

Checklists for Reviewing Teacher Assistant (TA) Qualifications

Overview:

The following checklists reflect federal and state requirements for pre-employment qualifications for instructional teacher assistants, non-instructional teacher assistants and other paraprofessionals. Employers of teacher assistants or prospective teacher assistants can use these checklists to evaluate the extent to which individuals meet these requirements. These checklists are based on state legal minimums for requirements for individuals to be employed as teacher assistants. School districts and related educational programs (e.g., Collaboratives, Charter Schools, State Operated Programs and Private Schools for Children with Disabilities) can have requirements that are above state minimums (as some do)...but not below these state minimums.

The 3 Teacher Assistant Qualifications Checklists that follow include:

1. Instructional Teacher Assistants Qualifications Checklist
2. Non-Instructional Teacher Assistants Qualifications Checklist
3. Other Paraprofessionals Qualifications Checklist

In addition, the final part of this document presents a Checklist For Reviewing Coursework Related to RIDE Standards for Teacher Assistants. This checklist may be relevant to both Instructional Teacher Assistants and Non-Instructional Teacher Assistants depending on their qualifications.

Instructional Teacher Assistants Qualifications Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____

Instructional Teacher Assistants - An instructional TA is someone (no matter the job title) who provides instructional or other direct services related to the school's curriculum to students (and/or their parents/legal guardian) under the supervision and direction of the classroom teacher or other appropriately certified professional staff. This includes those who (1) provide one-on-one instructional reinforcement (referred to as "tutoring" in Title I programs) if such is scheduled at a time when a student would not otherwise receive instruction from a teacher, (2) assist with classroom management, such as by organizing instructional materials, (3) provide instructional assistance in a computer laboratory, (4) provide instructional support in a library or media center, (5) provide instructional assistance along with acting as a translator, or (6) provide instructional support services under the direct supervision of a highly qualified teacher. Because TAs provide instructional support, they should not be providing planned direct instruction, or introducing to students new skills, concepts, or academic content.

Requirements for Instructional Teacher Assistant Qualifications and Timelines for Meeting - Your employer needs documentation you meet requirements.	Check requirements you meet.
Qualification # 1 - Be of good character	___ Yes ___ No
Qualification # 2 - High school diploma OR general equivalency	___ High School Diploma OR ___ GED
<p>Qualification # 3 - Completion of a TA Training Program approved by the RI Department of Education (RIDE) IF you were hired AFTER Jan. 1, 1999. Three (3) exceptions to this particular qualification:</p> <p>(1) TAs hired before Jan. 1, 1999 <u>OR</u></p> <p>(2) TAs with certification as a TA in another state, <u>OR</u></p> <p>(3) TAs with an associate's degree or bachelor's degree and who have completed coursework or other training that covers the knowledge and skills needed for entry level instructional TAs as articulated in RIDE TA Standards. <i>The law does not specify that the degree has to be in education or a related field...BUT training needs to have covered the RIDE TA Standards content re: TA knowledge and skills. (See attached)</i></p> <p><u>NOTE:</u> The TA Website at www.ritap.org/ta has a Directory of RIDE Approved TA Training Programs on the Training Opportunities webpage: go to Pre-Employment Training Programs. The directory identifies both currently approved training programs and formerly approved training programs no longer in operation. The directory has the initial approval date and approval expiration date so that employers can verify if a TA's documentation of pre-employment training is from a RIDE approved program and if that training took place during a time in which the program was approved.</p>	<p>___ Hired before Jan. 1, 1999 <u>OR</u></p> <p>IF hired AFTER Jan. 1, 1999:</p> <p>___ Completion of RIDE Approved TA Training Program <u>OR</u></p> <p>___ Certified as TA in another state <u>OR</u></p> <p>___ Hold associate's or bachelor's degree and coursework or training that covers knowledge and skills articulated in RIDE TA Standards</p>
<p>Qualification # 4 - <u>One</u> of the following 3 requirements:</p> <p>(1) Completed at least 2 years of study at an institution of higher education. <i>The law does not specify that the coursework has to be in education or a related field. School districts or other education agencies have discretion to have requirements related to type of coursework.</i> <u>OR</u></p> <p>(2) Obtained an associate's or higher degree. <i>School districts or other education agencies have discretion to have requirements related to type of degree.</i> <u>OR</u></p> <p>(3) Met a rigorous standard of quality and can demonstrate, through a formal State or local academic assessment: knowledge and ability to assist in instructing, reading, writing, and mathematics; OR reading, writing, and mathematics readiness. (The ParaPro is the state recognized assessment.)</p>	<p>___ Completed at least 2 years of study at an institution of higher education <u>OR</u></p> <p>___ Obtained an associate's or higher degree <u>OR</u></p> <p>___ Academic assessment (The ParaPro is the state recognized assessment - passing score is 461 in RI.)</p>

