

# U.S. SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATIONS

The United States Service Academies are among the most highly respected, quality educational programs in the nation. To be admitted to an academy, you must meet stringent academic, physical and medical requirements specified by public law. As a cadet/plebe at the academy, you will be provided a fully-funded four-year college education. By law, graduates of service academies appointed as commissioned officers in the respective service are required to serve at least five years active duty. For the United States Merchant Marine Academy, the obligation will be with the U.S. Naval Reserve, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, another U.S. Reserve, or National Guard Unit.

## I. General Guidelines

Each candidate must:

- Be at least 17 years old, but have not passed their 23<sup>rd</sup> Birthday (25 years for U.S. Merchant Marine Academy);
- Be a citizen of the United States;
- Be unmarried, not pregnant or have any legal obligation to support children or dependents;
- Be a legal resident of the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

In addition to statutory requirements, each academy has established academic, physical, and leadership requirements for admission. Candidates for appointment to each academy must:

- Demonstrate comprehensive academic preparation,
- Demonstrate leadership in athletics and other extracurricular activities;
- Take the SAT, or the ACT Assessment (ACT);
- Be in good physical and mental health;
- Pass a comprehensive medical examination; and
- Pass a physical aptitude examination.

## II. Communication with the Academies

The academies will start your candidate file when you complete the Pre-Candidate Questionnaire. The questionnaire can be completed electronically and can be found at the websites of each academy. This ideally should be done the SPRING of your junior year in high school.

After you complete the questionnaire, and are considered a competitive candidate, you will receive additional forms to complete from the academy in the mail.

The admissions office of each academy also coordinates a nationwide network of trained Academy Liaison Officers. Once you have made initial contact with the academies, you will be able to receive assistance and guidance throughout your admissions process.

## III. Academy Admissions Office Addresses

**Three reside within the Department of Defense**

### U.S. Military Academy

West Point Admissions  
Building 606  
West Point, NY 10996  
Phone: (845) 938-4041  
Website: [www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)

### U.S. Airforce Academy

The Director of Admissions  
Colorado Springs, CO 80840  
Phone: (800) 443-9266  
Website: [www.usafa.edu](http://www.usafa.edu)

### U.S. Naval Academy

U.S. Naval Academy Admissions  
52 King George Street  
Annapolis, MD 21402  
Phone: (410) 293-4361  
Website: [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)

### The Department of Transportation

#### U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

300 Steamboat Road  
Kings Point, NY 11024-1699  
Phone: (516) 733-5391  
Website: [www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)

### The Department of Homeland Security

#### U.S. Coast Guard Academy

31 Mohegan Avenue  
New London, CT 06320  
Phone: (800) 444-8500  
Website: [www.cga.edu](http://www.cga.edu)

**NOTE:** The U.S. Coast Guard Academy does not require a congressional nomination. Appointments are considered solely on the basis of an annual nationwide competition.

# U.S. SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATIONS

## IV. Academic Qualifications

My office follows the academic requirements set forth by the academies when making a nomination. Certain requirements are specified by current public law; however, the academies look at the “whole person” when considering admission. Character, leadership, physical aptitude, medical fitness, goals and motivation are key components of a favorable evaluation for admission.

The following are **recommended** areas of preparation and academic requirements:

### College Preparatory Studies

**Four Years:** English, Mathematics (includes: Algebra, Trigonometry and Geometry)

**Three Years:** Social Science (includes: History, Economics and Government)

**Two Years:** Laboratory Science (includes: Biology, Physics and Chemistry)

### Class Rank and Class Percentage

Nominees are generally expected to be in the top 40% of their class. However, the most successful candidates are in the top 10-20% of their class. We do recognize that some high schools do not rank students.

## V. Extracurricular Activities and Leadership

Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extracurricular activities, scouting, ROTC, Keystone Boys/Girls state, church or other community-related activities demonstrate evidence of leadership potential. The Academy’s admissions committee gives more consideration to applicants who demonstrate higher levels of involvement and leadership. This strengthens your overall evaluation during the admissions process.

