

**UNITED STATES SERVICE ACADEMY NOMINATIONS  
2014 FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**What are the five service Academies?**

- [United States Military Academy](#)
- [United States Naval Academy](#)
- [United States Air Force Academy](#)
- [United States Merchant Marine Academy](#)
- [United States Coast Guard Academy](#)

**How do I attend an Academy?**

Admission to an Academy is a competitive two-step process:

- Step (1) is to obtain a nomination from an authorized source.
- Step (2) is to receive an appointment from the academy.

Both steps are described in greater detail below.

**What is a nomination?**

A nomination is the selection made by an authorized source. Title 10 of the U.S. Code establishes two types of nominations: 1) congressional and 2) presidential/military service connected.

Congressional nominations include selections made by 1) the Vice President, who nominates candidates from any part of the nation, 2) U.S. Senators, who nominate candidates from their entire state, and 3) U.S. Representatives, who nominate candidates that reside within their congressional district.

**What is an appointment?**

An appointment allows you admission to an Academy and is only granted by the individual Academies AFTER an applicant has received a nomination and competed with other nominees in the areas of academics, leadership potential and physical aptitude.

**What are the basic eligibility requirements for a nomination?**

To be eligible for nomination, you must meet these requirements by July 1, 2015:

- Be at least 17-years-old, but not past your 23rd birthday.
- U.S. citizen.
- Unmarried, not pregnant, and without legal obligation to support children or other dependents.
- Reside within the legal boundaries of the Representative's Congressional District for which you are applying and of the State of New Mexico (if you are applying for a nomination from Senator Udall or Heinrich). *If you are attending a Service Academy Prep School, a University out of state, or have recently relocated out of the State due to your parents' service in the military, and maintain New Mexico as your state of residence, you may still apply with our offices.*

**Can I apply for a nomination from more than one source?**

Yes. Because the nomination and appointment process is competitive, you should seek all the nominations for which you are eligible. Every candidate is eligible for the four congressional nominations: one from the Vice President [Joe Biden](#), one from U.S. Senator [Tom Udall](#), one from U.S. Senator [Martin Heinrich](#), and one from the Representative of your local Congressional district: 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional District – Representative [Michelle Lujan Grisham](#), 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District – Representative [Steve Pearce](#), or the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District – Representative [Ben Ray Lujan, Jr.](#)

**Can I also apply for a presidential nomination?**

Yes, if you are eligible. Presidential nominations are reserved for children of career military personnel. To qualify, the parent must meet one of the following criteria:

- Be on active duty and have served continuously on active duty for at least eight years.
- Be retired with pay or have been granted retired or retainer pay.
- Be a reservist or National Guard member (see Section 12733 Title 10 USC for details).
- Have died after being retired with pay or being granted retired or retainer pay.
- Have begun adoption proceedings before the child's 15th birthday.

**Who can apply for the military service nominations?**

- Children of a deceased or disabled member of the Armed Forces may apply for nomination if the parent was killed or is 100% disabled by wounds or injuries received or diseases contracted while in active service.
- Children of armed service members or civilian employees in active government service who are in an officially determined status of missing in action may apply for a nomination.
- Children of Medal of Honor recipients from any branch of the armed services may apply for nomination.

**How do I apply for a presidential or military service nomination?**

Contact the Academy in which you are interested for specific instructions.

**Can I apply for a nomination if I am active duty in the armed services or reserves?**

Yes. Active duty armed service members are eligible for the four congressional nominations, in addition to a nomination through their branch of the armed services. For more details, contact your commanding officer.

**How many candidates can Sen. Udall nominate?**

Each Member of Congress is allowed five appointees at each Academy over a four year period. This means that in most years, Sen. Udall will be making nominations for one vacancy at each Academy. As Sen. Udall uses the competitive method, he will nominate up to ten candidates for each vacancy.

**When should I apply for a nomination?**

The spring semester of your junior year of high school is the best time to apply. However, you may also apply in the fall semester of your senior year, as well as after you graduate from high school, as long as you meet the basic eligibility requirements. Prospective applicants are encouraged to begin the application process well in advance of the deadline.

**What is the deadline for completing my nomination file?**

You must have a complete file updated with my office *by Friday, October 10, 2014*. This includes your online application, two letters of recommendation, a principal/guidance counselor form, high school/collegiate transcripts, and a copy of your SAT and/or ACT scores.

**Why is an essay needed in the application?**

Your essay is very important. This is your chance to explain why you want to attend a service academy. It doesn't have to be long or elaborate; keep it short, no longer than one page. Be yourself; don't try to impress with fancy language. Remember to proofread!

**What if I miss the stated deadline?**

The nomination process is competitive. To be fair to all applicants, failure to submit all information by the deadline will result in disqualification from Academy nomination consideration.

**Who should complete my two letters of recommendation?**

The letters of recommendation should be completed by a high school teacher or principal, employer, clergy/church member, coach, mentor, or an adult family friend...someone who knows you. It's a good idea to ask individuals who know you in a variety of settings such as a teacher, an employer, and a family friend. It is recommended one letter be from an academic source and the other from a non-academic source. Letters of recommendation should be submitted to my office electronically at [academy\\_letters@tomudall.senate.gov](mailto:academy_letters@tomudall.senate.gov).

