



Requirements for the Visually Impaired, Birth – Grade 12 Endorsement

Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit

General Information

The Visually Impaired endorsement may be added to a prerequisite Standard Professional teaching certificate to authorize the holder to teach students who are blind or visually impaired in birth-grade 12.

Requirements for the Visually Impaired endorsement are referenced in Arizona Administrative Code R7-2-615(E) Visually Impaired Endorsement and R7-2-621 Reciprocity. Certification rules are published on the Arizona Board of Education website at <https://azsbe.az.gov/rules>.

Administrative Requirement Checklist

The following items must be submitted for the ADE Certification Unit to complete a substantive review of your application. Fees are non-refundable.

- Prerequisite Certificate.** You hold a valid Arizona Standard Professional Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Grades, Secondary, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Moderate/Severe Disabilities, Early Childhood Special Education, Specialized Special Education, Cross-Categorical Special Education, or Hearing Impaired teaching certificate.
- Application & Fee.** A completed online or paper [Application for Certification](#) and the appropriate fee.
- IVP Fingerprint Card.** A photocopy of your valid [Arizona Department of Public Safety](#) Identity Verified Prints (IVP) fingerprint card, (not the paper copy of your prints).

➤ **Out-of-State Certificate holders.** If you hold a valid, comparable Visually Impaired certificate or endorsement from another state, submit a photocopy of the certificate with the above items. The additional documents listed below are not required for applicants who qualify under Certification Reciprocity rules.

- Teaching Experience.** Verification of three years of full-time teaching experience. Please forward the [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form to your school/district human resources office with a request to verify your experience.
- Official transcript(s).** Official transcripts documenting the required coursework. Electronic official transcript must be sent directly by the college or university to certification@azed.gov. Paper official transcripts must be original and mailed to Arizona Department of Education – Certification Unit, P.O. Box 6490, Phoenix, AZ 85005.
- Verification Letter.** A letter from a college or university department chair or designee verifying completion of 90 clock hours of practicum in a visually impaired classroom.
- Braille Competency.** An official score report or letter documenting a passing score on Board-approved Braille exam or the Braille exam administer by the University of Arizona.
- Name Change Information (If applicable).** If the name on your official transcript does not match your current name, please scan and upload or provide a photocopy of legal documentation of your name change (e.g., marriage certificate, court record).



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Requirements for the Visually Impaired Endorsement

1. **Application.** Completed Application for Certification and appropriate fee
2. **AZDPS IVP Card.** A photocopy of your valid Arizona Department of Public Safety Identity Verified Prints (IVP) fingerprint clearance card.
3. **Prerequisite Certificate.** A valid Arizona Standard Professional Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle Grades, Secondary, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, Moderate/Severe Disabilities, Early Childhood Special Education, Specialized Special Education, Cross-Categorical Special Education, or Hearing Impaired teaching certificate.

**** Out-of-State Certificate Holders.** If you hold a valid, comparable out-of-state Visually Impaired certificate or endorsement in another state, submit a photocopy of the certificate. Applicants who hold a comparable out-of-state certificate or endorsement from another state and who are in good standing with that other state are not required to meet the requirements listed in 4, 5, 6, 7, or 8.

4. **Teaching Experience.** Verification of three years full-time teaching experience. Please forward the [Verification of Teaching Experience](#) form to your school/district human resources office with a request to verify your experience.
5. **Special Education Courses.** Official transcripts documenting six (6) semester hours of special education courses to include all of the following:
 - a. Special education law and individualized education program planning;
 - b. Behavior management for students with disabilities;
 - c. The use of instructional and assistive technologies in the classroom.
6. **Visually Impaired Courses.** Fifteen semester hours of courses in visually impaired special education to that adhere to a guidance document approved by the Board and include all of the following:
 - a. Instructional approaches for teaching students who have vision impairments;
 - b. Methods for facilitating literacy development in children who are blind or low vision;
 - c. Assistive technologies for students with vision impairments;
 - d. Assessment of students with vision impairment;
 - e. Early intervention and parental involvement to enhance early skills of students with vision impairment;
 - f. Anatomy and physiology of the eye, to include causes and educational implications of visual impairments;
 - g. Methods for teaching basic concepts and related travel orientation and mobility to students who have visual impairments.
 - h. Methods for teaching students who have visual impairments with multiple disabilities, including deaf-blindness.
7. **Practicum.** Completion of a minimum of 90 clock hours of supervised practicum in teaching students who have visual impairments, which may be included in the courses listed under Requirement # 6.
8. **Braille.** Proficiency in Braille verified by one of the following:
 - a. An official score report documenting successful completion of a nationally validated braille test approved by the Board; or



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- b. A letter verifying successful completion of a braille test developed in the program in visual impairment at the University of Arizona.

Board-approved Guidance for Visually Impaired Education Courses

The outline below was approved by the Arizona Board of Education to provide the content that should be included in the visually impaired education courses described in Requirement # 6.

- A. Instructional approaches for teaching students who have vision impairments. This requirement includes approaches that are appropriate for specific eye conditions and individual needs, based on individualized education program planning.
- B. Methods for facilitating literacy development in children who are blind or low vision. This requirement includes:
 1. Instructional methods of braille;
 2. The use of optical and non-optical devices;
 3. The use of electronic text.
- C. Assistive technologies for students with vision impairments.
- D. Assessment of students with vision impairments. This requirement includes assessment instruments and interpretation of assessment data.
- E. Early intervention and parental involvement to enhance early skills of for students with vision impairment;
- F. Anatomy and physiology of the eye. This requirement includes causes and educational implications of visual impairments.
- G. Methods for teaching orientation and mobility to students who have visual impairments. This requirement includes methods for teaching basic concepts and related travel orientation and mobility to students who have visual impairments.
- H. Methods for teaching students who have visual impairments with multiple disabilities, including deaf-blindness.