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Michael Williams
Commissioner

USCIS Premium Processing

November 16, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

Effective, August 1, 2015, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) was notified by the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) fingerprinting vendor, MorphoTrust that they are updating their technology and P-numbers can no longer be utilized for completion of the fingerprinting process.

TEA has the ability to assign a temporary file number to educators who do not have a United States social security number. The temporary file number begins with a "P" and is used for certification purposes only until the individual obtains a social security number.

In addition, school districts and charter schools are advised to upload only valid 9-digit social security numbers to initiate the fingerprinting process for new hires. Individuals attempting to be fingerprinted using a non-valid 9-digit number will not be allowed to complete the fingerprinting process.

TEA staff recognizes that the use of the P-number has been a longstanding practice, and the timing for this change is not ideal. Unfortunately, this is a process change outside the control of the agency. TEA staff will continue to process requests for P-numbers for the purpose of establishing a TEA Login (TEAL) account. This will allow an individual to access the Educator Certification Online System (ECOS) to complete any type of application needed for certification.

An online certification application will prompt individuals to pay for fingerprinting, if needed, for issuance of certification or completion of certificate renewal. A fingerprinting Fast Pass is emailed to an individual shortly after an online payment is submitted to TEA. Unfortunately, the fingerprinting process cannot be completed without a valid social security number, and an application to issue a teaching certificate cannot be processed without completion of the fingerprinting process.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Jeannie Tomasek at 512-463-5415, or jeannie.tomasek@tea.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy J. Miller". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Tim Miller
Director of Educator Preparation