

CONGRESSMAN DWIGHT EVANS

UNITED STATES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

PENNSYLVANIA'S 3RD DISTRICT

U.S. Service Academy Guidelines

The U.S. Service Academies are among the most highly respected educational programs in the nation. To be admitted to an academy, a prospective applicant must meet stringent academic, physical, and medical requirements.

As a student at an academy, you will be provided a fully-funded four-year college education. By law, graduates of service academies are appointed commissioned officers in their respective service and are required to serve at least five years on active duty. For graduates of the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, the obligation will be with the U.S. Navy Reserve.

I. General Guidelines

Each candidate must:

- Be at least 17 but not past your 23rd birthday by July 1 of the year you enter the Academy (25th Birthday for the Merchant Marine Academy)
- Be a citizen of the United States
- Be unmarried with no dependents
- Be a legal resident of the 3rd Congressional District (Pennsylvania for the Merchant Marine Academy).

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/or other extracurricular activities

- Take the SAT or ACT assessment
- Be in good physical and mental health
- Pass a comprehensive medical examination
- 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 on the website of each academy. This should be done in 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 your academy of choice 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 Offices

Military Academy
(845) 938-4041
www.usma.edu

Air Force Academy
(800) 443-9266
www.usafa.edu

Naval Academy
(410) 293-4361
www.usna.edu

Coast Guard Academy
(800) 444-8500
www.cga.edu

Merchant Marine Academy
(516) 733-5391
www.usmma.edu

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IV. Academic Qualifications

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

The following are recommended areas of preparation and academic requirements:

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

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

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

Two Years: Foreign Language

Class Rank: Each nominee must be in the top 40% of their class. However, the most successful candidates are in the top 10-20% of their class.

Standardized Testing

Although the academies do not establish minimums, candidates who score below the following will normally not be competitive:

Military, Naval, and Air Force

SAT 560 Verbal, 600 Math

Merchant Marine

SAT 500 Verbal, 550 Math

Military, Naval, Air Force, and Merchant Marine

ACT 22 Reading, 24 Math

V. Extracurricular Activities and Leadership

Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extra-curricular activities, scouting, JROTC, Boys/Girls State, church, or other community-related activities demonstrate evidence of leadership potential. The greater level of involvement/leadership, the more points are awarded in your overall admissions

evaluation with an academy. The service academies consider it more valuable to achieve distinction in a specific activity rather than to merely participate in numerous activities without any evidence of leadership. If you have a part-time job, 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 to 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 be 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>

VII. Service Obligation

Graduation from an academy obligates you to serve five 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.

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U.S. Service Academy Nominations

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 historic institutions. An appointment comes with great responsibility as it will position you among our nation's military leaders, defending our freedoms around the world.

A nomination is required to gain an appointment to the Naval Academy, Air Force Academy, Military Academy, or Merchant Marine Academy. A Congressional nomination is *not* required to attend the Coast Guard Academy. All applicants interested in the Coast Guard Academy must contact this academy directly. Those interested in serving in the Marine Corps should apply to the Naval Academy.

While you **must** have a nomination for an appointment, **a nomination does not guarantee an appointment.** An academy will make the final decision on each candidate based on their 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 on April 1 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 letters of recommendation.

I. Nomination Procedures

Each applicant must meet the eligibility requirements highlighted in the General Guidelines section of this packet as well as complete a nomination file with Congressman Evans' office by **October 31st**.

A nomination file consists of the following items:

- Nomination Application
- High School and/or College Transcripts
- ACT/SAT Scores
- Personal Essay
- Three Letters of Recommendation
- Resume
- Current Photo

II. Application

Please complete the nomination application and mail, deliver, fax, or email required materials to:

The Honorable Dwight Evans
ATTN: Service Academy Nominations
7174 Ogontz Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19138
Fax: (215) 276-2939

Email: PA03academynominations@mail.house.gov

III. 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 school 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.

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IV. 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 the school you plan to apply to for admission. The Academy Selection Board will accept your best overall score if you take a test more than once.

V. Personal Statement

Please submit a typed personal statement, *no longer than 500 words*, indicating why you wish to attend a military academy and how your familial, religious, educational, athletic, extracurricular, community or employment preparation has led you to make this choice. In your answer, please indicate how you would meet the unique intellectual and physical challenges of a military academy.

Please be advised that an internal selection board will closely scrutinize your submissions. To that end, please be sure to carefully review, revise, and edit your application materials.

