

1 AN ACT concerning education.

2 **Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,**
3 **represented in the General Assembly:**

4 Section 5. The School Code is amended by changing Section
5 3-15.12 as follows:

6 (105 ILCS 5/3-15.12) (from Ch. 122, par. 3-15.12)

7 Sec. 3-15.12. High school equivalency testing program. The
8 regional superintendent of schools shall make available for
9 qualified individuals residing within the region a High School
10 Equivalency Testing Program. For that purpose the regional
11 superintendent alone or with other regional superintendents
12 may establish and supervise a testing center or centers to
13 administer the secure forms for high school equivalency testing
14 to qualified persons. Such centers shall be under the
15 supervision of the regional superintendent in whose region such
16 centers are located, subject to the approval of the Executive
17 Director of the Illinois Community College Board.

18 An individual is eligible to apply to the regional
19 superintendent of schools for the region in which he or she
20 resides if he or she is: (a) a person who is 17 years of age or
21 older, has maintained residence in the State of Illinois, and
22 is not a high school graduate; (b) a person who is successfully
23 completing an alternative education program under Section

1 2-3.81, Article 13A, or Article 13B; or (c) a person who is
2 enrolled in a youth education program sponsored by the Illinois
3 National Guard. For purposes of this Section, residence is that
4 abode which the applicant considers his or her home. Applicants
5 may provide as sufficient proof of such residence and as an
6 acceptable form of identification a driver's license, valid
7 passport, military ID, or other form of government-issued
8 national or foreign identification that shows the applicant's
9 name, address, date of birth, signature, and photograph or
10 other acceptable identification as may be allowed by law or as
11 regulated by the Illinois Community College Board. Such
12 regional superintendent shall determine if the applicant meets
13 statutory and regulatory state standards. If qualified the
14 applicant shall at the time of such application pay a fee
15 established by the Illinois Community College Board, which fee
16 shall be paid into a special fund under the control and
17 supervision of the regional superintendent. Such moneys
18 received by the regional superintendent shall be used, first,
19 for the expenses incurred in administering and scoring the
20 examination, and next for other educational programs that are
21 developed and designed by the regional superintendent of
22 schools to assist those who successfully complete high school
23 equivalency testing in furthering their academic development
24 or their ability to secure and retain gainful employment,
25 including programs for the competitive award based on test
26 scores of college or adult education scholarship grants or

1 similar educational incentives. Any excess moneys shall be paid
2 into the institute fund.

3 Any applicant who has achieved the minimum passing
4 standards as established by the Illinois Community College
5 Board shall be notified in writing by the regional
6 superintendent and shall be issued a high school equivalency
7 certificate on the forms provided by the Illinois Community
8 College Board. The regional superintendent shall then certify
9 to the Illinois Community College Board the score of the
10 applicant and such other and additional information that may be
11 required by the Illinois Community College Board. The moneys
12 received therefrom shall be used in the same manner as provided
13 for in this Section.

14 Any applicant who has attained the age of 17 years and
15 maintained residence in the State of Illinois and is not a high
16 school graduate, any person who has enrolled in a youth
17 education program sponsored by the Illinois National Guard, or
18 any person who has successfully completed an alternative
19 education program under Section 2-3.81, Article 13A, or Article
20 13B is eligible to apply for a high school equivalency
21 certificate (if he or she meets the requirements prescribed by
22 the Illinois Community College Board) upon showing evidence
23 that he or she has completed, successfully, high school
24 equivalency testing, administered by the United States Armed
25 Forces Institute, official high school equivalency testing
26 centers established in other states, Veterans' Administration

1 Hospitals, or the office of the State Superintendent of
2 Education for the Illinois State Penitentiary System and the
3 Department of Corrections. Such applicant shall apply to the
4 regional superintendent of the region wherein he or she has
5 maintained residence, and, upon payment of a fee established by
6 the Illinois Community College Board, the regional
7 superintendent shall issue a high school equivalency
8 certificate and immediately thereafter certify to the Illinois
9 Community College Board the score of the applicant and such
10 other and additional information as may be required by the
11 Illinois Community College Board.

12 Notwithstanding the provisions of this Section, any
13 applicant who has been out of school for at least one year may
14 request the regional superintendent of schools to administer
15 restricted high school equivalency testing upon written
16 request of: the director of a program who certifies to the
17 Chief Examiner of an official high school equivalency testing
18 center that the applicant has completed a program of
19 instruction provided by such agencies as the Job Corps, the
20 Postal Service Academy, or an apprenticeship training program;
21 an employer or program director for purposes of entry into
22 apprenticeship programs; another state's department of
23 education in order to meet regulations established by that
24 department of education; or a post high school educational
25 institution for purposes of admission, the Department of
26 Financial and Professional Regulation for licensing purposes,

1 or the Armed Forces for induction purposes. The regional
2 superintendent shall administer such testing, and the
3 applicant shall be notified in writing that he or she is
4 eligible to receive a high school equivalency certificate upon
5 reaching age 17, provided he or she meets the standards
6 established by the Illinois Community College Board.

7 Any test administered under this Section to an applicant
8 who does not speak and understand English may at the discretion
9 of the administering agency be given and answered in any
10 language in which the test is printed. The regional
11 superintendent of schools may waive any fees required by this
12 Section in case of hardship. The regional superintendent of
13 schools and the Illinois Community College Board shall waive
14 any fees required by this Section for an applicant who meets
15 all of the following criteria:

16 (1) The applicant qualifies as a homeless person,
17 child, or youth as defined in the Education for Homeless
18 Children Act.

19 (2) The applicant has not attained 25 years of age as
20 of the date of the scheduled test.

21 (3) The applicant can verify his or her status as a
22 homeless person, child, or youth. A homeless services
23 provider that is qualified to verify an individual's
24 housing status, as determined by the Illinois Community
25 College Board, and that has knowledge of the applicant's
26 housing status may verify the applicant's status for

1 purposes of this subdivision (3).

2 (4) The applicant has completed a high school
3 equivalency preparation course through an Illinois
4 Community College Board-approved provider.

5 (5) The applicant is taking the test at a testing
6 center operated by a regional superintendent of schools or
7 the Cook County High School Equivalency Office.

8 In counties of over 3,000,000 population, a high school
9 equivalency certificate shall contain the signatures of the
10 Executive Director of the Illinois Community College Board and
11 the superintendent, president, or other chief executive
12 officer of the institution where high school equivalency
13 testing instruction occurred and any other signatures
14 authorized by the Illinois Community College Board.

15 The regional superintendent of schools shall furnish the
16 Illinois Community College Board with any information that the
17 Illinois Community College Board requests with regard to
18 testing and certificates under this Section.

19 (Source: P.A. 98-718, eff. 1-1-15; 98-719, eff. 1-1-15; 99-78,
20 eff. 7-20-15.)