Prairie View A&M University
Whitlowe R. Green College of Education

Alternative Teacher Certification Program

E-FOLD-P
Educators as Facilitators of Learning for Diverse Populations

ATCP Candidate’s Handbook
Prairie View, Texas
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>PAGE NUMBER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATCP Contact Information</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certificates Offered</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definitions</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter to Applicant</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Information</td>
<td>7-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Entry Requirements for Certification</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application Process</td>
<td>10-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Certification Application</td>
<td>12-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Certification Application Essays</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently Asked Questions</td>
<td>15-18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Form Instructions</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference Forms</td>
<td>20-22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY
Whitlowe R. Green
College of Education

Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ATCP)
Certificates Offered

**Single Subject Certificates**
- Art EC·12
- Computer Science
- Eng/Lang Arts/Reading 8·12
  - French 8·12
  - German 8·12
  - Health EC·12
- Health Science Technology 8·12
  - History 8·12
  - Journalism 8·12
  - Life Science 8·12
  - Mathematics 4·8
  - Mathematics 8·12
  - Music EC·12
- Physical Education EC·12
- Physical Science 8·12
- Physical Science/Math/Engineering 8·12
  - Science 4·8
  - Science 8·12
  - Social Studies 4·8
  - Social Studies 8·12
  - Special Education EC·12
  - Speech 8·12
- Technology Applications 8·12
- Technology Applications EC·12
- Technology Education 6·12
DEFINITIONS

**Alternative Certification Program (ACP)** – An approved educator preparation program specifically designed as an alternative to a traditional undergraduate certification program for individuals already holding at least a baccalaureate degree.

**Internship** – A one year concentrated program of intense supervision, which consists of coursework, training, assignments, field experiences, teaching, assessment, evaluation, TExES testing and other educational experiences. Upon completion of all program requirements and favorable evaluations from immediate supervisors, the intern will be recommended for certification.

**THEA** – Texas Higher Education Assessment – Basic Academic Skills Examination. It is designed to provide information about the reading, mathematics, and writing skills of students entering public colleges.

**TExES Exam** – Texas Examination of Educator Standards – Content area examination required for interns seeking a Probationary Certificate in Art EC-12, Chemistry 8-12, Computer Science 8-12, English Language Arts & Reading 6-12, Health EC-12, Health Science Tech. 8-12, History 8-12, Life Science 8-12, Math 8-12, Music EC-12, Physical Educ. EC-12, Science 8-12, Social Studies 8-12, Spanish 6-12, Technology Applications EC-12:
  - **PPR EC-12** – Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities Test.
  - **Special Education EC-12 & Generalist EC-6** – Required examination for interns seeking certification in Special Education.

**Field Experience** – Documented completion of 30 clock hours of observations in a public classroom setting prior to internship. Up to 15 clock hours may be provided by use of electronic transmission, video or other technology based method.

**NCLB** – No Child Left Behind – Education Act signed in 2002 to ensure that every child has a high quality education, and has highly qualified teachers who use proven teaching methods.
Dear Applicant:

Thank you for your interest in the Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Our program assists talented individuals in filling teaching vacancies in the state of Texas.

The staff of Prairie View A&M University’s Alternative Teaching Certification Program thanks you for your interest and anticipated participation in serving the youth of Texas. Teaching is an excellent opportunity to see growth in our youth, to give back to society, and to participate in a rewarding professional field. We look forward to serving you.

Sincerely yours,

The ATCP Staff
Alternative Teacher Certification was established in 1984 by the 68th Legislature in House Bill 72. In this Bill, the State Board of Education was directed to provide for certification of individuals who met specific requirements, and who completed an internship in a public school.

The Prairie View A&M Alternative Teacher Certification Program was implemented in 1990 to prepare degreed, but non-certified individuals to fill teaching positions in critical shortage areas such as Mathematics, Science, and Special Education.

