ADULT WORKFORCE DIPLOMA PROGRAM PROVIDER MANUAL



November 2026

Department of Education & Workforce

Table of Contents

Adult Workforce Diploma Program Provider Manual 1

Adult Workforce Diploma Program Provider Manual 1

Introduction 3

Adult Workforce Diploma Program Overview 3

Adult Workforce Diploma Program-Provider Eligibility 4

Co-Enrollment Policy 4

Adult Workforce Diploma Program Participant Eligibility 5

OHID Information 5

Student Handbook 5

Transcript Review 6

Past Credits/Prior Credentials 6

Career Action Plan Guidance 6

Documentation upload 7

Graduation Pathway Options 8

Additional Program Requirements 9

Payment Submission 11

Payment Processing 11

Diploma Sender 12

Associated Services 16

State Contact Information 17

Frequently Asked Questions 17

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Adult Workforce Diploma Program Provider Manual. This manual is intended to support providers in understanding program requirements, and their eligibility as a part of the Adult Workforce Diploma Program. The Adult Workforce Diploma Program provides eligible adult participants with opportunities to earn a high school diploma while preparing for employment, career advancement, and post-secondary opportunities. Providers play an important role in supporting participants through academic instruction, career planning, workforce readiness activities, and student support services. This manual contains guidance related to:

- Program overview and implementation
- Provider eligibility requirements
- Participant eligibility requirements
- Provider responsibilities
- Invoicing and payment processes
- Transcript review procedures
- Career action planning guidance
- Expectations
- State contact information

Providers are responsible for ensuring compliance with all applicable Ohio Revised Code, Ohio Administrative Code and department guidance associated with the Adult Workforce Diploma Program. Additional guidance and updates may be provided by the department throughout the program year.

ADULT WORKFORCE DIPLOMA PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Adult Workforce Diploma program is a competency-based program designed to provide eligible adults with pathways to earn a high school diploma while developing workforce readiness and career preparation skills. The program encourages participants to pursue educational and career goals while preparing for long-term employment success.

Approved providers support participants through:

- Academic instruction
- Career advising
- Transcript review
- Workforce readiness activities
- Career pathway exploration
- Postsecondary planning
- Student support services

ADULT WORKFORCE DIPLOMA PROGRAM-PROVIDER ELIGIBILITY

To Participate in the Adult Workforce Diploma Program, providers must receive approval from the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce.

Eligible providers may include:

- City school districts
- Exempted village school districts
- Joint vocational school districts
- Career centers
- Community schools
- Other approved educational entities

Providers must demonstrate the ability to:

- Deliver Adult Education Services
- Support workforce readiness activities
- Maintain accurate participant records
- Conduct transcript evaluation
- Provide career advising
- Meet all applicable reporting and compliance requirements

Approved providers are responsible for ensuring:

- Accurate reporting of student enrollment
- Timely data reporting
- Proper documentation
- Participant support services
- Compliance with state requirements
- Appropriate communication with department staff

CO-ENROLLMENT POLICY

- Providers will ensure that a participant is not concurrently enrolled in more than one state or federally funded adult education program administered by the department for the same or substantially similar educational services. The department may withhold program funding until the department determines that compliance has been achieved. There is a requirement to return program funding spent in manner inconsistent with the requirements of this chapter and potential termination of provider eligibility for a period determined by the department.
- A student must have not active attendance in the LACES system in Aspire prior to being enrolled and placed in “started” status for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program. Additionally, a student cannot be enrolled into the Aspire program while in “started” status or “hardship” status for AWDP.

ADULT WORKFORCE DIPLOMA PROGRAM PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY

Participants enrolled in the Adult Workforce Diploma Program must:

- Be a resident of Ohio and be 18 and older
- Not possess a high school diploma or high school equivalency diploma
- Meet all additional enrollment requirements established by the provider
- Be officially withdrawn from school if 18 years old
- Documentation may include:
- Proof of identity
- Proof of Ohio residency
- Official transcripts or educational records
- Withdrawal documentation from previous educational institutions

OHID INFORMATION

Students are not required to create an OHID to enroll in the Adult Workforce Diploma Program. Only the approved provider needs an OHID for program administration purposes. We encourage providers to enter the student OHID in the student OHID field in LACES.

