

Reentry Education Guide

Education is a cornerstone of success and can broaden your opportunities upon reentry. It will assist you in becoming more employable, provide access to more resources, and give you a sense of personal fulfillment. Pursuing your GED or HiSET, certification or trade programs, and higher education are all possible both while still in custody and post-incarceration.

Resources

<p style="text-align: center;">Bankrate (Financial Aid Information) bankrate.com/loans/student-loans/affording-college-as-an-adult</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Career One Stop (Job Training and Education) careeronestop.org 1 (877) 872-5627 info@careeronestop.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Federal Trade Commission Education and Training (Consumer advice for seeking education) consumer.ftc.gov/jobs-and-making-money/education-and-training</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Inmates to Entrepreneurs (Educational Programs) inmatestoentrepreneurs.org info@inmatestoentrepreneurs.org</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Libraries</p> <p>Public libraries, as well as prison libraries if currently in custody, can be helpful in finding educational programs. Inmate Resource Centers can also provide information about what programs are offered in your facility.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Opportunities Industrialization Center (Educational Programs) oicofamerica.org (215) 236-4500 1415 N. Broad Street, Suite 116 Philadelphia, PA 19122</p>
<p>PIN Reentry Resources</p> <p>All states and territories have multiple organizational resources that can help returning citizens find education post-incarceration. Probationinfo.org/reentry-resources has state-specific pages for all 50 states and 5 major territories containing local resources for earning your GED, certifications, and seeking higher education.</p>	

GED or HiSET

If you have not earned your high school diploma, completing your GED or HiSet is highly recommended.

What is a GED?

GED stands for General Education Development and consists of 4 tests: Math, Science, Language Arts, and Social Studies. You must obtain a passing score of 145/200 for each test to earn a diploma.

Additional requirements by state: ged.com/policies

If you fail the GED, you are allowed 2 retests, without restrictions between retakes. If you fail a 3rd time, you will have to wait 60 days before you can retest.

Juveniles who receive a federal sentence must obtain their GED and will also have the opportunity to pursue other educational courses. While in custody, juveniles must attend classes for at least 4 hours a day by licensed instructors.

What is a HiSET?

HiSET stands for High School Equivalency Test and consists of 5 sections: Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies, and Science. hiset.org/test-takers-requirements

If you fail the HiSET, you are allowed 2 retakes within a 12-month period.

Post-Release

If you do not earn your GED or HiSET while in custody, consider pursuing one after your release.

Benefits include:

- Ability to apply for higher paying jobs
- Eligibility to attend college
- Acquiring effective critical thinking skills and strategies

You can earn your GED or HiSET online or in-person. You can also attend classes to prepare and take a practice test before taking the official GED or HiSET tests.

How to find classes and tests near you

- Search online with phrases such as “Free GED classes in my area” or “Where can I earn my GED/HiSET?”
- Your local library may have free resources to help you find classes and prepare for the tests.
- Your probation officer may be able to point you towards other resources.
- The following websites provide free access to preparatory materials:
 - careeronestop.org/FindTraining/Types/high-school-equivalency.aspx
 - consumer.ftc.gov/jobs-and-making-money/education-and-training
 - gedtestingservices.com
 - <https://gedeno.com/>
 - hiset.org
 - hisetpracticetest.org/hiset-math-practice-test
 - test-guide.com/free-hiset-practice-tests.html
 - uniontestprep.com/ged-test

Certificates and Trades

A certificate is an educational credential that shows that you have completed a course that teaches a specific skill. Examples: Paralegal, Computer Science, Cybersecurity, HVAC, etc.

A trade is a skilled job that requires training in a specific skill set. Examples: Plumbing, Electric, HVAC, Carpentry, etc.

What are the benefits?

- These career paths offer opportunities for financially stable careers post-incarceration.
- Certificate and trade programs are often cheaper and take much less time to complete than a 2–4-year degree program.
- Certificates can help you develop your professional profile.
- Steady and meaningful employment has been found to decrease the risk of recidivism.

