

Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC)

Teacher Qualifications and Impact on Educator Practicums

Extended Waiver Guidance for Academic Year 2020-2021

This guidance is for students completing practicums for college credit as a part of a degree program through an accredited College or University, as a part of a Chapter 74, Non Chapter 74, EEC High School Approved Early Education Program, and the Jump Start Corps Program.

EEC understands how child care program, high school, college/university closures due to COVID-19 have impacted students and educators who were in the process of completing the required practicum hours to fulfill the EEC practicum requirements. In addition, child care programs will continue to have limited staffing capacities upon reopening. Student teachers and practicum students can be utilized in programs or the count as interns/non-essential employees as long as a student teacher, practicum student, or other student intern is assigned to a single classroom and does not float from classroom to classroom to observe or support.

EEC is extending the waiver for [606 CMR 7.09\(18\)\(a\)\(2\), Practicum](#) in conjunction with [Childcare Provider Reopening Preparedness Order](#) dated, June 1, 2020. Educators must meet the criteria set forth below. This policy waiver only addresses the required work experience educators need to meet EEC certification requirements. Educators must still meet all of the educational course requirements in order to meet the criteria set forth below. *Waivers will not be considered for those who completed less than 50% of the required practicum hours.*

COVID-19 Policy Waiver for EEC Practicum Requirements:

- Category 1: *Educators who complete at least 50% (75 hours) to meet our practicum requirements and receive a recommendation from their College Advisor or Program Director from the Chapter 74/EEC Approved High School will be given a waiver for the remaining 50% of their hour requirements.*
 - Educators completing practicums through a college/university degree program will be required to complete the [Professional Certification Application Packet For Covid-19 Waiver](#). Additional waivers for ECE College/University degree programs include:
 - Reducing the current required 8 weeks for practicum to 7 weeks.
 - Reduce the number of required faculty on-site visits per practicum from 3 to 2.
 - Supervisions can also be completed virtually.
 - Substitution of in person practicums with the following:
 - Virtual Practicum with a participating EEC licensed or public school programs(up to Kindergarten);
 - Supervision is required by EEC Certified Lead Teacher or Licensed Public School Teacher.
 - 6 Credits (Two course) of Practicum coursework that provide experiential learning.
 - Digital Practicum Portfolios (Alternative Practicums Option)
 - Through video reflections on past field experience work.
 - Recording themselves implementing curriculum with or without children.

- Other alternative practicum methods as acceptable by EEC. Colleges must submit these alternative plans to Alicia.wells@mass.gov.
- Educators completing practicum requirements through a Chapter 74/EEC Approved High School Early Education program must complete the [Professional Qualification Certification Chapter 74 Vocational and EEC Approved High School Program Application](#) and have the Program Director submit the following to EEC:
 - A letter on the school's letterhead indicating the total number of practicum hours completed, the age group the student completed the practicum hours with, the type of practicum completed, and a clearly stated recommendation for EEC certification that the student met the competency requirements to obtain EEC Certification.
 - In person Practicum waiver alternatives for Chapter 74/EEC Approved High School Early Education program students:
 - Virtual Practicum with a participating EEC licensed or public school programs(up to Kindergarten);
 - Supervision is required by EEC Certified Lead Teacher or Licensed Public School Teacher.
 - 6 Credits (Two course) of Practicum coursework that provide experiential learning.
 - Digital Practicum Portfolios (Alternative Practicums Option)
 - Through video reflections on past field experience work.
 - Recording themselves implementing curriculum with or without children.
 - Other alternative practicum methods as acceptable by EEC. Schools must submit these alternative plans to Alicia.wells@mass.gov.
- *Category 2: Educators who complete at least 50% (75 hours) to meet our practicum requirements but does not receive recommendation from their College Advisor or Program Director from the high school will not be given a waiver. Time spent at a child care program will be considered General Work Experience.*
 - Educators who do not meet the requirements of a practicum through a College/University degree program will be required to complete the [EEC General Work Experience form](#) signed by the EEC Certified Lead Teacher or Director.
 - Educators who do not meet the requirements of a practicum through a Chapter 74/EEC Approved High School Early Education program, submit the following to EEC:
 - A letter on the school's letterhead indicating the total number of practicum hours completed, the age group the student completed the practicum hours with, and a clearly stated recommendation for EEC certification that the student met the competency requirements to obtain EEC Certification. The student must complete the remaining hours and submit all of the required documents with a completed [EEC General Work Experience form](#), signed by the supervisor of the

EEC Licensed program where the work experience is gained.

- ***Category 3: Jump Start Corps Member who complete at least 50% (150 hours) to meet our practicum requirements and receives a recommendation from their Program Director will be given a waiver for the remaining 50% of their hour requirements.***
 - Educators completing practicums through Jump Start program will be required to complete the [Professional Certification Application Packet For Covid-19 Waiver](#).
 - In-person practicum time can be substituted with the following:
 - Virtual, on-line programming with a participating EEC licensed or public school programs (up to Kindergarten)
 - Recording themselves implementing curriculum without children
 - Participation in credit-bearing experiential or service learning classes which include reflection on practicum programming with children
 - Video reflections on past field experience work
 - Other alternative practicum methods as acceptable by EEC. Applicants must submit these alternative plans to Alicia.Wells@mass.gov.

Educators who fall into the above categories must follow the process outlined above. If an Educator is unable to complete practicums due to limitations and accessibility of child care programs, College Advisors and equivalent must submit a request for a variance to Alicia Siryon-Wells, Associate Commissioner for Audits and Teacher Qualifications, Alicia.wells@mass.gov or 617-981-0343.

All other questions related to the **COVID-19 Policy Waiver for EEC Practicum Requirements** may be submitted to the EEC Teacher Qualifications Unit at eecprofdev@mass.gov.