STUDENT HANDBOOK

Providers should maintain regular communication with participants regarding:

- Enrollment status
- Coursework expectations
- Career planning activities
- Program updates
- Graduation requirements

Providers may issue student email accounts or establish communication expectations consistent with local policies. Approved providers will give every student an AWDP Student Handbook that clearly explains what to expect in the program, the requirements for graduation, the support available to students, and the guidelines for participating. The Ohio Department of Education & Workforce has also created an editable version of the handbook so providers can easily add details about their own programs or personalize it with their school's logos and branding.

TRANSCRIPT REVIEW

Providers are responsible for conducting transcript reviews to determine participant credit attainment and remaining graduation requirements.

Transcript reviews should include:

- Utilize official educational records
- **Identify credits already earned**
- Determine remaining requirements
- Support participant career planning

PAST CREDITS/PRIOR CREDENTIALS

Participants may have credits or credentials earned already that would reduce the number of requirements they need to complete the program. Ensure every effort is made to review all transcripts for those who opt to demonstrate competency through course credits. Request transcripts from each high school or post-secondary program. Please note that credits earned previously in the 22+ Adult High School Diploma Program cannot be rebilled for in the Adult Workforce Diploma Program.

CAREER ACTION PLAN GUIDANCE

Providers should support participants in developing individualized Career Action Plans aligned with educational career goals.

Career Action Plans may include:

- Career interests
- Postsecondary goals
- Workforce readiness activities
- Credential pathways

Link to Career Connections: Career Connections | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce

This User Guide is a provider-focused manual outlining the Diploma Pathway feature within LACES, the data management system used by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (OH DEW).

- Please visit the Administrator Information section of our webpage, and scroll to the “LACES Updates” section. Here you can access the most recent Diploma Pathway User Guide.

DOCUMENTATION UPLOAD

The Adult Workforce Diploma Program participant record and payment request approval process is streamlined when all appropriate documentation has been included in the appropriate areas. These appropriate areas include the "Documents" section of the "Student Data" tab or under the "Assessments, Course Credits, or Workforce Requirements" sections of the "Diploma Pathway" tab. No matter the option or requirements chosen by the participant, appropriate, legible, complete, concise documentation is imperative to recognize a prior credit, a credential, or a requirement being utilized or a payment being sought.

Note: *If denial of payment or activity has occurred; state staff include additional notes as to what information they are seeking to assist with the approval process and to ensure alignment with current state requirements. The provider must login back into LACES to see the "note". No email is sent to the provider.*

Automatic denials:

- Attachments that are in the form of: jpeg, jpg, gif, png, webp, heif, heic, .svg, .mvk, .zip, tiff
- Missing initial career plan goal that is to be completed in the diploma pathway plan tab
- Missing signatures, dates, required fields, required documentation

Necessary elements of appropriate documentation:

- Appropriate party signatures (OMJ Seals, evaluations, work-based learning documents, etc.)
- Relative dates (date that the document is signed, the course was completed, the requirement was met, etc.)
- Evidence of prior or current credit, credential, or requirement earned (transcripts, assessment scores, IRCs, etc.)
- Appropriate information for the required field (names, dates, amount of hours, signatures, mentor comments, evidence of completion, etc.)

GRADUATION PATHWAY OPTIONS

Option 1: Assessment Requirements Pathway

***Appropriate Documents*:**

- End of course assessment scores showing competency score (684) on the Algebra 1 and English Language Arts II end-of-course (EOC) exams.