Most recently the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 signed by President George Bush on January 8, 2003, reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school. The new law includes provisions stating that all teachers in core academic areas must be highly qualified by the end of the 2005-2006 school year. It also requires that newly hired teachers in Title I programs or schools be highly qualified immediately.

As part of the accountability provisions set forth in the law, No Child Left Behind has set the goal of having every child making the grade on state-defined education standards, states must include in their plans annual, measurable objectives that each local school district must meet in moving toward the goal.

No Child Left Behind gives states and districts the flexibility to find innovative ways to improve teacher quality including alternative certification, merit pay for master teachers and bonuses for people who teach in high-need schools and subject areas like Special Education, Math and Science.

In general, under No Child Left Behind, a highly qualified teacher must have:

- A Bachelor’s Degree.
- Full state certification and licensure as defined by the state.
- Demonstrated competency, as defined by the state, in each core academic subject he or she teaches.
Therefore, teachers in alternative route programs are not considered highly qualified before they demonstrate competency in each core academic subject they will be teaching. They must comply with the NCLB criterion.

Choosing the ATCP route to certification enables professionals from diverse fields to merge new and varied life experiences with research-based practices to enhance instruction in Texas classrooms.

Applicants must complete pre-service field experience observations and six (6) semester hours of course work. Prior to becoming eligible to apply for probationary certification, applicants must also pass the TExES exam in their content area.

Applicants enter the internship year as “teacher of record” once a position is secured in an accredited public school.

On-going training and support is provided through university course work, state certification test reviews, university supervisor visits, collaboration with a mentor teacher, and school administrative support.

ATCP candidates will remain in the program for 1-3 years depending on how long it takes the candidate to complete all the program requirements. Specific time frame for program completion is aligned with state statute, i.e. probationary certificates may be issued for three years only. Therefore, all alternative certification candidates must complete their program within three years.
## CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

| 1 | Download application from PVAMU-ATCP web page. Submit with official transcripts and $75.00. |
| 2 | Submit a complete application for admission to the Graduate School (www.applytexas.org). |
| 3 | Prior to acceptance, applicant is eligible to take TExES (PACT) content exam. |
| 4 | Applicant passes 1st screening pending transcript evaluation. |
| 5 | Applicant invited for Haberman assessment and interview. |
| 6 | Applicant passes 2nd screening. |
| 7 | Applicant’s selection score is calculated. |
| 8 | Applicant receives (“Acceptance” of “Non-Acceptance” letter from PVAMU-ATCP). |
| 9 | Applicant attends Intern Orientation and signs Candidate Agreement Form. |
| 10 | Applicant is now referred to as a candidate. |
| 11 | Candidate registers for classes and pays required Tuition by the University. |
| 12 | Candidate begins attending classes. |
| 13 | Candidate begins 30 hours of field experience in a public school and submits written reflections. |
| 14 | Candidate enters demographic on TEA website with user name and password to apply for certification. |
| 15 | Candidate sets up account for ETS with user name and password (to register for exams). |
| 16 | Candidate receives approval to register for TESE content exam after at least 6 hours of test preparation and a score of at least 80% on practice exam. |
| 17 | Candidate takes and passes the content TExES exam. |
| 18 | Candidate begins to apply for internship teaching positions. |
| 19 | Candidate completes Phase 1. |
| 20 | Accredited school district offers employment at an accredited campus to the intern. |
| 21 | PVAMU-ATCP Director approves position. |
| 22 | Candidate processes Statement of Eligibility Internship Form, ATCP Financial Contract, Criminal Record Check Form, and completion of Probationary Certificate. |
| 23 | Candidate pays Phase 2 Tuition. |
| 24 | PVAMU-Certification Office recommends candidate for Probationary Certificate. |
| 25 | TEA approves Probationary Certificate. |
| 26 | Candidate is now referred to as an intern. |
| 27 | Intern begins Phase 2 which includes full-time teaching position and attending classes. |
| 28 | PVAMU-ATCP Field Supervisor and Campus Mentor observe intern at least two times per semester and provides support and written feedback. |
| 29 | Intern observes Campus Mentor at least 3 times and submits written observations. |
| 30 | Intern's employer deducts and mails to ATCP office the first half of program fees ($1,350.00). |
| 31 | Intern takes and passes EC-12 PPR TExES exam. |
| 32 | Intern completes internship with satisfactory recommendations from Field Supervisor, Campus Mentor, Campus Administrator, and PVAMU-ATCP Director. |
| 33 | Intern's employer submits final payment of program fees ($1,350.00). |
| 34 | Intern applies for Standard Certificate. |
| 35 | PVAMU-Certification Office recommends intern for Standard Certificate. |
| 36 | TEA approves Standard Certificate. |
| 37 | CELEBRATE!!!!!
**Application Process**

