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## Free GED testing offered through June 30

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The usual \$55 fee to take the GED test that leads to the equivalent of a high school diploma is being waived through June 30 under a joint effort of the Louisville Free Public Library and the Jefferson County Public Schools' adult-education program.

Mayor Greg Fischer promoted the drive Tuesday at a news conference at the Main Library. He noted that nearly 20 percent of Jefferson County adults don't have a high school diploma and that high school dropouts typically earn 25 percent to 50 percent less than high school graduates.

Fischer said the effort fits in with a communitywide goal set last year to have 55,000 local adults obtain college degrees by 2020. And he said it underscores his administration's belief that improving the local education level increases economic and development opportunities.

Fischer said many people consider taking the GED but put it off for a variety of reasons, including the fee. If people are considering taking the test, "go for it," the mayor said.

The county's public schools a year ago set a target of 1,350 local adults passing the GED test this fiscal year, which ends June 30. About 700 people have passed the GED since last July 1, about half of the goal, officials said.

To help attain the target, the Louisville Library Foundation is providing \$50,000 to subsidize the cost of the test and practice tests over the next three months and for preparation classes and other support, said Craig Buthod, the Louisville library director.

The tests and prep classes are given regularly at locations around the county, including branch libraries, community centers and schools. Officials urged people to call 485-3400 to get information or to schedule a time and place to take the test, practice test or classes. You must live or work in Jefferson County to be eligible for the free GED program.

Buthod said the library plans a strong push for the GED program, including sending emails to library cardholders outlining the effort and promoting it on its website, [www.LFPL.org](http://www.LFPL.org).

Heaven Covington, 20, of Louisville, who spoke at the news conference, said she dropped out of school in the seventh grade but recently passed the GED. She now has a job and is taking college courses.

She said in an interview that she dropped out because she didn't think she could stand the challenges that attending school posed. Asked where she would probably be without having passed the GED, she said, "Nowhere."

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