**How should I submit my SAT/ACT scores?**

More often than not, test scores are recorded on your high school transcripts. However, you should have the test results sent directly to my office by the testing agency. The direct reporting code is 7162 (ACT) and 4642 (SAT).

**Can I be nominated to more than one Academy?**

Yes, it is possible to be nominated to more than one Academy. On your application, you will be asked to rank in numerical order your Academy preferences. Keep in mind that the nomination process is competitive. How well you compete among the pool of candidates will determine if you are nominated to your first choice. Therefore, only indicate your preference for Academies that you are truly interested in attending. We also recommend that you apply to more than one Academy, as you may be more competitive at one Academy compared to another.

**Do I need a nomination to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy?**

No. The USCGA is the only service academy that does not require a congressional nomination. To be considered for an appointment to the USCGA, you must submit an application and supplemental information to the Academy by March 1, 2015. Since you are already collecting much of the supplemental information requested by the USCGA, such as high school transcripts, ACT/SAT test scores and evaluations, it is a good idea to submit an application to the USCGA. For more information about the USCGA, visit [www.uscga.edu](http://www.uscga.edu).

### **Should I apply for an ROTC scholarship?**

Because the nomination and appointment process is competitive, not all candidates will receive a nomination or an appointment, so it is also a good idea to apply for an ROTC scholarship.

- [Air Force ROTC](#)
- [Army ROTC](#)
- [Naval ROTC](#)

### **What are the basic qualifications for a nomination?**

Candidates are evaluated in five areas: moral character, academic record, leadership potential, physical and medical fitness, and commitment to the military. The information you provide through your essay and letters of recommendation should reflect these basic qualifications:

- *Moral character* - All candidates are considered of good moral character, unless evidence suggests otherwise.
- *A strong academic record* - Your high school/college transcripts, class rank and SAT/ACT scores will be evaluated. However, please keep in mind that even if you are not a top student, prep school opportunities are available from the USMA, USNA, USAFA, and USCGA.
- *Demonstrated leadership potential* - List all of your extra-curricular activities, such as participation in sports, school government, clubs, church activities and employment. Also, your references will be asked to provide information about your leadership qualities.
- *Physical and medical fitness* - The individual academies will make this determination through a physical aptitude and medical examination.
- *A commitment to live a military lifestyle* - Attending an Academy is not like a normal college. When you accept an appointment to a service academy, you become a member of the U.S. Armed Services, so you must have a desire to serve in the military while obtaining your education.

### **Who is eligible to attend the prep school at the USMA, USNA, USAFA, and USMMAA?**

Prep school candidates are students who receive a nomination but do not meet the academic standards to attend an Academy. These students have been deemed to have the ability to benefit from a year at prep school with the goal of admission to an Academy. Attendance at a prep school does not guarantee an appointment, but prep school graduates are very successful in obtaining a future appointment.

### **How will I know if I am nominated?**

Nominations will be made by mid-December. You will be notified by mail.

### **Does a nomination guarantee an appointment?**

No. A nomination is the selection made by an authorized source and allows a candidate to compete for an appointment. You should also be applying at the Academies in which you are interested, while applying for a nomination.

### **When will I know if am appointed?**

The Academies will begin making appointments in late December. All appointment offers are generally completed by May 1 of each year.

**If I do not receive a nomination or an appointment, can I apply again?**

Yes. Candidates may apply up until the age of 23.

**How can I improve my chances of qualifying academically for a nomination and an appointment?**

Your high school preparation should include:

- Four years of mathematics courses - including geometry, algebra, and trigonometry. Pre-calculus and calculus courses are also encouraged.
- One year of chemistry, with lab, if possible.
- Four years of English - with special attention on the study and practice of effective writing. English and American literature courses are also helpful.
- Two years of a foreign language.
- One year of physics, with lab, if possible.
- Physical activity - involvement in sports or club teams.
- One year of U.S. history, and, if possible, one year of European or world history.
- Enrollment in one or more honors or advance placement courses.
- Enrollment in one or more college/university course through "dual enrollment"

We **recommend a minimum** ACT composite score of 26 and a minimum SAT score of 1800 to be competitive at the academy level.

**Why should I participate in extracurricular activities?**

Your participation in athletic and non-athletic extracurricular activities will help to demonstrate your ability to meet the physical, time management, and leadership demands of four years at an Academy. Maintaining the highest level of physical fitness in high school will benefit your application. Physical exercise is part of everyday life at an Academy. Your first year at an Academy is not the time to whip yourself into shape. Participation in these activities, as well as a record of part-time employment, will help to show your versatility and your ability to accept responsibility.

**Is it possible to visit the Academies?**

Yes. Each Academy hosts tours for prospective candidates and their parents, the summer between their junior and senior year. We highly recommend tours to help you decide if Academy life is right for you and which Academy you would like to attend. For more information about tours, contact the Academy in which you are interested.

**Tentative 2014 Dates for Service Academy Nominations**

April 8, 2014 - *Application Process Opens*

October 10, 2014 - *Application Process Closes*

November 8, 2014 - *Interview Day in Albuquerque (all candidates that submit a complete application packet by the October 10 deadline will be invited to interview)*