OR

- ACT WorkKeys assessment scores showing a qualifying WorkKeys workforce readiness score (12 points), currently defined as a Silver NCRC, which requires a minimum score of 4 on each of the three WorkKeys assessments (Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, Workplace Documents).

Option 2: Course Credit Requirements Pathway

- Four credits in English Language Arts
- Four credits in mathematics
    - One credit may be career-based mathematics
- Three credits in science
- Three credits in social studies
- One-half credit in financial literacy
    - This credit may be applied toward the total number of credits in either mathematics or social studies

***Note:** It is very helpful when the provider leaves a simple comment in the "note" box when submitting an activity for payment in LACES. A simple note letting us know what the course or courses that are being requested for payment and what transcript we should look at is extremely helpful to the state office. We have seen multiple transcripts uploaded with no notes, creating a longer process to review. A note that lets our team know where to look and what to identify will help create a smoother process when reviewing credits for payment and also credits for review when the student is in "requirements passed" status.*

***Appropriate Documents*:**

- Prior/ current transcripts- transcripts showing prior course credits or credits that the participant has earned in the program
- Prior/ current report cards (as long as credit earned is included)- if transcripts are not available and report cards are the only option showing that a participant has earned credit, these will be accepted

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

In addition to meeting an option pathway above, documentation must demonstrate completion of two of the following:

- **Documentation of a prior earned Industry-Recognized Credential:**

  Prior credential guidance:
  - Must contain the complete occupational license, certification, or certificate.
  - Must be issued in the state of Ohio.
  - The name of the occupational license, certification, or certificate must match the name of the individual enrolling into the Adult Workforce Diploma Program.
  - The accreditation of the issuer, and the license, certification, or certificate was completed at a community college, technical college, state community college, an Ohio Technical Center, or a private or public entity that delivers training.
  - The credential must be a part of a career pathway plan.
  - The occupational license, certification, or certificate must be in English.
  - The occupational license, certification, or certificate must be in active status and not expired.

Current credential guidance:

- **Documentation of a program earned Industry-Recognized Credential:**
  - Must contain an occupational license, certification, or certificate on the approved industry-recognized credentials list.
  - Must contain the complete occupational license, certification, or certificate.
  - Must be issued in the state of Ohio.
  - The name of the occupational license, certification, or certificate must match the name of the individual enrolling into the Adult Workforce Diploma Program.
  - The accreditation of the issuer, and the license, certification, or certificate was completed at a community college, technical college, state community college, an Ohio Technical Center, or a private or public entity that delivers training.
  - The credential must be a part of a career pathway plan.
  - The occupational license, certification, or certificate must be in English.

- **Documentation of an earned cumulative score of Proficient or higher on three or more WebXam state technical assessments**
  - Must contain documentation of Proficient or higher scores.

- **Documentation of a completed pre-apprenticeship program and be accepted into a registered apprenticeship or complete a registered apprenticeship**
  - Must contain documentation of a completed pre-apprenticeship program being accepted into a registered apprenticeship or complete a registered apprenticeship.

- **Documentation of completed work-based learning experience with progressive positive evaluations and a self- reflection piece (this can be a provider created form or document aligning with current state requirements)**
  Work-Based Learning Guidance:
    - Must complete 250 work-based learning hours. (completed after July 1, 2026, to seek payment)
    - Must have progressive positive evaluations completed at intervals determined by the provider and employer. (Ex. A provider and employer have determined that the employer will submit an evaluation at 50 hours, 150 hours, and 250 hours.)
        - These evaluations should show continual improvement throughout milestones and not regression
    - Must complete a self-reflection piece (a presentation, written piece, etc.)
    - Must contain employer information and student information

- **Documentation of a completed OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal**
    - Must contain documentation showing completion of the OMJ Readiness Seal (this can be a provider created form or document aligning with current state requirements)

Work-Based Learning Resources:
- Work-Based Learning for Schools and Educators | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce
- Portfolio Rubric for WBL
- Student Reflection Questions

Requirements:

Students will earn the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal by satisfying each of the following:

- Demonstrate proficiency in each of 14 Identified Professional Skills;
- Use the OhioMeansJobs-Readiness Seal form to record demonstration of each professional skill; and
- Work with a mentor to validate demonstration of each skill across a minimum of two of the three environments. The three potential environments are: 1. School, 2. Work, and 3. Community.

