

Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder

Level V

LEVEL I | LEVEL II | LEVEL III | LEVEL IV | **LEVEL V** | LEVEL VI

What is the Career Ladder?

The Career Ladder identifies the six career levels of early childhood professional development. It serves as a basis for tracking and planning your professional growth. You may enter the Career Ladder at any level, and there are many different paths to take to develop your career. Each level combines education and experience. The Northern Lights core competencies provide the foundation for this system.

What is Level V?

You reach Level V when you have at least two years' experience working with young children, a current Individual Professional Development Plan (IPDP), and completed education through college course work.

Level VA education requirement is a Master's degree in a field related to early childhood education or services.

Level VB is the Master's degree and Vermont Department of Education educator licensure with an endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education, or elementary education.

Why is completing Level V important?

Reaching Level V is a significant accomplishment in your career showing your commitment to your profession. Many people who achieve Level V are in charge of their own classroom, supervise others, administer programs or consult to programs or professionals. By achieving Level V, you have more job opportunities and will likely earn a higher wage.

How do I apply for a Level V certificate?

Please submit a completed Level V application to Northern Lights. Applications can be found at the Northern Lights website under CAREER LADDER.



"It has been hard to both work and go to college, but I am learning so much that I will use in my program, and now I think I can really help others in the field."

Resources:

On Northern Lights' website:

- see *Career Ladder* for the application and other Level V resources
- see *Instructors* to learn about the Instructor Registry
- See *Planning Professional Development – IPDP*
- see *Program Directors* to learn about the Program Director Credential
- see *Resources: college and universities* for lists of institutions that offer related course work, educator licensure, and for peer review information

Vermont Northern Lights Career Development Center

<http://northernlightscdc.org>

Phone: (802)828-2876

See the reverse side for more information on Level V

Vermont Early Childhood Career Ladder Level V (continued)

What do I get when I achieve Level V?

You are recognized as a professional in the field, and others may seek you out as a leader.

- You may earn a bonus from the Child Development Division if you are working in the field of early childhood and earn your Master's degree.
- Programs specifically look for Master level applicants for administrator and consultant roles.
- Many colleges require a Master's degree to instruct or work at the college.
- Your degree is more valuable to programs seeking accreditation or recognition such as STARS (Step Ahead Recognition System), NAEYC accreditation, National Afterschool Association (NAA) and National Association of Family Childcare (NAFCC).
- With a Vermont teaching license, you may choose to work for the public schools or in partnership with public schools.

How do I pay for college courses?

There are grants, scholarships, loans and low cost courses. The Child Development Division offers grants for college courses. Talk with the higher education institution you are planning to attend, and the Vermont Student Assistance Corporation (VSAC) about financial aid. Also, check with your employer.

How do I get an educator licensure from the Vermont Department of Education?

You can achieve educator licensure in one of two ways. One way is to graduate from a college or university that is approved to recommend you for educator licensure. The second is to submit a professional portfolio for peer review to the Department of Education. Every licensed educator also has one or more endorsements, which defines the age group or topic that you can teach. To achieve a Level VB certificate you will need an endorsement in early childhood, early childhood special education or elementary education. See the Vermont Department of Education website for information on educator licensure, endorsements and peer review.

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Did you know...?

- The college courses you take may also help you achieve the Program Director Credential.
- If you have a Master's degree and experience teaching adults, you may apply to the Northern Lights Instructor Registry.

More Resources:

VSAC

www.vsac.org

Child Development Division
grants

[http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/
grants](http://dcf.vermont.gov/cdd/grants)

Vermont Department of
Education

[http://
education.vermont.gov/](http://education.vermont.gov/)

Higher Education Collaborative
<http://www.vthec.org/>

Graduate coursework leading
to educator licensure with
early childhood endorsement

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