

Post-Secondary Schools Programs (PSS)



The Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD) has statutory powers, duties, functions and responsibilities regarding the establishment and approval of non-public institutions incorporating private colleges and universities under the Michigan General Corporation Act (1931 PA 327). Proprietary schools are required to be licensed and their programs approved by LEO-WD.

What are Educational Corporations?

Educational Corporations are defined as any number of persons, not less than 3, who may incorporate for the purpose of conducting a school, academy, seminary, college, or other institutions of higher learning where preparatory subjects or the arts, sciences, professions, special occupations, and higher learning may be taught.

A proposed educational corporation must submit a written proposal to LEO-WD requesting approval to operate a private college or university in or from Michigan offering the proposed educational programs. The proposal must demonstrate it meets the five areas of adequacy required under the act.

Post-Secondary Schools - Proprietary Schools

The Proprietary Schools Act, PA 148 of 1943, defines a proprietary school as “a school that uses a certain plan or method to teach a trade, occupation, or vocation for consideration, reward, or promise of any kind.” Proprietary school includes, but is not limited to a private business, trade, or home study school. Proprietary school does not include any of the following:

- A school or college possessing authority to grant degrees.
- A school licensed by law through another board or department of this state.
- A school maintained or a program conducted, without profit, by a person for that person’s employees.
- A school or program within a school that exclusively provides yoga instruction, yoga teacher training, or both.

Michigan proprietary schools offer classes in traditional brick and mortar facilities, as well as through distance education or hybrid programs. They prepare students for a wide variety of occupations, such as nurse aide, phlebotomist, medical assistant, emergency medical technician or paramedic, dental assistant, massage therapist, realtor, bartender, boat builder, construction, heavy equipment operator, tax preparer, numerous information technology positions and many other occupations.

There are more than 375 Proprietary Schools in Michigan, with new schools applying each year. Some Proprietary Schools have been established since the 1930’s and have been renewing their licenses since the Proprietary Schools Act was passed in 1943.

Distance Education Authorizations

The Higher Education Authorization and Distance Education Reciprocal Exchange Act (2015 PA 45) authorizes LEO-WD to enter reciprocal distance learning compacts; ensure that distance learning providers meet standards of practice; set annual fees; protect student records; and establish a student complaint system.

In-state schools that choose to participate as part of a national reciprocity agreement are authorized to provide distance education in other member states.

Out-of-state schools located in states that are not a member of a national reciprocity agreement may seek authorization under this act to provide distance education to Michigan residents.

To be eligible to apply and participate, a school must be degree granting and accredited.

Where can you learn more about PSS?

To learn more about Post-Secondary Schools Programs, please visit Michigan.gov/PSS.