- Students are required to document how they demonstrated each of the 14 professional skills. At least two environments must be reflected among the demonstrated skills. A minimum of three mentors must be involved in the overall validation process and sign the form. Students must choose mentors they worked with, activities they participated in and skills they demonstrated while in high school.
- Comments must be unique to the mentor and the student.

**Note: If your entity has created a process or form that you would like Adult Options Team to input on, please feel free to share with our team. The attachment documents must be the electronic version of the document or a scan, not a photo of the document.*

PAYMENT SUBMISSION

Payment requests should be submitted according to department-established procedures and timelines.

Payment Information:
Payments are issued in accordance with department procedures and approved payment processes. Providers are responsible for ensuring submitted payment requests are accurate and supported by appropriate documentation.

Approved payments for the Adult Workforce Diploma Program will automatically run at 2:00am on the last Monday of each month, unless the last Monday in the month is a state holiday. In that case, payments will run at 2:00am on the next business day. Only approved payments will be included in processing. It may take 1-2 weeks for providers to receive payment after the payments are processed.

At 5:00pm on Wednesday prior to the last Monday of the month will be a cut-off for providers to submit payments so that DEW program staff have time to review and approve. This deadline may change due to holidays and will be reflected on the website: Ohio Options for Adult Diploma and Ohio High School Equivalence | Ohio Department of Education and Workforce in the Administrator Information, Timeline area.

PAYMENT PROCESSING

Approved Payment timelines may vary depending on:

- Activity and payment completeness
- Required submitted documentation
- Department review processes
- Program funding availability

Payment Documentation

- Participant enrollment records
- Student career plan
- Credential attainment documentation
- Completion records
- End of Course Assessments
- ACT WorkKeys
- Workforce readiness documentation
- Other department-required records

Documentation must include:

- Complete records
- Required signatures and dates
- Relevant, legible information

DIPLOMA SENDER

Below is an overview of the DiplomaSender process to help clarify how students access their credentials once all requirements have been met.
Participants will use DiplomaSender processes for all transcript and diploma-related activities as required by the department. After a student record is loaded into DiplomaSender and marked as "credentialed," DiplomaSender sends an email informing the student that they may create an account and access their documents.

If a student did not provide an email address or does not receive the "congratulations" email, they can still register directly through the DiplomaSender website. When prompted to select the type of records they are seeking, the student should choose "High School Equivalency." Students may also use the chat feature on the site to request assistance. Those who *do* receive the "congratulations" email will have a direct link to the registration page.

All test takers from February 5, 2018, forward receive their first diploma and transcript at no cost. Additional documents are available for $20 and may be used as needed for future employers or schools.

