

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 Knowledge Areas and 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 graduate college coursework.

Level VA education requirement is a Master Degree in a field directly related to child development, early childhood education or services.

Level VB is a Master Degree and 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 dedication to your profession. Many people who achieve Level V are in charge of their own classroom, supervise others, teach college courses, 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, current IPDP and a copy of your transcript as issued by the college registrar to Northern Lights. Applications are on the Northern Lights website.



"I am earning my degree online. Still, it is hard to work and go to college. I am learning so much that I use in my program, and now I want to really help others in the field."

Resources on Northern Lights website

Career Pathways

- *Early Childhood Career Ladder and links*
- *College and University Pathways*

Training and Coursework

- *College and University Coursework*
- *Financial Assistance*

Roles - find related careers

- *Program Directors and the Program Director Credential*
- *Instructors and the Instructor Registry*
- *Mentoring, coaching, consulting (MATCH)*

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. Programs specifically look for Master level applicants for administrator and consultant roles. Many colleges require a Master Degree to instruct or work at the college. Your degree is more valuable to programs seeking national accreditation or Vermont recognition such as STARS (Step Ahead Recognition System). With a Vermont teaching license, you may choose to work for the public schools or in partnership with public schools. Also, you may earn a bonus from the Child Development Division for earning a Level V certificate and an additional bonus for earning a teaching license with related endorsement (VB).

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 related to your work, including graduate 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.

Which Master Degree counts?

Your degree must be from an accredited higher education institution, and their accreditation must be recognized by both the US Department of Education and the Council of Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

How do I get an educator licensure from the Vermont Agency of Education Standards Board?

You can achieve educator licensure in one of two ways. One is to graduate from a college or university that is approved to recommend for educator licensure. The second is to submit a professional portfolio for peer review to the Agency 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.

<http://northernlightscdc.org>

Phone: (802)828-2876



Did you know...?

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

More Resources:

VSAC

www.vvac.org

Child Development Division
grants

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

Vermont Agency 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

**Northern Lights Career
Development Center
660 Elm St, PO Box 489
Montpelier, VT 05601**