**Application Materials and Deadlines**
The process begins with an application that can be downloaded from the PVAMU website under the Whitlowe R. Green College of Education. The application form and official reference forms require original signatures.

**Overall GPA and Transcripts**
Admission to PVAMU-ATCP requires a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education. The applicant must submit 2 official transcripts from every college and/or university attended. The applicant’s transcripts must demonstrate a 2.5 GPA overall or in the last 60 hours taken. The PVAMU-ATCP does a transcript evaluation and computes the GPA based on all transcripts.

All international degrees must be evaluated by a TEA approved agency. The detailed evaluation must include a translation/description for all courses.

**Required Previous Coursework**

**Single Subject Certificates** – Through our program, individuals may acquire certification in the secondary content areas and all-level areas provided they have on their transcript 24 semester hours, with 12 of the hours being upper division coursework and/or a passing score on the TExES or PACT content exam.

**Special Education EC-12** – Through our program, individuals may acquire certification in this area provided they have completed 24 hours in a combination of subjects taught in Elementary/Secondary school, which must include English, Mathematics, a Natural Science and Social Studies and/or a passing score on the TExES or PACT content exam.

**Proficiency in Reading, Writing, and Math**
In addition to the coursework requirement, an applicant must demonstrate evidence of competence in reading, writing, and math using the following measure:

- **THEA (Texas Higher Education Assessment)** with minimum scores of 230 in reading, 230 in writing or 230 in math or the TSI Initiative.

Test scores must be submitted to the PVAMU-ATCP office with the application.
NOTE: The Test of Proficiency in the English Language internet-based (TOPEL-iBT) is required of all applicants who present transcripts from a foreign country.

References
Each applicant must submit three professional references of the forms downloadable from the PVAMU-ATCP web page. The official reference forms must be used and should be mailed in a sealed envelope by the reference directly to the ATCP office.

Criminal Background Check
Each applicant is required to submit a criminal background report from the Texas Department of Public Safety (http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/). Applicants whose background checks are unacceptable, will not be admitted to the PVAMU-ATCP Program.

Haberman Interview
Applicants will participate in a structured face-to-face interview by individuals who have had the Haberman training. The purpose of the interview is to determine the applicant’s probability to succeed as a teacher in schools with less than ideal working conditions and who serve diverse children in poverty.

Selection Process
Candidates are selected for the program based on their qualifications as set out in the application process. The selection criteria include, overall GPA, coursework requirements per certification area (based on transcript evaluation) evidence of competency in reading, writing, math and interview score, quality of references and writing sample. PVAMU-ATCP also uses other criteria such as language fluency for foreign language and bilingual applicants with foreign transcripts.

