

Teacher Standards and Practices Commission



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Instructions For Answering Character Questions

1. You must read each question very carefully and provide either a “yes” or a “no” answer. When in doubt, answer “yes” and explain why you think the answer might be a “yes.” Each answer is carefully reviewed. If you do not need to answer “yes” on future applications, you will be notified.
2. If you answer “no” to all questions and your fingerprint report or your criminal background check reveals that you have not disclosed a conviction or a possible conviction, this will be considered a false statement and may result in an investigation. If you are asked to explain why you did not disclose, your answer will be reviewed to determine if it is reasonable in light of the facts. **A false statement on the application is grounds for denial or revocation of an Oregon Educator License.**
3. Explain your answers fully, in complete sentences. Typed answers are preferred; please do not write your answer on scrap paper. This is a professional application, and your responses are kept as part of your permanent licensure file. Do not minimize your explanations. Incomplete responses may be a basis for denying your application and will delay the processing of your licensure application. **Sign and date** your explanation.
4. An arrest can happen without “going to jail.” In Oregon and in many other states, arrests are not erased from your record. If you have recently been arrested and are scheduled to appear in court in the future, you must report this arrest and your scheduled court date.
5. Do not assume that a conviction or arrest has “gone away.” (This includes expungements and dismissals.) Even if you have been advised that your record has been expunged or dismissed, do not assume that this definitely happened. Instead, it is your responsibility to obtain the court documents that confirm final action.
6. If you answer “no” to questions 8, 9 or 10 based upon an arrest or conviction that was subsequently dismissed, expunged, set aside or sealed, you must personally verify with the court directly involved that the corresponding judgment was properly entered by the court. It is your responsibility to report incidents accurately. An erroneous statement, even upon advice of an attorney, that a conviction has been dismissed, expunged, set aside or sealed, may be deemed a false statement.
7. If you answer “yes” to questions 8, 9 or 10, **a certified true copy of the court’s final disposition, if available, must accompany the first application on which the events are being reported** in order for the application to be considered complete. Obtain copies of all court records of any conviction. If a court record is unavailable, you must get verification from the court that the record has been destroyed. (Even if records are destroyed, they may show up on a state or FBI report.)
8. If you give a false statement, it may be grounds for the state to deny your license or deny your right to be placed in a practicum and could possibly result in a permanent disciplinary record. Answering with “I forgot” or “I was told it would not be on my record” is not an acceptable answer.
9. Even if you think an incident was insignificant and therefore do not report it, this decision could permanently affect your ability to obtain an educator’s license in Oregon.
10. Serious events include but are not limited to:
 - a. Shoplifting
 - b. Criminal Trespass
 - c. Driving under the Influence (DUI)
 - d. Driving While Suspended
 - e. Domestic Restraining Order
 - f. Criminal Neglect
 - g. Any Drug Conviction
 - h. Assault conviction or judgment
 - i. Abuse conviction
 - j. Criminal conviction for misdemeanor and/or felony
11. Generally, your response to the character questions will be treated as confidential, unless the Attorney General determines that it must be turned over as a public record.