

Guidance for Exempt School Districts

Employment and Registration of Non-Licensed Individuals as Educators

Superintendents of Ohio school districts that qualify for exempt status pursuant to [section 3302.151](#) of the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) may employ an individual who is not licensed as required by ORC 3319.22 to 3319.30, but who is otherwise qualified based on experience. The individual **must** submit a criminal records check to the Ohio Department of Education (“Department”) and register with the Department **annually** during the period in which the district employs the individual. At the time of registration with the Department, the individual must provide verification of his or her approval by the local school district board through a board resolution.

Please note conditions below for registration and employment of individuals who qualify.

- The employing Ohio school district must qualify for the exemptions described in ORC 3302.151 to employ an individual under this provision.
- Each year, the individual must complete a paper registration application and submit it to the Office of Educator Licensure. The registration application must include a copy of the board resolution approving the employment of this individual before the Office of Educator Licensure can process it.
- The employing district must provide mentoring and professional development opportunities to individuals employed under this section, as deemed necessary by the board.
- As a condition of employment under this section, [state law](#) (ORC 3319.39) requires that the individual complete a criminal records check and submit the results to the Department when he or she completes the registration application. Due to the confidential nature of criminal records checks, the Department does not have the authority to share related results with the employing school district. Unlike applications for licenses, certificates and permits, the Department does **not** have the legal authority to deny a registration based upon the applicant’s criminal history. Therefore, the Department strongly advises employing school districts to consider conducting its own review of the individual’s criminal background for any violations that would otherwise prohibit the school district from employing the individual pursuant to ORC 3319.39.
- It is the employing exempt school district’s sole responsibility to investigate any reported misconduct by non-licensed individuals because the Department’s Office of Professional Conduct only has the legal authority to investigate individuals who hold educator licenses, certificates or permits. Please see the [Educator Conduct FAQs](#) webpage for details regarding unemployable offenses and other information regarding best hiring practices.

You may direct any questions to educator.licensure@education.ohio.gov.