How can you earn certificates in custody?

Many universities offer correspondence programs for certificates that can be earned in prison.

<p>Adams State University ASU's Prison College Program is a correspondence program that offers a variety of certificate programs and is ideal for those in prison who are seeking continuing education. adams.edu/academics/print-based</p>	<p>Blackstone Career Institute Blackstone Career Institute offers paralegal correspondence courses for the incarcerated. blackstone.edu</p>	<p>Stratford Career Institute Stratford Career Institute offers a variety of correspondence courses specifically for inmates, with flexible scheduling and payment plans. scitraining.com/Dispstpg.htm?ID=10386</p>
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How can you learn trades in custody?

Some training and apprenticeship programs are available through the BOP. Check with your facility to see which programs they may offer.

To pursue a certificate or trade you must:

1. Obtain a GED or High School Equivalency (HiSET) if you do not already have a high school diploma
2. Enroll in a certificate program
 - Many colleges and trade schools offer certificate programs you can enroll in to start your career.
3. Complete apprenticeship training
 - An apprenticeship is a training program for aspiring trade workers that offers them practical training on the job.

<p>CareerOneStop CareerOneStop has a resource for finding programs in each state: careeronestop.org/ExOffender/GetTraining/TypesofTraining/certifications.aspx</p>
<p>Apprenticeship.gov Apprenticeship.gov is a government resource that can help you find apprenticeship opportunities in your area: apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-job-finder</p>

Higher Education

Higher education includes institutions like colleges and universities that provide education beyond high school where you can earn a degree.

How to find higher education in custody

- Check with your facility's education department. Program offerings vary by facility.
- Alliance for Higher Education in Prison has a national directory of programs:
nationaldirectoryhep.org

Nationwide correspondence courses

- Adams State University – adams.edu/academics/print-based/prison-college-program
- Blackstone Career Institute – blackstone.edu/inmate-education
- Criminon – criminon.org/bookstore/correspondence-courses
- Ohio University Correctional Education – ohio.edu/online/programs/print/correctional
- Reentry Lifeskills – reentrylifeskills.com/#purchase
- Stratford Career Institute – scitraining.com/Dispstpg.htm?ID=10386

How to find higher education post-release

Pursuing higher education after incarceration may seem like a challenge for many, but it is not impossible. The American Association of Community Colleges makes it easy to find schools in your area: aacc.nche.edu/college-finder

Beyond the Box

Many institutions of higher education require detailed disclosure of your criminal history on their applications. Even if this does not result in being denied admission, it can be stressful, embarrassing, and even traumatic for some. Some advocates are calling for those questions to be removed from applications. brookings.edu/articles/thinking-beyond-the-box-the-use-of-criminal-records-in-college-admissions

Financial Aid for the Justice-Impacted

Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

This is a form that students must fill out each year that they are enrolled in school if they want to be eligible for student loans, scholarships, and grants. It is also available to incarcerated individuals.

Apply online at fafsa.gov or find the current paper forms at studentaid.gov/resources

*If in custody, it is recommended that the FAFSA form is submitted close to the same time your prison education program is to begin. Deadlines vary.

Financial Aid Resources

<p>Appily Offers a scholarship of up to \$1000 dollars and does not exclude the justice-impacted population: appily.com/scholarships</p>	<p>Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Awards financial aid between \$100 and \$4000 every year: studentaid.gov/understand-aid/types/grants/fseog</p>
<p>Federal Student Aid Money provided by the government to students with financial need: studentaid.gov/resources.</p>	<p>Prison Education Foundation Provides a limited number of scholarships for currently incarcerated individuals and individuals released within the past twelve months: prisonedu.org</p>

Clear Your Criminal Record

Clearing your criminal record, if eligible, presents many benefits such as increasing your chances of:

- Getting into a college or university
- Receiving financial aid and scholarships

Visit our **How to Clear Your Criminal Record** guide for more information:

probationinfo.org/record-clearing