



Summary of Certification Process: Institutions of Higher Education

All prospective school owners seeking certification to operate an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia must follow the steps outlined below.

Institutional Certification is a two-step process. Applicants must complete the first part of the process and wait to receive a response from SCHEV before proceeding. Both parts of the application must be complete and in compliance with SCHEV’s minimum standards before approval to operate an institution of higher education in the Commonwealth of Virginia is granted.

Processing Timeline: A school submitting its complete certification application package will have 180 days to complete the process, after which time its application will be withdrawn by SCHEV and it will receive a refund of the application fee minus a nonrefundable administrative fee of \$1000.

Step 1

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| 1. | Attend New School Orientation at SCHEV. |
| 2. | Submit an “Intent to Operate a Postsecondary School in the Commonwealth of Virginia” form and Coversheet and wait to receive an approval from SCHEV. SCHEV staff will respond within 45 days. |
| 3. | Submit a “Name Acknowledgement Form” and “Background Check Profile Form,” wait to receive an approval letter from SCHEV. SCHEV staff will respond within 21 business days. You must use the approved name in completing the certification application forms. |

Step 2

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| 1. | Submit a complete Certification Application Package. |
| 2. | SCHEV will acknowledge receipt of your application and obtain additional information from you as needed. Please note that the length of time it takes to complete this process is dependent on the completeness of the application and the processing timeline above. |
| 3. | After application is processed by staff, it will be presented before Council for “Provisional” approval. |
| 4. | Institution must meet Council’s requirements for full certification within one calendar year from provisional approval date. Provisional certification will automatically lapse after one year. |
| 3. | Once all requirements are met, SCHEV will conduct a site visit. |
| 4. | After the site visit, SCHEV senior staff will complete a final review of the application. After verification that all stipulations have been met, the SCHEV Director will approve full certification. |
| 5. | Once the school is granted approval, SCHEV will issue a full Certificate to Operate (CTO); please allow 5-7 business days to receive your CTO by U.S. mail. |