****

# **Virginia’s GED Credentialing™**

# **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Administrators**

**August 2022**

**Effective January 1, 2014, Virginia secured a credentialing service for use throughout the entire state to produce all new and historical GED® transcripts and certificates. The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education will no longer accept requests for duplicate copies of GED® credentials. These FAQs will assist adult education administrators to answer any questions pertaining to this new credentialing service. This new service will significantly reduce response time for test takers to obtain their GED® documents.**

**Q: What is GED Credentialing™?**

A: GED Credentialing™ is a full-service program that Virginia uses to outsource all fulfillment requests for transcripts and certificates. The service includes fulfillment for new graduates and historical requests dating back to 1947.

**Q: What does GED Credentialing™ mean for my program?**

A: GED Credentialing™ eliminates the administrative burden of fulfilling requests for secure duplicate transcripts and certificates at the local level. GED Credentialing™ uses the services of Parchment, a secure, electronic transcript fulfillment company for high schools nationwide.

GED Credentialing™ is provided to the Department of Education at no additional cost. It provides service for both first-time and historical transcript and certificate requests. The Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education and regional and local GED® programs will no longer have to provide and maintain fulfillment functions within their offices.

1. **Q: What does GED Credentialing™ cost students?**

A: Currently, students receive their initial transcript and certificate free of charge after completing the GED® test; however, the certificate is not automatically sent to the new graduate and needs to be requested.

For each repeat or historical request for GED® credentials, the individual or organization that makes the request (e.g., past student, employer, school, employment verification firm) pays a $15 fee for each item ordered.

**Q: Is the GED® credential I receive from GED Credentialing™ still a Virginia credential?**

A: Yes. GED Credentialing™ fulfills requests for Virginia’s GED® certificates and the Smart Transcript through the GED Testing Service®. The Virginia Department of Education remains the issuing agency. The certificate features Virginia official signatures and design. Other states recognize this certificate as documentation of high school completion.

**Q: What does GED Credentialing™ mean to current GED® test takers?**

A: A free, secure electronic transcript is delivered to their email as soon as they have passed the GED® test. They will want to retain this electronic version on their computer for future documentation needed to show that they have earned a high school equivalency credential. Encourage them not to delete this document from their files.

In that same email, they will also receive an electronic version of their certificate that includes a link to order a professionally printed Virginia GED® certificate free of charge.

They will receive a free initial certificate after they pass the GED® test, but only upon their request. Remember, certificates are not automatically sent to graduates.

**Q: What is a Smart Transcript?**

A: The Smart Transcript is an electronic transcript that not only provides a Virginia test- taker’s scores, but also includes links to the GED Testing Service website with additional information regarding what the GED® test measures, what the scores mean, and what skills the test taker demonstrated on the test. This includes information about earning a GED® Passing Score and the GED® Passing Score with College Ready or College Ready + Credit.

**Q: Will historical requests also receive a Smart Transcript?**

A: Yes. GED Credentialing™ uses Smart Transcripts to fulfill all transcript requests, including historical requests. A Smart Transcript is customized based on the GED® test series taken by an individual and explains the scoring and types of content tested.

**Q: How do test takers request their historical transcripts?**

A: Anyone seeking to order duplicate copies of their transcript or certificate will go to [GED Credentialing™](https://ged.com/life_after_ged/). If a match is found in the database, their request will be answered quickly. If an electronic transcript is ordered, it will be delivered within 24 hours to the graduate’s email address. If a paper copy is ordered, it usually takes 5-7 days to receive it in the mail. If a match is not found immediately, a manual search will be done, and it may take a few days to fulfill the request. The test taker will be notified if this situation arises.

**Q: Can students send their transcript and certificate to colleges and employers?**

A: Yes, students can forward the free electronic transcript they received in their email inbox directly to potential colleges and employers; however, first check with the postsecondary institution or employer to see if they will accept these documents electronically from a personal email account. GED Credentialing™ also will send GED® credentials anywhere requested during the ordering process.

**Q: How does GED Credentialing™ access the jurisdiction’s data and historical records?**

A: In order to fulfill historical transcript requests, GED Testing Service® worked closely with Virginia to safely and securely acquire all student data either as electronic data or physical data (such as paper, microfiche, or card stock).

**Q: Who owns Virginia’s data?**

A: All data is still owned by Virginia. Parchment merely stores the data in order to fulfill transcript and certificate requests on behalf of the Department of Education. If Virginia should cancel its agreement with GED Credentialing™, GED Testing Service® will return all data to the jurisdiction free of charge.

**Q: How is Virginia’s data stored?**

A: All electronic data is stored through a secure website while physical records are stored at a secured facility where some requests may be sent for manual fulfillment.

**Q: Are the electronic transcripts and certificates secure?**

A: All Virginia GED® credentialing documents, including transcripts and certificates, are secure. The electronic delivery system uses Parchment’s patented Blue Ribbon™ Security system, which is more secure than delivering a physical, paper copy.

**Q: What security system is used to protect the integrity of Smart Transcripts and certificates?**

A: GED Credentialing™ uses Blue Ribbon™ Security, a secure delivery system developed and patented by Parchment. When individuals receive their requested documents, Blue Ribbon™ Security guarantees the document has not been altered. Each electronic transcript and certificate contains a certificate code, which is then validated against Parchment’s database to verify all content is the same as the original document that was sent out. The recipient can easily assess the integrity of a transcript or certificate by noting the presence of a blue ribbon indicating the document is authentic and trustworthy or a red X indicating the document has been altered.

**Q: Do colleges and employers know about the Blue Ribbon™ Security?**

A: Parchment currently works with over 4,000 colleges, and over a third of all high school certificates are delivered by Parchment using this secure process. Virginia Community Colleges can sign up for Parchment’s FREE Receive service to easily obtain the secure, electronic credentials. Every electronic transcript will contain a cover letter explaining the Blue Ribbon™ Security to colleges and employers.

**Q: What do my students do if they do not have Internet access to order their credentials?**

A: Your students have two choices. Either they can complete a mail-in form or they can call a number to request a form. As an administrator, you can print [this form](https://parchment.my.site.com/GED/s/article/Pay-by-money-order) for the student. (located on the Adult Education HSE website under GED Transcript and Certificate Requests). Alternatively, students can call (888)-906-4031 to request this paper form.

**Q: How does one of my students get more information about GED Credentialing™?**

A: If you or your students are interested in learning more about GED Credentialing™ and the Smart Transcript, contact the Virginia Department of Education’s High School Equivalency Specialist at 804-225-3999, the GED® Hotline at the Virginia Adult Learning Resource Center at 877-376-9433 or visit the GED Credentialing™ [website](https://ged.com/life_after_ged/).