



FAQ for Undocumented Students enrolled in CUNY Education Programs

This FAQ features new guidance as of September 2022 from New York State Education Department (NYSED) Office of Teaching Initiatives (OTI).

Q1: I do not have an SSN and am not studying under an F1 International Student visa. Will I be able to obtain fingerprinting clearance to complete fieldwork or student teach?

- Yes! Undocumented students can do fieldwork and/or student teaching in charter schools, independent (private) schools, and/or some schools outside New York City. NY State Education Department has updated the process for requesting a “Teach Access Number” at NYSED (please see Question 3 for details) which enables them to open a TEACH account and pursue the fingerprinting process. Other college requirements and processes for clinical placements remain unchanged.

Q2: Will I be able to do fieldwork and/or student teaching in a NYC DOE public school?

- No. Students who do not have an SSN and are not studying under an F1 International Student Visa will not be able to be fingerprinted and cleared through the NYCDOE PETS system. As such, they will not be allowed to enter NYCDOE schools to complete field work or to student teach. Students should speak to their clinical coordinator (or appropriate faculty member) about finding a non-DOE clinical placement.

Q3: What is the first step to register for a NYSED TEACH account to start the fingerprinting process?

- Undocumented students should reach out to their college certification officers. Certification officers will email OTI (otiadmin@nysed.gov) to request a nine-digit identifier with student’s first and last name, DOB, and email, with “TEACH Access Number” in the subject line.
- Once this identifier is received from NYSED, the student creates a TEACH account.

This guidance is detailed on NYSED’s website, under Evaluation of Foreign Credentials:

<https://www.highered.nysed.gov/tcert/certificate/evalforeigncred.html>

Q4: Once I am able to create a NYSED TEACH account, how do I get fingerprinted?

- Once students create a TEACH account, but before they are fingerprinted by IdentoGo, students are directed to contact OSPRA by emailing (OSPRA@nysed.gov) for further instructions on how to proceed with fingerprinting. Staff in NY State Education Department want to make sure students get good advice on how to register for fingerprinting with their new identifier so they don’t end up having to pay IdentoGo more than once.

This guidance is detailed on NYSED’s website, under FAQ for Individuals #20:

<http://www.nysed.gov/educator-integrity/fingerprint-frequently-asked-questions-faqs>



- Once a student obtains the Teach Access Number, students can request the fingerprinting appointment via IdentoGo:

<https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows/14ZGQT>

Please see “What Documents to bring to the appointment” webpage before making the fingerprinting appointment:

<https://uenroll.identogo.com/workflows/14ZGQT/documents/documents>

For the list of acceptable fingerprinting documents, students can preview “What do I need to bring to enrollment?” Acceptable documentation includes a NYC ID card.

Q5: What happens to my personal information collected by IdentoGo?

[Idemia’s privacy policy is published online](#) and includes a description of when or when not information collected is treated confidentially.

Q6: I do not have US citizenship, legal residency, or a SSN. Can I still be certified as an educator in NY State?

- Yes. You can be certified with an initial certification. The initial certificate is valid for 5 years. You, however, may not be able to work in many settings in the United States without securing a work permit. Guidance on registering for an ITIN number which can facilitate work is available from CUNY’s [Office of Immigrant Student Success](#).

However, citizenship or legal residence is required for initial certified educators to advance to the professional/permanent certification.

Q7: I have other questions about my undocumented status. What resources are available at CUNY?

- CUNY’s **Citizenship Now** project offers free immigration law services to students and their families: <https://www1.cuny.edu/sites/citizenship-now/>
- CUNY’s **Office of Undocumented & Immigrant Student Programs** (<https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/cuny-immigrant-student-success/>) features a dedicated webpage for undocumented students: <https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/cuny-immigrant-student-success/undocumented-student-support/>
- CUNY colleges have designated staff who serve as **Immigrant Student Liaisons**. To find the contact at your campus, see: <https://www.cuny.edu/current-students/student-affairs/cuny-immigrant-student-success/undocumented-student-support/#cuny-liaisons>
- CUNY’s **Initiative on Immigration and Education** (CUNY-IIE) offers resources for students: <https://www.cuny-iie.org> and [UndocuEdu](#), which works to highlight specific issues.
- CUNY’s **Office of the University Dean for Education** can provide resources on a range of educator preparation-related questions: see www.cuny.edu/teachered or email Teacher.Education@cuny.edu