Phase 1
During Phase 1 candidates will receive a letter of acceptance to the program. They will be invited to attend a New Intern Orientation Session where all aspects of the program will be explained to them. This includes:

- Completion of 30 hours of classroom field experience in a public school setting
- Registration procedure for required classes
- Review Educator Ethics form and sign
- Review Intern Commitment Form and sign
- Set up a personal account on the Educational Testing Service website (www.texes.ets.org) and get a TEA ID number
ALTERNATIVE CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM
P. O. Box 419/MS 2800 Prairie View, TX 77446-2800
Phone: 936-261-3515/ FAX: 936-261-3529

Phone ___________________________ Email ___________________________

Last Name ___________________________

First Name ___________________________ Middle ___________________________

Date of Birth _________________________

Gender _____ Male _____ Female

Are you a veteran? _____ Yes _____ No

Ethnic Origin:

_____ African-American _____ White _____ Hispanic

_____ Asian _____ Other

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: _________ Zip: ____________

Phone: ________________________ [H] ________________________ [M]

__________________________ [WK]

How many different colleges/universities have you attended even part-
time? _____________

Most Recent Degree:

_____ Bachelor Major: ____________________________

_____ Master’s Minor: ____________________________

_____ Doctorate Grad Date: ______________ GPA: ____________
Did you include your resume with at least three references?  ____ Yes  ____ No

**Requested Areas of Certification**

Place a 1, 2, or 3 to indicate your specific preference for your area of teacher certification:

- 1. Art EC-12
- 2. Life Science 8-12
- 3. Math 4-8
- 4. Mathematics 8-12
- 5. Computer Science 8-12
- 6. Music EC-12
- 7. Eng/Lang Arts/Reading 8-12
- 8. Physical Education EC-12
- 9. French 8-12
- 10. Physical Science 8-12
- 11. German 8-12
- 12. Science 8-12
- 13. Health EC-12
- 14. Social Studies 8-12
- 15. Health-Science Technology 8-12
- 16. Spanish 8-12
- 17. History 8-12
- 18. Speech 8-12
- 19. Journalism 8-12
- 20. Technology Applications EC-12
- 21. Technology Education 6-12
- 22. Special Education EC-12

A Basic Academic Skills Test is a program pre-requisite and requirement. The scores must be submitted with your application. Please check off the test that you have taken and then indicate your scores in each area below:

- 1. THEA
- 2. GRE
- 3. ACT
- 4. SAT

Reading _______  Math _________  Writing ________

Do you have a Master’s Degree from an acceptable accredited university?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Are you a graduate of a teacher education program?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Have you been on a university deficiency plan for certification?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

Have you ever held a Texas teaching certificate?  ____ Yes  ____ No

If yes, beginning what year? _______ How long did you teach? ________

Signature of Applicant _______________________________ Date: ____________

I hereby affirm that all information provided in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge, and understand that any deliberate falsifications, misrepresentations, or omissions of a fact may be grounds for dismissal from the PVAMU – Alternative Teacher Certification Program.
ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAM APPLICATION ESSAY

Please prepare a one page typewritten, double-spaced essay to include the following questions/statement:

1. Why have you decided to pursue a career in teaching?

2. What talents or contributions will you bring to the teaching profession?

3. Describe your philosophy of learning and/or education.
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What are the fees associated with the program?

- **Application Fee** - $75: non-refundable; required to establish eligibility for program entrance into the ATCP.
- **Graduate Application Fee** - $50: non-refundable; payable to Prairie View A&M University Graduate School to establish entry into the Graduate School.
- **THEA Test Fee** - $29. An application can be obtained at PVAMU.
- **University Course Fees** – Pre-Assignment Training: For three (3) credit hours of Summer I and three (3) credit hours of Summer II course work. See current *Schedule of classes Catalog* for exact fees.
- **On-Going Training**: For three (3) credit hours of Fall and three (3) credit hours of Spring semester course work. See current *Schedule of Classes Catalog* for exact fees.
- **Books and Supplies** – Cost will vary.
- **Program Fees** – Apply only to applicants who successfully obtain employment for the current school year. Cost: $3200. This amount is normally deducted from the intern’s salary by the employing school district during the internship year.
- **Probationary Certificate Fee** – A one-year teaching certificate is required upon employment with any school district in Texas. The cost is $52 and is the responsibility of the applicant.
- **Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (TExES) Test Fees** – Each intern must take two tests. Cost per test: $120
- **Full Certification Fees** – Applicants who successfully meet all program requirements may apply for full certification. This fee is the responsibility of the intern. Cost: $77.
- **Fingerprinting Fee** - $47.

