



Frequently Asked Questions - TEACH Grant Service Obligation

1. What Is the TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve?

Each year that you receive a TEACH Grant, you must sign an Agreement to Serve and TEACH Grant Counseling on the U.S Department of Education TEACH Grant website. The TEACH Grant Agreement to Serve and TEACH Grant Counseling explains the terms and conditions of the service obligation you must agree to fulfill as a condition for receiving a TEACH Grant. By signing the Agreement to Serve and completing Counseling, you agree to these terms and conditions and acknowledge your understanding that if you do not fulfill the service obligation, the TEACH Grant funds you received will be converted to a loan that you must repay.

2. Can I teach any subject or grade?

You must be a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families. High-need fields are bilingual education and English language acquisition, foreign language, mathematics, reading specialist, science, and special education, as well as other fields included in the annual Teacher shortage Area Nationwide Listing. For information regarding high-need field, please visit the Federal Student Aid website at <https://studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/teach>

3. Is it required to teach in a high need area for four years and in a specific subject area for two, for a total of six years?

You must serve for at least four years (in an eight year period) as a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families. You must meet both the high-need area and low-income family requirements.

4. Do I have to teach in one of those 'high-need' fields to keep the money as a grant and not have to pay it back as a student loan, or would it count if I was a regular teacher?

To keep the money as a grant, you must meet all the criteria, including teaching in a 'high-need field'. The TEACH Grant Program provides up to \$4,000 a year in grant assistance to a student who agrees to serve for at least four years as a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families. Please note: The TEACH Grant maximum award amount is impacted by sequestration each academic year. This can result in an increase or decrease in the TEACH Grant amount you will receive due to the scheduled percentage reduction determined by the Budget Control Act of 2011.

5. My Special Education degree qualifies me for both Special and Elementary Education certification; if I get hired on as an elementary teacher, and I teach in an elementary classroom, does my grant turn into a student loan?

Yes, that could happen because the elementary classroom is not considered a “high-need field”. However, a special education elementary classroom is considered an area of high need. It will be your responsibility to choose a position that meets the service agreement requirements.

6. Would we be eligible for it even though we don't meet the 'high-need' requirement (special education, etc.)?

To keep the money as a grant, you must meet all the criteria of your service obligations described in your agreement to serve.

7. What if something happens and I can't teach or I can't find a job in a low-income area?

If you do not fulfill your agreement to serve, the grant(s) you received will be converted to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan and you will have to repay it/them with interest. Once converted to a loan, they cannot be converted back to a grant. However, you should consult the U.S. Department of Education's resource listing of Title I Schools. It is very large.

8. What if my family moves and I have to leave the state; will it count if I teach in a low-income school?

TEACH Grant is a nationwide program; you may perform your service obligation in any state. You must be a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families.

9. Is there any way the teaching can be deferred for a year or two?

Yes, you must teach at least four years as a full-time teacher within an eight year period of time.

10. If I do not meet the TEACH grant obligations, when does the interest start accruing?

The interest on your converted grant starts accruing from the original disbursement date of the grant.

11. How many years do I have to teach?

You must teach at least four years as a full-time teacher within an eight year period of time.

12. Does part-time teaching or substitute teaching count?

No, you must be a full-time teacher in a high-need field in a public or private elementary or secondary school that serves students from low-income families.