

September 20, 2006

DIRECTIVE:	JOB CORPS PRH CHANGE NOTICE NO. 06-04
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TO: ALL JOB CORPS NATIONAL OFFICE STAFF  
ALL JOB CORPS REGIONAL DIRECTORS  
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER DIRECTORS  
ALL JOB CORPS CENTER OPERATORS  
ALL NATIONAL TRAINING AND SUPPORT CONTRACTORS  
ALL OUTREACH, ADMISSIONS, AND CTS CONTRACTORS

FROM: ESTHER R. JOHNSON, Ed.D.  
National Director  
Office of Job Corps

SUBJECT: **PRH Chapter 1:** Changes on the Verification, Documentation and Assembly of High School Diploma/General Education Development Documents; Corresponding Updates in Exhibit 1-1 and Exhibit 1-5;  
**PRH Chapter 3:** Changes on Center Development Plan Requirements; Changes on the High School Diploma/General Education Development Requirements, Reporting, Documentation, and Recordkeeping; Guidelines for Compliance with IDEA Legislation; and Updates in Appendix 301 and Appendix 304

1. Purpose. To inform the Job Corps community of revisions to the Policy and Requirements Handbook (PRH) regarding Job Corps Admissions Counselors' responsibilities for the collection, verification and documentation of an applicant's High School Diploma (HSD) or General Education Development (GED) status; to provide additional guidelines on documenting students' attainments of their HSD or GED while participating in the Job Corps program; and, to ensure that Job Corps' HSD programs covered by existing legislation are in compliance with requirements for assessing and providing special education services to students with disabilities. This Notice also informs the Job Corps community of revisions in Appendix 301 regarding guidelines used to determine the TABE levels for retests and follow-up tests.

2. Background. ***HSD/GED Verification, Documentation and Reporting.*** During the admissions process, one of the criteria used for determining an applicant's eligibility to participate in the Job Corps program is the applicant's educational background, including the attainment of a HSD or GED. The Job Corps Data Sheet (ETA 652) and the Admissions Counselor's Assessment Tool (ACAT) capture this information, which the admissions counselor (AC) enters into the Outreach and Admissions Student Information System (OASIS). Guidelines for the assessment, verification, and documentation of the required information are detailed in

Exhibit 1-1 of the PRH (Attachment A). However, in a number of cases, the educational information in OASIS must be changed when a student arrives at a center, specifically regarding details on the student's GED and/or HSD status. Questions arise regarding the verification of the information provided, the accreditation of the school that issued the diploma, and the acceptability of high school diplomas from foreign countries. For example, students who state that they completed the 12<sup>th</sup> grade may not have actually obtained diplomas if they have not passed state-mandated high school exit exams. Similarly, students may state that they obtained their GED but could not present a copy of their GED certificate, and the centers are unable to obtain verification.

The PRH changes outlined in this Notice provide clarification and additional guidelines to assist ACs in verifying and documenting an applicant's HSD or GED status. They streamline related processes to ensure the information documented in the applicant's admissions file and in OASIS, as well as documents submitted to the centers on a student's academic status, are accurate. The release of this Notice will be accompanied by a modification on the OASIS Enrollment Page to capture more specific information on a student's HSD or GED status. This allows centers to more effectively address and serve the students' needs upon arrival.

Job Corps centers have also raised questions concerning the completion date entered in the Center Information System (CIS) when a student obtains a GED or completes a HSD program while on center, but has not received a GED Certificate or diploma at the time of separation. A change in PRH Section 3.11 provides guidance on the completion date to be entered in CIS to ensure that centers receive credit for the students' HSD/GED attainments.

***HSD Program Compliance with Federal Statutes.*** In support of Job Corps' High School Diploma Program Initiative, centers have established high school programs in partnership with local school districts, charter schools, private schools, and online schools. In some cases, centers have become state-accredited diploma-granting high schools, and may be designated as a Local Education Agency (LEA) that operates schools.

State Education Agencies (SEAs), LEAs, and secondary schools administered by an SEA or LEA are required to assess students for disabilities under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEA), and to provide special education services to those students. Consequently, Job Corps centers that are diploma-granting high schools and are in one of the categories below, are subject to federal, state and local regulations for the administration of IDEA. Additionally, Job Corps centers receiving federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education are also required to assess students under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The entities required to assess students for disabilities and provide special education services are:

- Public secondary schools administered by an LEA (i.e., school district or board);
- Public charter schools; and
- Public or private schools receiving U.S. Department of Education funds.

Centers that are degree-conferring high schools and meet the above criteria must document their processes for assessing students with undisclosed disabilities and provide special education services, directly or through partners, to ensure that centers are in compliance with applicable provisions of existing legislation.