The service academies consider it more valuable to achieve distinction in a specific activity, rather than participation in a number of activities without any evidence of leadership.

If you have a part-time job that affects your level of involvement in school activities, the academies view your work experience as a demonstration of your leadership potential.

## V. Extracurricular Activities and Leadership

Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extracurricular activities, scouting, ROTC, Keystone Boys/Girls state, church or other community-related activities demonstrate evidence of leadership potential. The Academy’s admissions committee gives more consideration to applicants who demonstrate higher levels of involvement and leadership. This strengthens your overall evaluation during the admissions process.

The service academies consider it more valuable to achieve distinction in a specific activity, rather than participation in a number of activities without any evidence of leadership.

If you have a part-time job that affects your level of involvement in school activities, the academies view your work experience as a demonstration of your leadership potential.

## VI. Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB)

All Academies require you pass a Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB). The academy to which you apply will initiate the scheduling of an examination with the Department of Defense. Once taken, the examination may be used for all service academies. **A service academy medical examination must be passed before a candidate can receive an appointment.** The most frequently encountered problem areas include:

- **Visual Acuity:** All candidates accepted shall have an uncorrected visual acuity no poorer than 20/400 in either eye and must be correctable to 20/20.
- **Color Vision:** Color blindness, complete or partial, can be cause for disqualification
- **Asthma:** Any history of asthma may also cause for disqualification

The Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB)

**8304 Edgerton Drive, Suite 132**

**U.S.A.F. Academy, CO 80840-2200**

**(800) 841-2706 (scheduling)**

**(719) 333-3562 (status)**

**Website: <https://dodmerb.tricare.osd.mil/>**

# U.S. Service Academy Nominations

## VII. Service Obligation

Graduation from a United States Service Academy obligates you to serve five (5) years of Active-Duty Service.

The United States Merchant Marine Academy requires service within the Maritime industry and an obligation with the U.S. Navy Reserve, U.S. Coast Guard Reserve, another U.S. Reserve, or National Guard Unit.

## Congressional Nomination

It is a tremendous honor to receive a Congressional nomination and appointment to a military academy. Only the brightest of America's youth are offered a chance to attend one of these historical institutions. An appointment comes with great responsibility as you would be among our nation's military leaders, defending our freedoms around the world.

A Congressional Nomination is Required to gain an appointment to the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, Military Academy at West Point, or the Merchant Marine Academy. A Congressional Nomination is **NOT** required to attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. All applicants interested in the U.S. Coast Guard Academy must contact it directly by mail or online. Those interested in serving in the Marine Corps should apply to the Naval Academy to take the Marine Corps Option or the Merchant Marine Academy.

While you **Must** have a Nomination for an Appointment, **A Nomination Does NOT Guarantee an Appointment.**

The Academy will make the final decision on each candidate based on the academy's own standards. An elected official may nominate you, but only an academy may appoint you. You are encouraged to apply to as many nominating authorities as possible. Candidates may begin applying to the Academies in the spring of their junior year of high school. It is suggested that you start the process early to make sure you complete the requirements before established deadlines.

Nominations are based on a composite of academic achievement, leadership, extracurricular activities, physical fitness, a personal statement and 3 letters of recommendation.

## I. Nomination Procedures

Each applicant must meet the eligibility requirements highlighted in the Academy Requirements section of this packet as well as complete a nomination file with Congressman Rob Bresnahan's Office no later than **October 30, 2026** by 5:00PM.

