

Braille Competency Renewal Testing Guidelines

Colorado Department of Education

**Revised May 2010 with a December 2012 Reference Update and a January 2016 update
specific to the Unified English Braille Code requirements**

The Colorado Braille Competency Test process is designed to measure accuracy and efficiency in reading and writing the Unified English Braille Code specific to literary skills. This process includes defined steps for a one-time renewal of the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Certificate of Braille Competency. This braille competency renewal process is required only for teachers licensed and endorsed in the area of visual impairment who are working in Colorado administrative units. The CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency is not likely to transfer to other states that require demonstration of braille competency and would not replace other national braille competency certification processes or requirements.

Once a candidate has earned an initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency, there is a one-time renewal process. Within a full five-year period from the date the initial CDE Braille Competency Certificate was issued, the candidate must pass 15 CDE pre-approved Unified English Braille modules. One clock hour is earned per the successful completion of each module. Up to four modules can be taken each subsequent year from the award of the initial CDE Certificate of Braille Competency, but a minimum of two modules must be reserved for the fifth year.

Effective February 1, 2016, all CDE renewal modules will be in Unified English Braille (UEB) only. Individuals who are in the process of renewing their CDE Certificate of Braille Competency and have taken past English Braille American Edition (EBAE) renewal modules toward their renewal certificate will need to complete their remaining renewal modules in the Unified English Braille. For those candidates who are yet to take any of the renewal modules, all modules must be completed in Unified English Braille.

Each Unified English Braille module involves three sections: (1) an interlining passage activity; (2) a transcription activity; (3) a proof-reading activity. The directions for the modules will be given to the candidate at the onset of each proctored session. The directions will detail the time parameters of the session and the general procedures of the modules.

A passing score for each section involves the following criteria: (a) two or fewer errors in the transcription activity; (b) two or fewer errors in the interlining activity, (c) two or fewer errors in the proofreading activity; and (d) completion of the module within a one-hour time period (including the time needed to make any needed corrections). The clock starts once the candidate has received instruction on how to complete the module. If a candidate exceeds the hour and has not successfully completed the module, the module is failed. The proctor will document the start and end time with the candidate.

If the candidate has between three and five errors in one of the graded sections, there is an opportunity, time permitting, for the candidate to correct the errors to within the limit of two errors per section. Correction time is built into the allocation of one hour to complete the full module. While the proctor is grading, the clock will stop and restart once the candidate has the module back to make the needed corrections. If the error is correctable by reinserting the paper and correcting, this attempt is allowed. Erasures must be clean and tactually undetectable. If the paper cannot be reinserted to correct the error(s), the entire sentence in which the error occurred must be rebrailled on a separate piece of paper.

In addition to braille errors, an error will be counted for each occurrence, if the candidate does not use the maximum potential of a 28-cell line or is over the 28-cell line. Hyphenation, however, is not a requirement. Six and over mistakes on any one section of a module will result in automatic failure. If a module is failed, it is moved to the end of the sequence of the required Unified English Braille modules.

Advance notice must be given to the braille proctor as to which modules will be needed in any given proctored session. This allows the braille proctor to prepare the needed materials in advance of the proctored session. If a candidate fails a module, given available time, an opportunity can be provided to complete a different module. If a candidate fails two consecutive modules in one sitting, the candidate will not be allowed to take another module on that day. Practice and review of one's braille knowledge and skills will be to the candidate recommended before attempting to take modules in the future.

Candidates taking the CDE braille-renewal modules will be provided access to a set of standard references during the proctored session. No additional reference materials may be brought into the testing session. Clean copies of the following resources will be provided to the candidate for the duration of the testing session:

1. Aroga Unified English Braille Chart / HumanWare Unified English Braille Chart
2. Ashcroft's Programmed Instruction: UEB (2014, Printing 3 or later)
3. Braille Enthusiast's Dictionary in UEB (when it is published)
4. Burns Braille Guide: A Quick Reference to UEB
5. Instructional Manual UEB Edition 2015
6. The Rules of Unified English Braille (2nd Edition 2013)
7. A standard English dictionary

Candidates should bring appropriately sized braille paper, a braillewriter in good-working condition, a braille eraser, and a pen or pencil to the proctored session for the renewal modules.

The modules must be completed with a braillewriter. The Unified English Braille modules should be completed with 8.5 by 11 inch braille paper with a 28 cell line.

If accommodations are needed to access and/or complete the module materials, the candidate should contact Dr. Tanni Anthony no later than one month prior to the proposed module session date. Dr. Anthony’s email address is anthony_t@cde.state.co.us and her phone number is (303) 503-4647. If accommodations were used for the initial Colorado Braille Competency Test, these do not automatically transfer to Braille Renewal Modules.

The request for an accommodation(s) must be resubmitted to the CDE. For more information about how to request an accommodation(s), please refer to the *Colorado Braille Competency Test Accommodation Procedures* document located at http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/sd-vision_guidedocs

Arrangements to take a module(s) should be made with a CDE approved proctor during the school year. Summer sessions are dependent on the availability of the proctor. There is no cost to the candidate to take a module.

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A clock hour certificate will be issued after each module is completed successfully. The clock hours can be used toward CDE teacher re-licensure. It is the responsibility of each candidate to maintain a copy of the certificate(s), a record of the specific units completed, and how many hours he or she has completed. When 15 clock hours have been completed successfully with the five-year time span, a CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency will be issued to the candidate and the Director of Special Education of the candidate’s administrative unit will be notified of the renewal status.

Any questions about the CDE braille competency renewal process should be directed to Dr. Anthony at anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or (303) 503-4647.