

# NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS



## Admission to the U.S. Service Academies

Appointment to a United States Service Academy is both an honorable and challenging goal. Admission can be dependent on your academic performance, your leadership or community involvement and your physical fitness. The process for admission begins with a nomination and ends with an appointment.

### What is a service academy?

The service academies provide a first-rate college education in conjunction with military training in preparation to be a commissioned officer in the U.S. military. Upon entry to the academy, except for the Merchant Marine, you will be on active duty in the military. Upon completion, you will serve in the military as an officer in the branch of your academy. If you are a Merchant Marine graduate, you will have several options of service in the government and military.

Many consider admission to a service academy to be a prestigious and rewarding experience. The full four year scholarship is estimated to be worth over \$350,000 including tuition, room and board, medical and dental care and a monthly salary. Students can expect to be educated in discipline, morals, ethics and military science in an environment that fosters development of teamwork, leadership and character.

Upon graduation from the service academy, you will then have a service contract with the government or military. After completion of your service requirement, you will most likely have earned veteran status which then entitles you to a full range of state and federal benefits which may include the VA homeloan, VA compensation and pension, VA healthcare and education benefits.

### What are the five service academies?

- **U.S. Military Academy** (Army) - West Point, New York (Est. 1802)  
<http://www.usma.edu/SitePages/Home.aspx>
- **Naval Academy** - Annapolis, Maryland (Est. 1845)  
<http://www.usna.edu/homepage.php>
- **Coast Guard Academy** - London, Connecticut (Est. 1876)  
<http://www.cga.edu/>
- **Merchant Marine Academy** - Kings Point, New York (Est. 1943)  
<http://www.usmma.edu/>
- **Air Force Academy** - Colorado Springs, Colorado (Est. 1954)  
<http://www.usafa.af.mil/>

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## How do I apply?

You should apply directly to the service academies through their websites and seek a “nomination” from your U.S. Representative or U.S. Senator. In rare situations, it may be appropriate to seek a nomination from the Vice President or the President of the United States. You may choose to seek more than one nomination. You may also be nominated to more than one academy.



\*Note: Nominations for the service academies are required for all but the U.S. Coast Guard Academy (USCGA). Applications to the USCGA are made directly to the academy. Also, receipt of a nomination does not guarantee an appointment to a service academy.

## What is the basic eligibility?

Basic eligibility include:

- Age: Must be at least 17 years old, but not yet 23 years of age on July 1 of the year you will enter the academy (25th birthday for the Merchant Marine Academy).
- Citizenship: Must be a U.S. citizen.
- Marital Status: Must be unmarried, not pregnant, and have no legal obligation to support children or other dependents.



## When should I apply?

Application deadlines at each academy vary so it is important to research the timeline prior to applying. You may apply for a nomination as soon as January of your Junior year or as late as after your high school graduation provided you meet eligibility criteria. You should complete and submit your application for nomination as soon as possible as the deadline is November of each year.



## What information is included in my application for nomination?

Your applications to the academies and for nomination will contain some personal information including a personal letter or essay, your transcripts including your ACT/SAT scores and any information that will assist the academies in granting an appointment. Your application will be weighed on the following qualifications:

1. Moral character
2. A strong academic record
3. Demonstrated leadership potential
4. Physical and medical fitness
5. A commitment to living a military lifestyle.



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## How will I know if I am nominated?

Nominations are generally made by mid-December after which you will be contacted by the nominating office. Nominations allow you to compete for an appointment but do not guarantee an appointment.

## What is an appointment?

An appointment gives you the ability to enroll at a service academy. You may receive more than one appointment. The application process is highly competitive and the receipt of an appointment is considered to be an honor and a privilege. Appointments begin in late December and are generally completed by May.

\*Note: Anyone not receiving a nomination or appointment may reapply as long as they meet eligibility criteria.

## Who are my Congressional Representatives?

You may find your U.S. Representatives in the phone book or online. All of your representatives have information regarding the service academies on their web pages.

- **Jeff Fortenberry** - Congressman, Nebraska's 1st Congressional District  
<http://fortenberry.house.gov/>
- **Lee Terry** - Congressman, Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District  
<http://leeterry.house.gov/>
- **Adrian Smith** - Congressman, Nebraska's 3rd Congressional District  
<https://adriansmith.house.gov/>
- **Deb Fisher** - U.S. Senator, State of Nebraska  
<http://www.fischer.senate.gov/public/>
- **Mike Johanns** - U.S. Senator, State of Nebraska  
<http://www.johanns.senate.gov/public/index.cfm>

## Additional Information

Seeking an appointment to a service academy is a highly competitive process. It is important to remember that there are resources available to assist you in your journey. Additionally, there are numerous other options after high school including enlistment in the military, attending college under the ROTC program or service academy prep school. There are no downsides to examining all options and choosing the best option for you. For more information, you are encouraged to visit the service academy websites or contact your Congressman or U.S. Senators.

\*Note: This sheet is provided as a summary to the U.S. Service Academies and is not inclusive of all information, is not endorsed by the service academies and may change without notice.