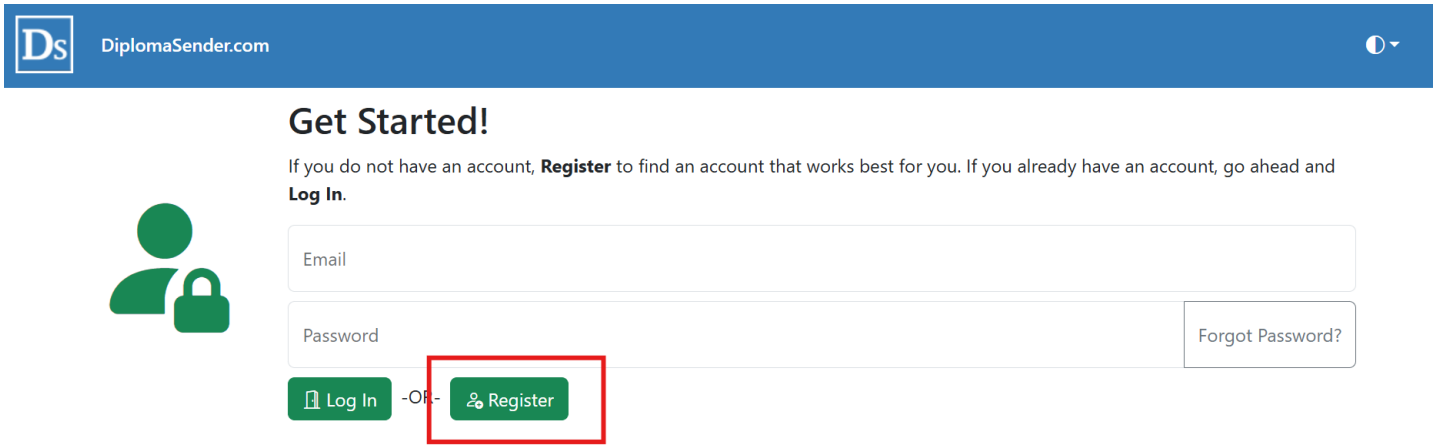
For AWDP providers: please ensure your student is placed in "requirements passed" status so their record can be reviewed by the state office. "Requirements passed" does not mean the record is fully approved until the state completes the remaining steps. Students should not register with DiplomaSender until the diploma is officially earned and the state has finalized the approval.

HOW TO REQUEST YOUR TRANSCRIPT AND DIPLOMA

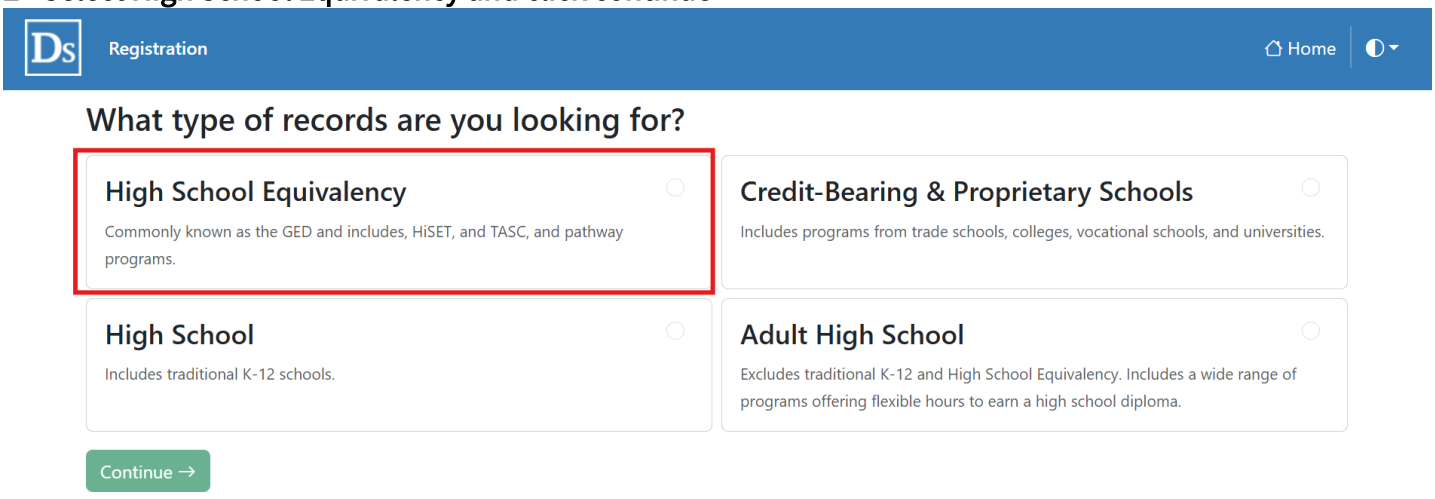
Below, you'll find step-by-step instructions along with screenshots to guide you through the process in detail

Here is the link that will take you to DiplomaSender: https://diplomasender.com/

1 - Create an account by selecting "Register" – If you have questions, click on the chat feature at the bottom of each screen.