How long does it take to complete the Alternative Teacher Certification program?

Students will be in the program for 1-3 years depending on how long it takes for them to meet all the program requirements. The maximum amount of time allowed for the program is 3 years.

Are any of the above fees refundable if I do not qualify?

No. All of the services for these fees are conducted prior to your consideration and/or acceptance into the program.
According to your literature, I have to apply to the graduate school to join your program. Why? Will I have to take the GRE?
Because you already have your four-year degree, you must apply to the graduate school in order to be eligible to take the required coursework at the University.

When will I need to pay university tuition and fees?
The university designates the date.

Will I be required to register for courses I’ve successfully completed?
Possibly. The content and syllabi of these courses may be different or have changed since you had taken the course. In either case, exemptions for courses taken over five (5) years ago will not be accepted.

What happens if I mail in an incomplete application?
The entire packet will be returned to you within 10 working days for completion.

What happens after my application is submitted to the Alternative Certification Program?
- Evaluation of your transcripts
- Haberman Interview
- Essay & Evaluation
- Reference Checks
- Criminal Records Check
- English Proficiency exam (all selected candidates)
- Notification of selected candidates – Letter of Acceptance
- Orientation/Coursework Begins

Will the ATCP place me in a teaching position?
It is the responsibility of each intern to find their own position teaching in a public school district. The Alternative Teacher Certification Program will attempt to assist each intern through notification of job fairs and other assistance on an individual basis. This offers each intern the opportunity to select the district and school he/she would feel most comfortable in. **Note:** Acceptance into the ATCP does not guarantee you a position with a school district.

Once I complete my internship year, do I automatically receive my teaching certificate?
No, for your certification application to be filed by the university, you must complete all of the following requirements:
- Pass the content Certification Area TExES exam
- Pass the Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities TExES exam
- Achieve at least “Meets Expectations” on supervisor and district appraisals
- Satisfactory completion of all required observations
- Turn in all required documentation
- Satisfactory completion of all required university course work, with no grade less than C
- Have no outstanding fees due to the university
- Be recommended for certification by the Certification Review Team
- Pay the Application for Certificate fee

During the internship, am I paid a salary?
Yes! Once you are accepted into the PVAMU-ATCP, and officially hired by a school district, you are eligible to receive first-year teacher’s salary – less the $3,200 program fee. The cost of university courses is a separate fee. As the salaried teacher of record and district employee, you are subject to all rules and responsibilities as outlined in district and school board policy. Once the internship year is completed satisfactorily, the year counts as your first year of service.

Is it too late for me to apply?
Please contact the ATCP Office by phone at 936-261-3515 or by fax at 936-261-3529. For the latest application requirements and deadlines, please call the ATCP Office number above.

Once I find a position, how can I legally teach in a classroom since I’m not certified?
Once you have secured employment with a school district and completed the District Employment Package, the ATCP will recommend you for Probationary Certification. The Probationary Certificate is a temporary teaching certificate, good for one year. This legally allows you to teach in a Texas public school and to be considered a teacher of record in the state.

I’ve never taught before, how will I know what to do on the first day of school?
The ATCP does not believe in placing interns into the classroom to “sink or swim.” You will receive extensive training during the summer to prepare you to enter the classroom. Your principal will assign a mentor teacher from your school to show you the ropes and assist you throughout the year. The ATCP also provides University Supervisors who will monitor your progress and act as liaisons between the university and the school district. And of course, you’ll be in a class with other first year teachers sharing their experiences.

I have plans to travel this summer, can I still be a part of the program?
The A in ATCP stands for many things to include: alternative, aspiring, accelerated, assertive, agitated, angst, and anxious. Participation in ATCP requires personal, financial and time management commitments. Because the program and ultimately the University is held accountable for the TExES
pass rates, the ATCP Advisory Board instituted an attendance policy that allows for only 2 absences per program year.

