



This document applies to secondary local education agencies (“LEAs”) that receive funding through the CTE State Priority grant.

To be eligible for CTE State Priority grant, CTE programs must meet three criteria: 1) be taught by an appropriately certified teacher, 2) have at least once concentrator by the fourth year since the program’s inception, and 3) have at least one concentrator placement by the fourth year since the program’s inception. If any of these three criteria are not met, LEAs may submit an “exemption request” to waive one of these requirements for a single year.

An exemption request is a formal procedure to request, for one year, an exemption for one or more of the essential program requirements for an approved CTE program. Any program requesting an exemption must provide evidence-based information to support the exemption request. Evidence can include, but are not limited to, historical program outcomes or additional information showing the missing program requirements has been or will be corrected or resolved.

### **When may an exemption request be submitted?**

An exemption request may be submitted when the LEA’s reported data indicates that one or more of the funding requirements are not met. Exemption requests may not be submitted preemptively; the condition for which the exemption will be required must exist before the request can be submitted. The exemption request may be submitted at any point during the enrollment reporting timeframe as soon as the exemption condition exists in the data. Please see the CTE Data Portal reporting calendar or Important Dates & Deadlines to see the enrollment reporting timeframe. No exemption may be submitted after the enrollment reporting timeframe has ended.

### **How are exemption requests submitted?**

Exemption requests are submitted electronically in the CTE Data Portal. Once logged into the system, click on “Exemptions” in the main menu bar. Click on “Create New Request” to begin the request process. Complete the exemption request form; each form field will contain only the programs/courses/teachers for which a request may be submitted. Be sure to provide justification and any evidence required.

Once the form is submitted, you will receive a confirmation email that the request was submitted to the Department. A CTE Accountability Specialist will review your request and either approve it or request more information. In some cases, a request may be rejected if not needed or if not permitted. If more information is requested, you will receive an email requesting additional information be entered and/or attached to the request in the CTE Data Portal – provide the additional information and resubmit the request. If approved, you will receive an email – verify that your courses are now exempted and eligible for funding by viewing the “exemption status” in the course enrollment record.

## **TYPES OF EXEMPTIONS**

### **Exemptions for Teacher Certifications**

All CTE programs must be taught by an appropriately certified teacher. If a teacher is not appropriately certified to teach the program, the courses taught by that teacher will not be considered eligible for funding until an exemption request is submitted and approved. Teachers of cooperative education and diversified cooperative education courses must be appropriately certified teacher and possess the cooperative education (CEN) endorsement. LEAs should not rely on the exemption request to secure CTE State Priority grant funding; all

teachers must be appropriately certified as a condition of Perkins V funding and as a requirement to be an approved CTE program.

See the CTE programs website for proper certifications by program: [www.azed.gov/cte/programs](http://www.azed.gov/cte/programs) or view a single list here: [www.azed.gov/cte/data](http://www.azed.gov/cte/data) (under Additional Resources).

Teachers must have the proper CTE certification and, if necessary, proper CEN endorsement by May 1st of the school year to be considered appropriately certified to teach the CTE program. Certifications that will expire on or before May 1st of the school year will not be considered an appropriate certification and must be renewed or exempted for the teacher's courses to be considered eligible for funding.

LEAs can use the "Improper Teacher Certification Report" in the CTE Data Portal to view which courses are taught by improperly certified teachers, including those taught by teachers whose appropriate certification will expire before May 1st of the school year or whose certification has already expired.

Teachers for courses taught at community colleges (including CTED courses at a community college) are not evaluated for proper certification as the Department does not certify postsecondary instructors.

An approved teacher certification exemptions will exempt all courses taught by the teacher in the program requested. Only one request may be submitted per teacher.

### **Exemptions for Program Concentrators/Placements**

Every CTE program must have at least one concentrator and at least one recorded placement (recorded via the Placement Survey) within four years of the program's start year. In other words, there is a four-year grace period after which the program must have at least one concentrator and at least placement in the program's history for the program to be considered eligible for funding. Concentrators and/or placements are not required in each year; only one concentrator and one placement is required since the program started. If a program goes inactive (no enrollment for two consecutive years), four-year grace period for concentrators and placement starts over.

"Program" here means each individual CTE program at an individual school. If a district has multiple schools that offer the same CTE program, each school must have a concentrator and placement after the four-year grace period has elapsed.

### **FIVE-YEAR ROLLING PERIOD FOR SUBMITTING EXEMPTION REQUESTS**

Only one teacher certification exemption request per district per teacher may be submitted/approved in a rolling five-year period. In other words, if a teacher with an approved exemption request moves schools within the district, no second exemption can be approved until the five-year period has elapsed regardless of program taught. However, if the teacher moves to another district, a second exemption can be approved at the new district.

Only one program concentrators/placements exemption request per district per program may be submitted/approved in a rolling five-year period. However, if a program goes inactive (no enrollment reported for two consecutive years) and is restarted in a subsequent year, the program may be considered new for that school.

### **EXEMPTION REQUEST APPROVAL CRITERIA**

Exemption requests are approved on a case-by-case basis based on the school's specific circumstances that warranted the request. ADE will make every effort to approve requests, but some requests may be rejected if:

- The request is not needed or will make no impact on the school's funding, or
- The school has already submitted multiple requests for the program in a multi-year period, or
- Other extenuating circumstances exist that warrant the request being rejected.