Non-Instructional Teacher Assistants Qualifications Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____

Non-Instructional Teacher Assistants - Employed primarily as translators, solely involved in parental involvement activities, solely in non-instructional roles, e.g., cafeteria and playground supervision, personal care services, non-instructional computer assistance or other non-instructional direct services to students (and/or their parents/legal guardian) under the supervision and direction of the classroom teacher or other appropriately certified professional staff. Non-Instructional TAs do NOT include: (1) Bus monitors, because they do not work under the supervision and direction of the classroom teacher or other appropriately certified professional staff and (2) Persons whose role is solely clerical and does not include direct non-instructional services to students.

<u>Requirements for Non-Instructional Teacher Assistant Qualifications That Must Be Met NOW/Upon Employment - Your employer needs documentation you meet requirements.</u>	Check requirements you meet.
Qualification # 1 - Be of good character	Yes ___ No ___
Qualification # 2 - High school diploma OR general equivalency	___ High School Diploma OR ___ GED
<p>Qualification # 3 - Successful completion of a TA Training Program approved by the RI Department of Education (RIDE) IF you were hired AFTER Jan. 1, 1999. Three (3) exceptions to this particular qualification:</p> <p>(1) TAs hired before Jan. 1, 1999 <u>OR</u></p> <p>(2) TAs with certification as a TA in another state, <u>OR</u></p> <p>(3) TAs with an associate's degree or bachelor's degree and who have completed coursework or other training that covers the knowledge and skills needed for entry level instructional TAs as articulated in RIDE TA Standards. <i>The law does not specify that the degree has to be in education or a related field...BUT training needs to have covered the RIDE TA Standards content re: TA knowledge and skills. (See attached)</i></p> <p><u>NOTE:</u> The TA Website at www.ritap.org/ta has a Directory of RIDE Approved TA Training Programs on the Training Opportunities webpage: go to Pre-Employment Training Programs. The directory identifies both currently approved training programs and formerly approved training programs no longer in operation. The directory has the initial approval date and approval expiration date so that employers can verify if a TA's documentation of pre-employment training is from a RIDE approved program and if that training took place during a time in which the program was approved.</p>	<p>___ Hired before Jan. 1, 1999 <u>OR</u></p> <p>IF hired AFTER Jan. 1, 1999:</p> <p>___ Completion of RIDE Approved TA Training Program <u>OR</u></p> <p>___ Certified as TA in another state <u>OR</u></p> <p>___ Hold associate's or bachelor's degree and coursework or training that covers knowledge and skills articulated in RIDE TA Standards</p>
Qualification # 4 - Individuals serving as translators to enhance the participation of limited English proficient students must be proficient in English and a language other than English.	___ Proficient in English and a language other than English (if serving as translator)

Other Paraprofessionals Qualifications Checklist

Name: _____ Date: _____

Other Paraprofessionals – RIDE recognizes qualifications established by other state agencies for paraprofessionals other than TAs. The TA website at <http://www.ritap.org/ta> has a link to the RI Department of Health (DOH) website to access qualifications and related requirements for:

1. Nursing assistant,
2. Occupational therapy (OT) assistant,
3. OT aide,
4. Physical therapy (PT) assistant, and
5. Speech language support personnel.

