

What You Need to Know about Getting Your High School Equivalency Credential
Video Script (4 minutes, 16 seconds)

[Voice of Male] I don't have a high school diploma and I'm looking for a good job, but I can't find one. I know not having a diploma is holding me back. I just don't know where to start.

[Voice of Female] Even though I'm working a lot of hours at my job, I'm not making enough money. I need to make more. I cannot get a promotion because I don't have a high school diploma.

[Voice of Male Narrator] Do you find yourself in a similar position? You know in your heart that you need a high school diploma to achieve your goal of getting a job, getting a better job or a promotion, going to college, and earning the paycheck you deserve to support yourself and your family---but, you don't have a diploma and you're no longer school age so you don't quite know what to do about it.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and our Adult Literacy Hotline are here to help you reach your goals.

Our goal in this short video is to show you that the process of getting your high school equivalency credential is not as complicated and mysterious as you may think. We are here to help you connect with the process and find a free preparation program if you need it.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education issues the high school equivalency credential. This is a very, very valuable document. Virtually all colleges and universities in the country and almost all employers recognize this credential as exactly the same as a high school diploma. Any door that would have been open to you with a high school diploma will be open to you with this credential.

In Massachusetts there are two options to get a high school equivalency credential: the GED and the HiSET. Both options lead to the same high school equivalency credential. Both options require you to go to an official test center and pass the test. We have official test centers all around the state.

The testing process is safe, simple, and secure. You're not required to have any formal preparation to take these tests. You don't have to have any particular level of schooling, and you don't need a Social Security Number. Any Massachusetts adult who does not have a diploma and is not enrolled in school can register for, pay for, and take the test.

However, if you want to get a sense of whether you are ready to pass the real test before you pay for it, you can take a practice test.

There are free and low-cost options for HiSET and GED practice tests. The HiSET has a free practice test as well as ones that can be taken for a nominal fee. The GED Ready practice test, also available for a nominal fee, is taken online and gives immediate feedback on your strengths and weaknesses.

Take a look at the websites for the GED and the HiSET. Then, create an account with the vendor you want to test with. Creating an account is easy and free, and once you have taken the practice test, you can sit back, take a deep breath, and consider your options.

We hope that your results show that you are ready to take and pass the real test. If, however, you feel you need more preparation, the Massachusetts Adult Literacy Hotline has a complete list of preparation programs throughout the state. Many are supported by the Department, and are free of charge.

There are two ways to get information from the hotline. You can call the toll-free hotline number and speak to an adult literacy specialist who will give you contact information for programs in your area. Operators are bilingual in English and Spanish and have translators available for many additional languages. You can also search the free online database at the Massachusetts Adult Literacy Hotline's website to find a program near you.

If you have any questions, contact our high school equivalency team at the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Just call or email us and we will be glad to advise you. You can also find useful information and resources on the Department's High School Equivalency website.

We're here to support you on your journey to earning your high school equivalency credential and achieving your goals.