



# The Senior Teacher Exemption

# FAQ



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## What is the Senior Teacher Exemption?

Maryland teacher certification regulations contain a section often referred to as the *senior teacher exemption*.<sup>\*</sup> The regulation permits the current local superintendent to request a waiver of the certificate renewal requirements for certificated employees with 25 years of public school service or approved non-public service, or who are 55 years of age or older. Requests for exemption are ultimately approved by the State Superintendent of Schools.

This exemption allows the certificated employee to continue to hold the certificate that was previously issued. It does not allow the employee to move to a higher-level certificate [ex. Standard Professional Certificate (SPC) to Advanced Professional Certificate (APC)].

Employees who qualify for the exemption do not need to take any action toward the renewal of their certificate. The Division of Human Resources will verify the employee's status before renewing the certificate. Human Resources will not "look for" course work or a *Professional Development Plan* for eligible certificate holders. Certificate holders who are eligible for the exemption but elect to take the course work and write a *Professional Development Plan* are welcome to do so. That information will be maintained in the em-

ployee's record and submitted to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Employees under this exemption will still be responsible for the certificate processing fee charged by MSDE.

**Please be advised that support for the exemption is at the sole discretion of the current local superintendent.** Future superintendents may choose not to support the exemption at their sole discretion. In addition, the senior teacher exemption is provided for by state regulations and therefore may be revised by the state at any time. Any change to state regulations may affect the ability of the local superintendent to continue this practice.

Finally, this exemption applies as long as the individual remains employed with Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) or with another Maryland school system invoking the exemption. At the time of retirement, resignation, or dismissal from AACPS employment, the exemption ceases to apply and individuals are responsible for meeting renewal requirements to maintain their certification. As a means of further clarification, this pamphlet has been prepared for use by Anne Arundel County Public Schools certificated staff to understand the qualifications for the senior exemption.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

### **1. Must I be both 55 years of age or older and have 25 years or more of teaching experience?**

No. You qualify for the senior exemption if you satisfy either of the requirements.

### **2. Is a certificate issued under the exemption the same as a certificate issued without the exemption?**

A certificate issued under the senior teacher exemption is exactly the same as a certificate issued with course work and a Professional Development Plan.

### **3. What happens to my certificate if the exemption is revoked?**

A certificate issued under the senior teacher exemption is a regular Maryland teaching certificate and remains valid for the life of the certificate even if the exemption is revoked.

### **4. What is meant by teaching experience?**

Teaching experience is defined as verified teaching, administrative, or resource experience in a birth through grade 12 public or accredited non-public school system. This experience may be in Maryland or out of state. All non-AACPS experience must be verified.

### **5. Are administrators, resource teachers, and other non-classroom certified personnel eligible for the senior teacher exemption?**

Yes. Years of verified service as an assistant principal, principal, Central Office personnel, or resource teacher in a public or an accredited non-public school system are acceptable toward experience requirement for the senior teacher exemption.

### **6. What teaching experience or related experience does not count?**

College/university teaching experience, military experience, substituting, tutoring, home and hospital teaching, or other related life experience is not included.

### **7. I am “on loan” to the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE). Am I eligible for the senior teacher exemption and will my experience at MSDE count?**

Yes. You are eligible and your experience at MSDE will count toward the experience requirement.

### **8. By what date must I be 55 years old or have earned 25 years of experience?**

You must qualify for the senior exemption on the expiration date shown on your certificate.

### **9. Are retired teachers eligible for the senior exemption?**

No, you are not eligible for the senior teacher exemption if you are not employed by a local school system. You must contact the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) to renew your certificate. Six semester credits must be earned during each five-year certificate renewal cycle and must be submitted to MSDE at the time of renewal.

### **10. Is my teaching experience for senior exemption purposes always the same as my experience for retirement purposes?**

No, the years of experience for senior teacher exemption may not match retirement credit.

**11. Will my years of experience on the salary scale match my years of experience toward senior exemption?**

Experience on the salary scale may not match the years of experience required for senior teacher exemption. Some certificated personnel may have received experience credit on the salary scale for other experience that does not apply to the senior teacher exemption (ex. military).

**12. What if I transfer to another county in Maryland?**

All counties in Maryland do not invoke the senior exemption. It is your responsibility to contact the certification office in that county to inquire about its use of the senior teacher exemption.

**13. I hold a Standard Professional Certificate (SPC). Does the senior teacher exemption apply to me?**

Yes, but you cannot move to an Advanced Professional Certificate (APC) unless you have met the requirements for the APC.

**14. If I hold a Conditional Certificate, am I eligible for the senior teacher exemption?**

No, you must hold an SPC or APC to be eligible for the senior exemption.

**15. I was notified that I needed to complete reading credits for the renewal of my certificate. If I qualify for the senior exemption, do I still need to complete the reading credits?**

No, but refer to question 16.

**16. How long will the senior teacher exemption be in effect?**

In the event a future superintendent revokes the senior exemption or MSDE repeals the senior teacher exemption from Maryland teacher certification regulations, then all AACPS certificated staff, regardless of age or years of experience, will be held for the certificate renewal requirements in place at that time. "Grandfathering" is not applicable.

**For More Information...**

**Since the decision of future superintendents is not known, please use caution when deciding to base your renewal requirements on the senior exemption status.**

If you have specific questions regarding your eligibility for the exemption, contact your designated *Certification Specialist*.

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**Please note:**

If you are not a current, contracted AACPS teacher or administrator, you must contact MSDE directly for certification services at 1.410.767.0412 or toll-free at 1.866.772.8922 or at [www.mdcert.org](http://www.mdcert.org)