2 - Select High School Equivalency and click continue



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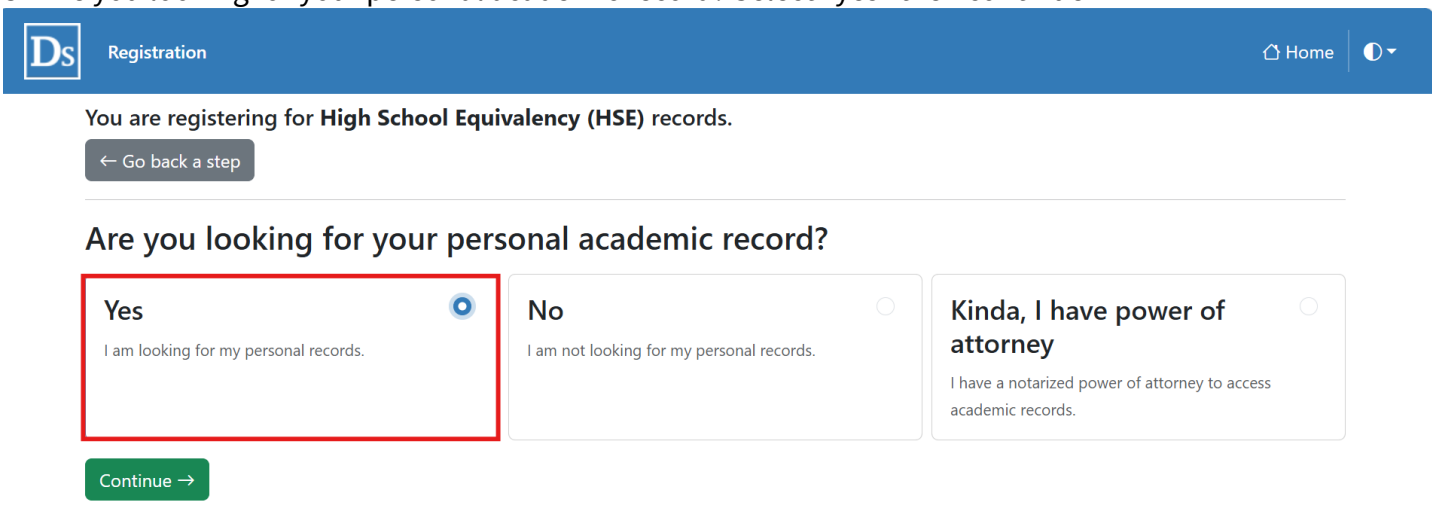
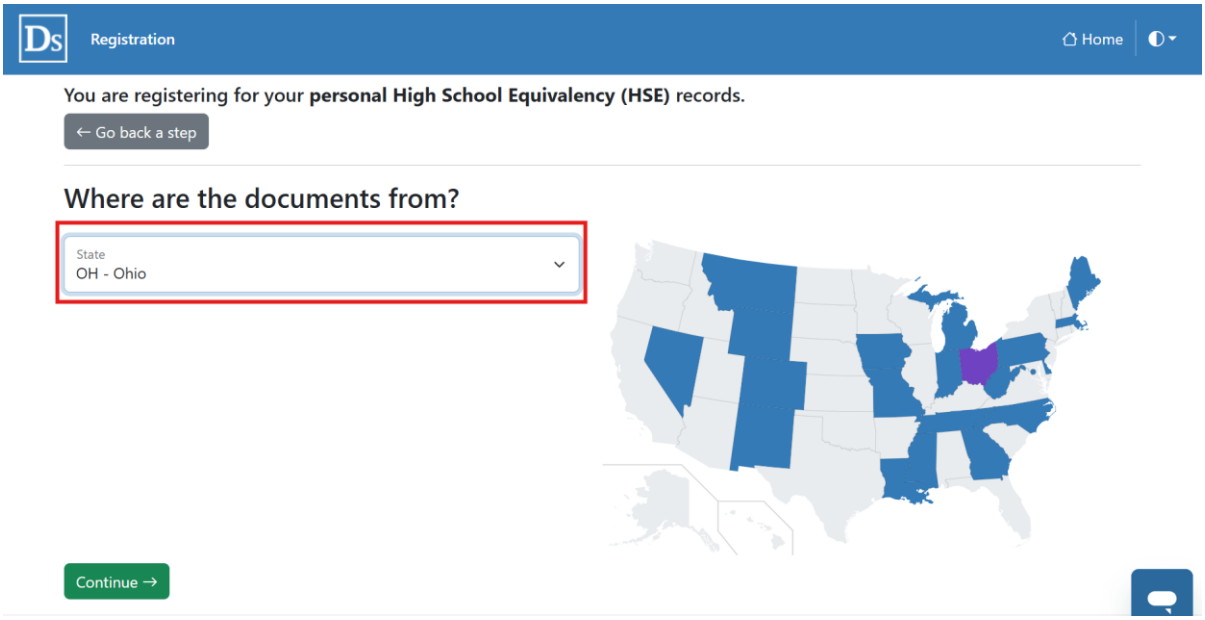
3 - Are you looking for your personal academic record? Select “yes” then continue