VI. Letters of Recommendation

Please select three people to write letters of recommendation for you. Your references may include teachers, coaches, neighbors, employers, clergy, and community leaders. Please do **not** ask family members. Ask your references to write about how they came to know you and in what capacity. They should also define your qualities, describe an example of how you demonstrated sound character or judgment, and why they think you should receive a nomination to a service academy. There is no word count or length limit to your letters of recommendation.

You may include your letters of recommendation when you submit your

nomination file or you may ask your references to send their letters directly to:

The Honorable Dwight Evans
ATTN: Service Academy Nominations
7174 Ogontz Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19138
Fax: (215) 276-2939

Email: PA03academynominations@mail.house.gov

VII. Resume

The resume should be a brief account of the candidate's education, awards, volunteer service, leadership experience, and work history. The resume should be no more than two pages and should provide the board with an overview of the candidate's qualifications. You are applying for a nomination. The resume is your opportunity to show that you are a qualified candidate.

VIII. Personal Interview

After your file is complete, a staff member from Congressman Evans' district office will contact you to arrange an interview with the Academy Selection Board. This board is comprised of several community leaders from across the 3rd Congressional District who will advise Congressman Evans on his nominations and offer their recommendations to him. In most cases, it is understood that you may need to miss school to attend this interview. Please let your school counselor know that you must interview for a military academy nomination and that you need an excused absence. Please contact the Congressional district office if you encounter any problems.

IX. Questions

For all questions concerning academy nominations, call (215) 276-0340 or email PA03academynominations@mail.house.gov.

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Frequency Asked Questions

WHAT IS A NOMINATION?

Members of Congress may nominate applicants who meet the eligibility requirements established by law. A candidate may seek a nomination from the following:

- A member of the U.S. House of Representatives who represents the congressional district in which the candidate resides
- Both U.S. Senators from their state
- The Vice-President of the United States

WHAT ARE THE BASIC ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS?

Each applicant for a nomination must meet the following eligibility requirements as of July 1st of the year of admission to an academy:

- Age: Be at least 17 years old, but not have passed the 23rd birthday
- Citizenship: Must be a U.S. citizen
- Marital Status: Must be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no dependents
- Residence: Must reside within the boundaries of the 3rd Congressional District of PA.
- Skill / Fitness: Must meet the medical, physical, and academic requirements of the academy

WHO DO I CONTACT TO REQUEST AN APPLICATION?

Contact the Philadelphia district office at (215) 276-0340 to request a nomination packet.

WHEN DO I APPLY FOR A NOMINATION?

The nomination application period opens on May 15th of each year for those candidates who are high school juniors and will be seniors the following school year, or who have already graduated.

WHAT IS THE DEADLINE FOR COMPLETING A NOMINATION FILE?

The deadline for submitting a nomination packet to the Philadelphia district office is October 31st.

WHAT MUST BE INCLUDED IN MY NOMINATION FILE?

A complete nomination file consists of the following items:

- Current photo
- High school/college transcript(s)
- ACT and/or SAT results
- Resume of extracurricular activities
- An essay stating why you want to attend a service academy (500 words or less)
- Minimum of three letters of recommendation

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER I HAVE COMPLETED MY NOMINATION FILE?

Applicants who submit a completed file will typically be scheduled for an interview in November.

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WHAT CRITERIA ARE USED IN SELECTING CANDIDATES?

Nominations are based on a "whole person" evaluation. Factors such as academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, leadership skills, physical aptitude, character, and motivation are taken into consideration and compared with other applicants.

HOW MANY ACADEMIES ARE THERE?

There are five service academies.

- U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York
- U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland
- U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs
- U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York
- U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut

ARE THE REQUIREMENTS THE SAME FOR ALL OF THE SERVICE ACADEMIES?

No. Although many of the qualifications are similar, each academy operates under its own admissions guidelines. Visit the academy of your choice via the websites noted for each academy's particular admissions qualifications. It is not necessary to seek a nomination to the Coast Guard Academy, as the USCGA accepts candidates based on their own testing criteria.

WHO SHOULD I ASK TO WRITE A LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION ON MY BEHALF?

Some of the people applicants typically seek recommendations from include:

- Teachers
- Employers
- Clergy
- Counselors
- Coaches
- Scout Leaders

A specific recommendation form is not required. A letter of recommendation is sufficient.

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.

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 win multiple appointments.

WHEN WILL I KNOW IF I HAVE BEEN OFFERED AN APPOINTMENT BY AN ACADEMY?

Academies will begin to notify candidates of their admission status in February. (We send the academies our nominations by the end of January). All offers of appointment are generally sent out by May.