

# Getting Started with Gateways to Opportunity® Credentials for Applicants

## Credential Flowchart

Here is what you can expect when applying for your Credentials, from beginning to end. Remember this varies by applicant. The best way to move the process forward is to ensure you do your research and know which Credentials to apply for.

## 1. Register

### Your Role

Become a Gateways Registry Member. Visit the Gateways Registry for quick and easy access.

<https://registry.ilgateways.com/be-a-member/registry-membership>

- Save your username and password.
- Save the log in page to your bookmarks.

### INCCRRA's Role

You will receive an email that welcomes you to the Gateways Registry.

## 2. Research

### Your Role

Your professional goals will help to inform which Credential can move you forward on your career journey. Previous and current roles and employment pathways may guide you to seek specific Credentials. College coursework and credential approved training, and areas of interest to you, will help you decide whether you are interested in the field, wish to specifically work with infants and toddlers, in administration, with school-age and youth, or with families. This information will help you determine which Credential is right for you.

Gateways offers multiple Credentials to professionals in Illinois at various levels depending on college coursework, credential approved training, and experience:

- ECE Credential Level 1 - Free Online Training
- ECE Credential Levels 2 - 6
- Family Child Care Credential Levels 2 - 5
- Family Specialist Care Credential Levels 2 - 5
- Illinois Director Credential Levels I - III
- Infant Toddler Credential Levels 2 - 6
- School-Age and Youth Development Credential Level 1 - Free Online/Face to Face Training
- School-Age and Youth Development Credential Levels 2 - 5
- Technical Assistance Credential Levels 4 - 6
- ESL & Bilingual Credential Levels 2 - 4

## 3. Apply

### Your Role

1. Become a Gateways Registry member.
2. Select the Credential that is right for you and Apply online OR download an application and email to: [credentials@ilgateways.com](mailto:credentials@ilgateways.com) or mail to: INCCRRA 1226 Towanda Plaza, Bloomington, IL 61701
3. Request your official transcripts be sent to Gateways from the accredited college or university that you have attended. Official transcripts, sealed in their original envelope, may be sent to the address above or to [transcripts@inccrra.org](mailto:transcripts@inccrra.org) if your college or university offers an online official transcript service. If INCCRRA already has your most current official transcripts on file, you do not need to resend them. Copies of foreign evaluations may be accepted, but only from the evaluation services found at <http://www.naces.org/members.html>  
Log into your Gateways Registry to see the pending status of your Credential application(s).

## 4. Application Processed

Within 20 business days

### INCCRRA's Role

After receiving all required application documents, INCCRRA will process your application within 20 business days.

- Once all coursework, trainings, and work experience have been reviewed, you will receive notification.
  - If eligible for a Credential, the Credential certificate and award letter will be mailed. Awarded Credentials will also appear automatically on your Professional Development Record.
  - If you do not yet meet Credential requirements, an eligibility status update will be sent via email. A counselor will work with you to identify training and/or coursework needed to obtain a Credential. An application can remain in a pending status for up to three years while additional requirements are met.

## 5. Credential Awarded

### Your Role

Log into your Gateways Registry to see Credential(s) awarded.

### INCCRRA's Role

Once all Credential components have been met, Credential(s) will be awarded within 20 business days. Awarded Credential(s) will be on your Professional Development Record. Credentials are valid for up to five years.

## Tips and things to know:

- INCCRRA will send you an update on your pending Credential application(s) via email every 2 months.
- Check your Registry membership.
  - Ensure that your email address is accurate and working.
  - Ensure your home address, phone number, and place of employment are current.
  - If anything changes, update your Registry information as soon as possible to ensure INCCRRA can continue to help you.
- Check your email filters. Gateways emails often have attachments, so they can end up in junk or clutter folders. Adding Gateways to your approved contact list can help prevent future emails from ending up in your junk folder.
  - If you have not heard from Gateways within 20 business days, check these folders first, then call 866-697-8278 ext. 722 or email [credentials@ilgateways.com](mailto:credentials@ilgateways.com).