A nomination file consists of the following items:

- Congressman Bresnahan's Application
- Privacy Form
- High School and/or College Transcripts
  - Class Rank and Percentage **REQUIRED\***

\*We recognize that some high schools do not rank students, thus If you are unable to meet this requirement, please indicate on application\*

- ACT/SAT Official Scores
- Essay
- 3 Letters of Recommendation
- Current Resume
- Recent Photograph of Yourself
- Employers Evaluation (West Point Applicants Only)

### A. Application

Please complete the application included in the packet and return it and all related materials to Director of Service Academy Nominations, at [PA08ServiceAcademy@mail.house.gov](mailto:PA08ServiceAcademy@mail.house.gov)

### B. High School/College Transcript

A transcript is a listing of all the high school and college-level courses you have taken and the grades you received in those classes. In some instances, it may also include absences or disciplinary action, etc. You may obtain a transcript by asking your high school guidance counselor for a copy. If you are in college, you may ask for a copy of your college transcript in the registrar's office. In that case, you will need to submit a high school transcript in addition to your college transcript.

# U.S. Service Academy Nominations

## C. ACT/SAT

You are not required to take one exam over the other and you may submit scores from both tests. Your ACT/SAT decision may be determined by which school you plan to apply for admission. The Academy Selection Board will accept your best overall composite if you take a test more than once. Historically, the best candidates have taken the test multiple times, you must submit an official copy of these scores.

## D. PERSONAL ESSAY

No more than 1,500 Word Essay in **APA Format** explaining the Following:

- Why do YOU want to attend a Service Academy and Serve as an Officer in the Military?
- What does "Service" mean to you?
- Find a quote on Leadership (including proper citation) and explain how that quote relates to your Leadership Style.
- Describe a Personal Experience that Developed you as a Leader?

Please be advised your submissions will be closely scrutinized by our internal selection board. To that end, please be sure to carefully review, revise, and edit your application materials, especially your essays, knowing that they will be carefully evaluated.

## E. Letters of Recommendation

Three letters of recommendation from a combination of the following individuals are required for a complete application:

- **Math teacher**
- **Science teacher**
- **English teacher**
- **Guidance Counselor**
- **coach, clergy-member, employer/supervisor, or other individual** with firsthand knowledge of your leadership and interpersonal skills

Please do **NOT** ask immediate family members such as parents, siblings or grandparents.

Ask your references to define your qualities, describe an example of how you demonstrated great character or judgement, and why they think you should receive a nomination to a service academy.

Please have your references email or scan their signed letters directly to:

Director of Service Academy Nominations, at  
[PA08ServiceAcademy@mail.house.gov](mailto:PA08ServiceAcademy@mail.house.gov)

These letters must also arrive on or before 5:00PM, 30 October 2026 or they will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to make sure your references email the letters on time. Out of courtesy to your references and consideration for their time, get started early to ensure that your letters of recommendation arrive on time and in good order.

## F. Resume

The resume should summarize the candidate's education, awards, volunteer service, and work experience. It should be no more than one page and provide the board with a clear overview of the candidate's qualifications. Since you are applying for a nomination, the resume is an important opportunity to demonstrate why you are a strong and qualified candidate.

## G. Personal Interview

In November, after your file is complete, the Congressman's Service Academy Coordinator will contact you to arrange a 15–30-minute interview with the Academy Selection Board. Please note that correspondence will be through email.

# U.S. Service Academy Nominations

## II. Timeline for 2026-2027

The following timeline outlines the typical nomination and appointment process. Deadlines are approximate and may change due to special circumstances.

May: Application Season Open.

October: Application Packet Deadline

November: Receive Interview Appointment

December: Interview with Academy Selection Board

January: Nominations Announced by Mail

## III. FAQs:

### **Will I automatically be selected by the academy after I receive a nomination?**

No. You will be placed among a select group of nominees, and the academy of your choice will make the final decision. If selected, you will receive an offer of admission (**an appointment**) directly from the academy. A nomination does not mean you will receive an appointment by the academy.

### **What if I choose more than one academy? Will I be limited to a single nomination?**

No. You can be nominated to multiple academies depending on how well you have competed among this year's pool of candidates. It is also possible to receive multiple appointments.

All other questions should be directed to the Director of Service Academy Nominations. You can reach them at (570) 763-6120, or via email at [PA08ServiceAcademy@mail.house.gov](mailto:PA08ServiceAcademy@mail.house.gov) .