The TA website has a link to the Dept. of Human Services (DHS) website at <http://www.dhs.state.ri.us/> to the Medicaid Direct Services Guidebook for Local Education Agencies that addresses: (1) PT including services provided by a PT assistant under the supervision of a licensed PT, (2) OT including services provided by a certified OT assistant (COTA) under the supervision of a licensed OT, and (3) Speech and Language Pathology including Individual Speech Hearing and Language Program and Speech Hearing and Language Program/Group (small group) therapy that may be provided by an appropriately credentialed paraprofessional working under the supervision of a Speech-Language Pathologist certified by RIDE or a Speech-Language Pathologist licensed by the DOH.

Checklist For Reviewing Coursework Related to RIDE Standards for Teacher Assistants

RI state law requires that persons employed as teacher assistants meet a number of qualifications. One of these qualifications is that all instructional and non-instructional teacher assistants employed after January 1, 1999 meet as a pre-employment qualification completion of a Teacher Assistant Training Program approved by the RI Department of Education (RIDE) as meeting RIDE Standards. RIDE standards and indicators identify the knowledge and skills that must be covered in a RIDE approved Teacher Assistant Training Program.

One exception to completing a RIDE approved Teacher Assistant Training Program is for those who hold an associate's degree or bachelor's degree and have completed coursework or other training that covers the knowledge and skills needed for entry level instructional TAs as listed in RIDE TA Standards below. One option for persons in this situation is to review each of the standards and indicators below and document the coursework or training through which the knowledge or skill was acquired.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Standards and Indicators	Coursework or training through which the knowledge or skill was acquired
Standard 1. <i>Teacher assistants demonstrate a level of professionalism in communication and collaboration among members of the school community, including colleagues, families, and related agencies.</i>	
1.1 exhibit an understanding of the differentiated staffing patterns that exist in the learning environment and the distinctions among the roles and responsibilities of professional and paraprofessional personnel.	
1.2 demonstrate an understanding of school policies and procedures.	
1.3 exhibit attributes of reliable attendance, promptness, and dependability.	
1.4 use a cooperative approach.	
1.5 respect confidentiality and other professional ethics.	
1.6 exhibit sensitivity and understanding of individual and cultural differences.	
1.7 provide an appropriate role model for children in areas of dress, language, and behavior.	
1.8 use effective communication skills (spoken, written and non-verbal): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to plan with team members • to review student needs and concerns • to report student performance 	
1.9 select and use the appropriate channels for resolving concerns.	
1.10 demonstrate a knowledge of the legal and human rights of children and youth and their families.	
1.11 demonstrate an awareness of standards-based education reform in RI	

Standards and Indicators	Coursework or training through which the knowledge or skill was acquired
Standard 2. Teacher assistants support teachers by participating in instructional opportunities.	
2.1 use appropriate strategies and techniques developed by teachers and other professional staff to support individual students' needs.	
2.2 use age and developmentally appropriate instructional procedures and reinforcement techniques.	
2.3 assist the teacher in planning, modification, and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment.	
2.4 gather and maintain data about the performance and behavior of individual students.	
2.5 demonstrate awareness of basic educational technology.	
2.6 demonstrate an understanding of and respect for cultural diversity.	
2.7 assist the teacher in providing instruction in reading, writing and mathematics or reading readiness, writing readiness, and mathematics readiness	
Standard 3. Teacher assistants support a learning environment that encourages appropriate standards of behavior, positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.	
3.1 follow discipline guidelines in accordance with school policy and legal requirements.	
3.2 implement positive behavioral supports.	
3.3 maintain and monitor compliance with classroom rules, procedures and behavior standards.	
3.4 serve as an appropriate behavior role model.	
3.5 motivate and assist students in acquiring interpersonal skills, increased self-esteem, and independence.	
Standard 4. Teacher assistants exhibit knowledge of health, safety, and emergency procedures of the learning environment.	
4.1 demonstrate knowledge of universal health care precautions.	
4.2 demonstrate knowledge of lifting techniques.	
4.3 participate in sustaining a clean, healthy, and safe learning environment.	
4.4 recognize indicators of abuse (substance, physical, sexual, emotional) and demonstrate knowledge of Rhode Island reporting laws.	