3. Explanation of Proposed Changes. Highlights of proposed PRH changes are as follow:

a. Chapter 1: Outreach and Admissions, Section 1.6 Enrollment Readiness

- (1) Revise Requirement R2d to require that a copy of official GED or high school record is included in the applicant's file, if available. If records are unavailable at the time of admission, the AC must include documentation of an official request for HSD or GED records.
- (2) Revise R2d1 to eliminate the requirement for official transcripts to be in a sealed envelope.
- (3) Add R2d2, which requires a copy of the applicant's GED Certificate or Official GED Test Scores.
- (4) Add R2d3, which requires a copy of an acceptable HSD or official high school transcripts indicating graduation if the ETA 652 indicates completion of 12<sup>th</sup> grade and graduation from high school. This also references Exhibit 1-1, which describes an acceptable diploma, and provides a guideline on when it is appropriate for an AC to document that the applicant has a HSD on the ACAT and in OASIS.
- (5) Revise R2e1 to indicate that a copy of the applicant's Official GED Test Scores is acceptable in lieu of a copy of the GED Certificate.
- (6) Add R2e2 to add to the list of original documents that need to be assembled for use on center, a copy of an acceptable HSD or official high school transcripts indicating graduation, as applicable.

b. Exhibit 1-1

Replace the current version of Exhibit 1-1: Job Corps Eligibility and Additional Selection Criteria and Documentation Requirements, with the revised version which adds verification and documentation requirements, as well as guidelines on what documents are acceptable as proof of an applicant's HSD or GED credentials, should this be indicated on the ETA 652. Web sites and resources for obtaining GED certificates and transcripts as well as evaluating foreign diplomas have also been included. These revisions are listed in Exhibit 1-1 under Section E: Education/Training/Family Needs. (Note: A Guide to Educational Systems Around the World by Shelley Feagles will be available from NAFSA in October 2006).

c. Exhibit 1-5

Replace the current version of Exhibit 1-5: Records Release Authorization with the revised version which:

- (1) Includes, in the list of documents that may be requested, a copy of the applicant's HSD or GED certificate, and/or supporting documentation for the Individual Education Plan (IEP) or 504 plan;
- (2) Requests the printed name of the person responding to the request;
- (3) Condenses the form into a single-page document; and,
- (4) Updates the accompanying instructions to the form, and replaces all references to outreach and admissions (OA) counselors to admissions counselors (AC).

d. Chapter 3: Career Development Period

- (1) Add R1c3(a)6 to Section 3.1 Center Plan, to include documentation requirements for centers subject to the provisions of IDEA and Section 504.
- (2) Add R1c to Section 3.11 High School Diploma and GED Certificate, to confirm center compliance with IDEA and Section 504.
- (3) Revise Section 3.11 High School Diploma and GED Certificate, R2 to update the required instruction for GED.
- (4) Revise Section 3.11 High School Diploma and GED Certificate, R4 to provide additional guidelines on required documentation and the appropriate HSD or GED completion date to be recorded in CIS.
- (5) Update Chapter 3 Table of Contents to reflect above changes.

e. Appendix 301:

Replace the current version of Appendix 301: Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Requirements and Instructions with the revised version, which includes updated guidelines for calculating TABE levels for retests and follow-up tests. These guidelines are now aligned with existing features of the Testing Management System (TMS).

f. Appendix 304:

Replace the current version of Appendix 304: Guidelines for the Accreditation of Job Corps’ High School Programs with the revised version, which provides updated information on the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools.

4. Filing Instructions.

<b><u>REMOVE FROM PRH</u></b>	<b><u>INSERT</u></b>
Chapter 1, Section 1.6, dated February 6, 2006	Chapter 1, Section 1.6 dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 1, Exhibit 1-1, dated February 6, 2006	Chapter 1, Exhibit 1-1, dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 1, Exhibit 1-5, dated November 15, 2004	Chapter 1, Exhibit 1-5, dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 3, Table of Contents, dated June 12, 2006	Chapter 3, Table of Contents, dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 3, Section 3.1, dated May 12, 2006	Chapter 3, Section 3.1, dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 3, Section 3.11, dated May 12, 2006	Chapter 3, Section 3.11 dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 3, Appendix 301, dated July 1, 2005	Chapter 3, Appendix 301, dated September 25, 2006
Chapter 3, Appendix 304, dated November 15, 2004	Chapter 3, Appendix 304, dated September 25, 2006

5. Action Required. Addressees are to ensure that a copy of this Change Notice is distributed to the appropriate staff.

To ensure compliance with federal statutes, Job Corps centers that meet or might fall under any of the criteria under IDEA or Section 504 must contact their SEA, LEA, and/or the U.S. Department of Education to confirm:

- their status under IDEA and Section 504; and
- the required processes to provide assessments for students with undisclosed cognitive disabilities, and special education services.

Centers should obtain a letter from their SEA, LEA and/or the U.S. Department of Education advising the center on its obligations to comply with legislation. The guidance to the center outlined in the letter from the SEA, LEA and/or the U.S. Department of Education should be incorporated into the center’s Career Development Plan. During regularly scheduled center assessments, Regional Offices will review center plans and high school programs, including Memoranda of Understanding or Memoranda of Agreement, to confirm that centers and partners are compliant with their obligations under IDEA and Section 504.

7. Effective Date. September 25, 2006.

8. Inquiries. Inquiries should be directed to Lynne Fry at (202) 693-3101, or [fry.lynne@dol.gov](mailto:fry.lynne@dol.gov); or Miles Galicia at (202) 693-3933, [galicia.milagros@dol.gov](mailto:galicia.milagros@dol.gov).

#### Attachments

- A – Chapter 1, Section 1.6
- B – Chapter 1, Exhibit 1-1
- C – Chapter 1, Exhibit 1-5
- D – Chapter 3, Table of Contents
- E – Chapter 3, Section 3.1
- F – Chapter 3, Section 3.11
- G – Chapter 3, Appendix 301
- H – Chapter 3, Appendix 304