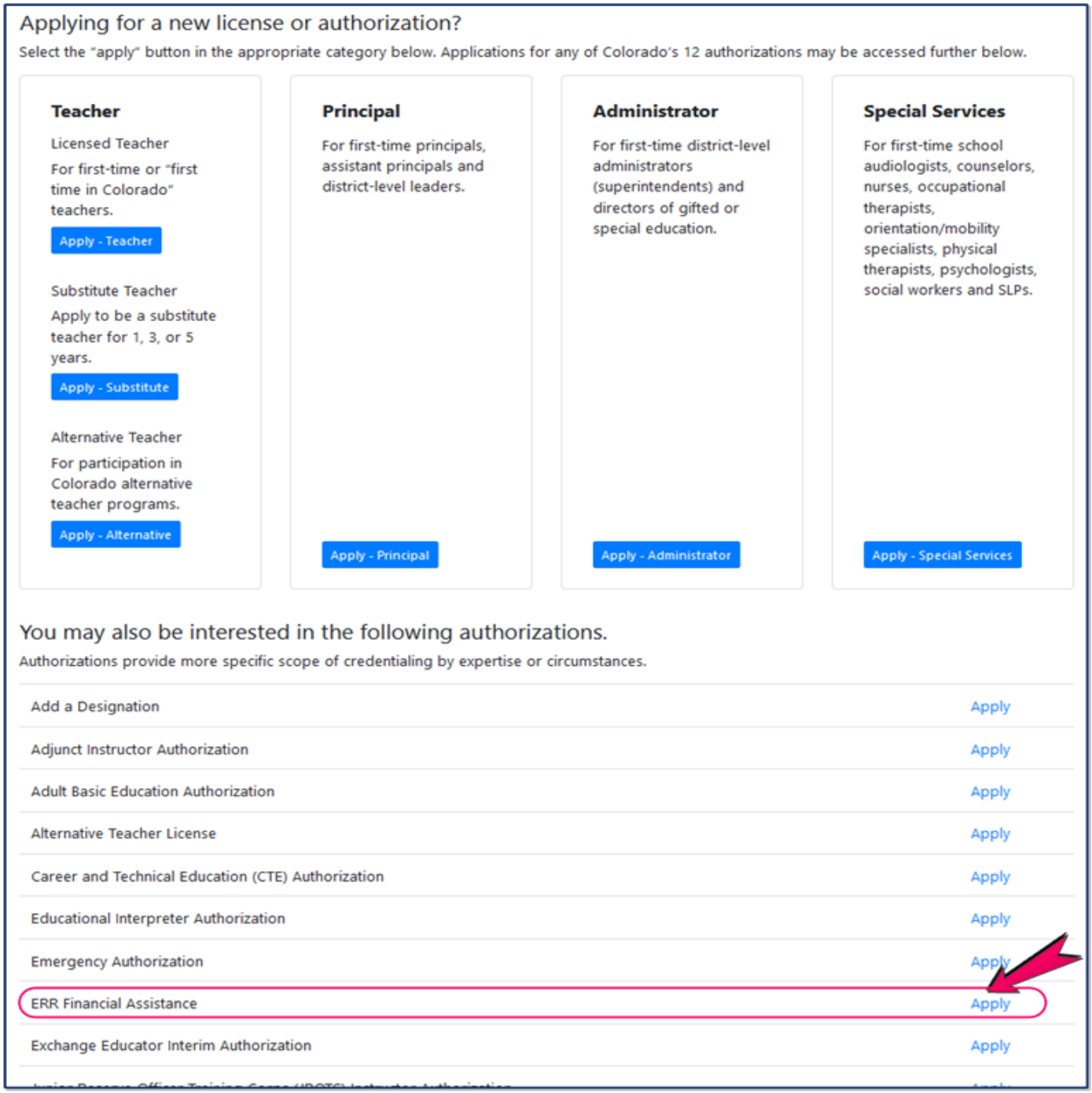
The application is accessed in the COOL system. You must have a COOL account to access the application. If you have not yet created a COOL account, click here for registration instructions. Once you have registered your COOL account, log in to access the application. Once logged in, click "Apply for License" from the Dashboard. Scroll down to the list of applications and click "Apply" next to ERR Financial Assistance application.

Eligibility

To be eligible for financial assistance, applicants must be enrolled in a Colorado approved educator preparation program (EPP) and meet one of the following criteria:

- Earned bachelor's degree and secured employment as an alternative teacher or TEE educator
- Currently employed as a paraprofessional
- Secured employment as a CTE instructor


Dashboard
My Profile
John Doe
Email:
Phone:
Most Recent Credentials
Apply for License
You do not have any active credentials.


Applying for a new license or authorization?
Select the "apply" button in the appropriate category below. Applications for any of Colorado's 12 authorizations may be accessed further below.
Teacher
Licensed Teacher
For first-time or "first time in Colorado" teachers.
Apply - Teacher
Substitute Teacher
Apply to be a substitute teacher for 1, 3, or 5 years.
Apply - Substitute
Alternative Teacher
For participation in Colorado alternative teacher programs.
Apply - Alternative
Principal
For first-time principals, assistant principals and district-level leaders.
Apply - Principal
Administrator
For first-time district-level administrators (superintendents) and directors of gifted or special education.
Apply - Administrator
Special Services
For first-time school audiologists, counselors, nurses, occupational therapists, orientation/mobility specialists, physical therapists, psychologists, social workers and SLPs.
Apply - Special Services
You may also be interested in the following authorizations.
Authorizations provide more specific scope of credentialing by expertise or circumstances.
Add a Designation Apply
Adjunct Instructor Authorization Apply
Adult Basic Education Authorization Apply
Alternative Teacher License Apply
Career and Technical Education (CTE) Authorization Apply
Educational Interpreter Authorization Apply
Emergency Authorization Apply
ERR Financial Assistance Apply
Exchange Educator Interim Authorization Apply

Documentation and Information You Will Need

1. Verification of enrollment in a Colorado approved educator preparation program*
2. Verification of relevant employment*
3. Completed Program Cost Demonstration Form
4. Contact person at your preparation program and district (this is who should be notified of your award)

*These items can be satisfied through the SOA for alternative licensed teachers, TEE verification form for TEE authorized educators or the ERR paraprofessional form.

****Please pay close attention to each question. CDE cannot edit any of your responses after you submit your application. Some errors will require submission of a new application.****

What to Expect After Submitting Your Application

CDE will review and respond to your application as soon as possible – the goal is within 45 days, although this is not always the case. If additional information is needed, you will receive an email from the COOL system notifying you to log in and view/respond to the request. You will receive an automated message from the COOL system when your application is approved. Once the application window has closed, you will receive an email from educator_recruitment@cde.state.co.us confirming the amount of your award (this email typically comes through in September for Window 1 applicants).

After the application window closes, CDE will send a Grant Award Letter (GAL) to the corresponding educator preparation program with a list of awardees from that window and instructions for invoicing CDE for payment. It can take 8-12 weeks after the application window closes for all payments to arrive. Status updates will be posted on the website regularly.