4 - Where are the documents from? Select your state by clicking on the drop-down key and select “Ohio” then continue



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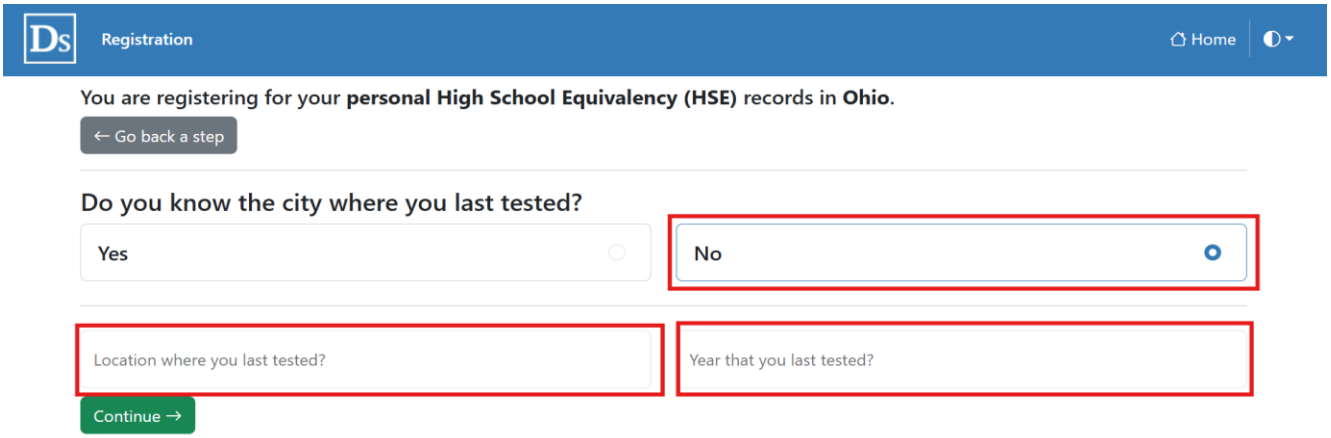
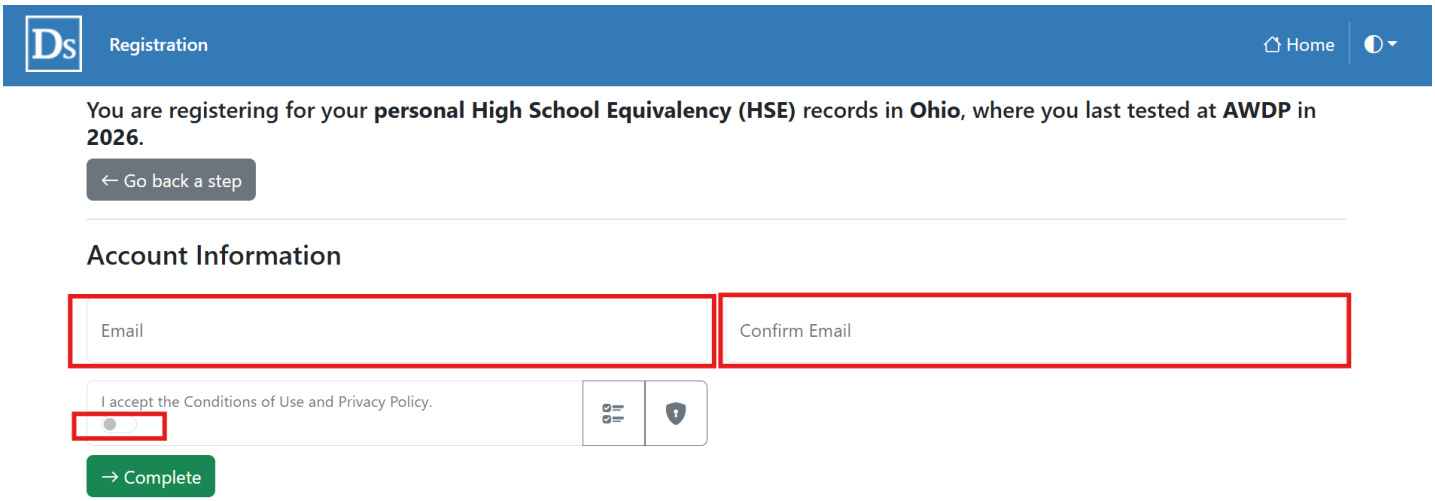
5 - Do you know the city where you tested? Select “no” and then enter **AWDP** in the **Location where you last test?** (a dropdown list may appear, verify the information), and enter the year tested. Ex. **2026** Click continue