How can I prepare for the TExES examinations?
All university courses required for the program are aligned to the Texas Standards for New Teachers and the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards (Pedagogy and Professional Responsibilities EC-12 and 8-12, and the Special Education EC-12 TExES examinations). The ATCP pass rate for the PPR test has surpassed state averages in previous years. Attendance and full participation in class activities will prepare you for the PPR exam. When you are accepted into the program with 24 or 48 semester hours in your content area, it is expected that you have the knowledge base required to pass the TExES exam in your area. In the beginning of the summer, ATCP suggests that you acquire a study guide for your specific content area. When possible, ATCP will provide study workshops.

ATCP requires that the interns in the program attend 12 hours of review sessions. This includes 6 hours of review in your content area and 6 hours of review for the PPR. The ATCP program also requires that the interns take the Representative TExES exams for their content area and PPR and pass with a minimum score of 80%.

What happens if I start the summer classes, but I do not get a job?
Advising you on this question depends mostly on your area of certification and your interview skills. For those individuals who have certification in core classes (Math, English, History, Science), I advise that you continue to seek employment. You must continue enrollment in the fall semester class and continue to seek employment and receive a probationary certificate.

What happens if I fail one of my TExES exams?
Interns will have the opportunity to attend a six (6) hour review session and take the content practice test and have a passing score of 80% on the Representative TExES Practice exam. Should the intern not meet the program requirements after one year the intern can be considered for rollover status only if they have exhausted every opportunity to complete the process in one year. Rollover status allows the intern one more year to teach under extension of the probationary certificate. During this year the intern must meet the program requirements and pay a $200 administrative fee each time an extension is requested.
Instructions for Reference Forms

- Complete the top portion of the three attached reference forms.
- Sign the release statement on the bottom of the form.
- Send the forms to former employers or someone you wish to use as a reference (other than a relative).
- Request that they mail these forms to:

  Prairie View A&M University  
  Alternative Teacher Certification Program  
  P. O. Box 519/MS 2800  
  Prairie View, Texas 77446-2800

**Note:** Your appointment for screening will not be scheduled until all three references have been received.
ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION REFERENCE FORM
INTERN REFERENCE FORM

__________________________ has submitted an application as a prospective intern in the Prairie View A & M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Please give me your confidential opinion of this applicant by checking the appropriate column below. Be assured that this information will be considered strictly confidential. Mail the completed form to: Prairie View A&M University – (ATCP), P. O. Box 519 Prairie View, Texas 77446-2800.

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Comments:

Name: __________________________ Phone: __________________________ Date: __________________________

Title: __________________________ Company/School: __________________________

Signature: __________________________

I hereby give you permission to complete this form furnished by Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ATCP) and to release the form with recommendations.

Applicant Signature: __________________________ Date: __________________________
ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION REFERENCE FORM
INTERN REFERENCE FORM

_________________________ has submitted an application as a prospective intern in the Prairie View A & M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Please give me your confidential opinion of this applicant by checking the appropriate column below. Be assured that this information will be considered strictly confidential. Mail the completed form to: Prairie View A&M University – (ATCP), P. O. Box 519 Prairie View, Texas 77446-2800.

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I hereby give you permission to complete this form furnished by Prairie View A&M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ATCP) and to release the form with recommendations.

Applicant Signature ___________________________ Date ___________________________
ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION REFERENCE FORM
INTERN REFERENCE FORM

________________________________________________ has submitted an application as a prospective intern in the Prairie View A & M University Alternative Teacher Certification Program. Please give me your confidential opinion of this applicant by checking the appropriate column below. Be assured that this information will be considered strictly confidential. Mail the completed form to: Prairie View A&M University – (ATCP), P. O. Box 519 Prairie View, Texas 77446-2800.

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