6 - Account Information – Enter your email address twice, and accept the conditions of Use and Privacy Policy, select “complete”. The screen will state that you are registering for your “personal High School Equivalency (HSE) records in Ohio, where you last tested “city name” in “year”.



7 - Follow the steps on each page to access your Adult Workforce Diploma Program records.

ASSOCIATED SERVICES

Below is a brief overview of the required follow-up process for students who have earned their Adult Workforce Diploma.

- Providers are required to follow-up with those individuals who have earned their diploma through the Adult Workforce Diploma Program at specific intervals upon completion. This mandatory information will be collected and submitted for each student to the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce following the 6-, 12-, and 18-month milestones of the diploma being issued. At the time of each contact, providers will request if that individual is gainfully employed, participating in an apprenticeship, enrolled in post-secondary educations, or serving in the military.
- This component is critical to capture longitudinal data on programs of study, student outcomes, and deliver providers with quantitative measures to evaluate their program offerings.

Associated Services Documentation:

- Career Plan
- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Mock Interviews
- Workforce skill preparation curriculum
- Career ready projects

STATE CONTACT INFORMATION

Contact the Office of Technical Education Adult Options Team with any questions.

Stephanie Schab
Assistant Administrator
(614) 387-2287
stephanie.schab@education.ohio.gov

Sandra Mitchell-Phipps, Ed.
Program Administrator II
(614) 466-4869
sandra.phipps@education.ohio.gov

Ashley Kerr
Education Program Specialist
(614) 387-2199
Ashley.Kerr@education.ohio.gov

Dean Scheiderer
Education Program Specialist
(614) 387-2254
dean.scheiderer@education.ohio.gov

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

For answers to common questions about the Adult Workforce Diploma Program, Click here to access the Adult Workforce Diploma Program FAQ