

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) FOR THOSE SEEKING A CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION

What is a nomination?

Each year Congressman Brooks receives many inquiries from students who wish to attend a U.S. Service Academy from Alabama's Fifth Congressional District. [Title 10 of the U.S. Code](#) establishes two types of nominations: a) Congressional, and b) military service-connected.

A student may seek a nomination from the following:

- Member of the U.S. House of Representatives who represents the congressional district in which the candidate resides
- Both U.S. Senators from his/her state
- Vice-President of the United States

Students whose parents are military service-connected may also apply for a Presidential nomination. For a Presidential nomination, apply after July 1st of the year prior to admission and before January 31st of the year of admission. For Vice-Presidential nominations, apply by October 31st of the year prior to admission.

Applicants to all service academies, except the United States Coast Guard Academy, are required to obtain at least one nomination by an official source. **The most successful candidates apply to all available nominating sources: Congressman Brooks, both Senators, Vice-President and President.** Students are encouraged to apply to all nominating sources for which they are eligible.

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:

- You must be at least 17 years old, but not yet 23 years of age to the Military, Naval or Air Force academies and not yet 25 years of age for the Merchant Marine Academy.
- You must be a U.S. citizen.
- You must be unmarried, not pregnant, and without legal obligation to support children or other dependents.
- You must reside within the boundaries of the 5th Congressional District of Alabama.
- You must meet the medical, physical, and academic requirements of the Academy, in addition to possess good moral character.

Whom do I contact to request an application packet?

Students interested in applying for a nomination should contact Sandy Garvey at the Huntsville district office at 256-551-0190 or sandy.garvey@mail.house.gov in the spring of their junior year in high school. Congressman Brooks' application packet may be obtained at <http://brooks.house.gov>. Also, please note that it is extremely important that applicants complete the application process for each academy they are considering applying to.

What is the deadline for completing my applicant file?

The congressional nomination form and other required documents (see below) must be submitted to the Huntsville district office no later than **5:00 p.m. on October 29, 2020** to complete each applicant file.

What is a Letter of Assurance?

A Letter of Assurance (LOA) is a letter sent to the candidate from the Admissions Office by the Academy advising the Academy is offering a Conditional Appointment to the Academy provided the candidate successfully completes the application process, the medical review by the Department of Defense Medical Review Board (DoDMERB), the physical fitness assessment and receives an official nomination. Letters of Assurance are conditional and subject to review through the entire application process.

Candidates receive Letters of Assurance based upon outstanding ACT/SAT scores early in the process, in addition to other information the candidate has submitted to the Academy Admissions Office.

What happens after my file is complete?

Qualified applicants who have submitted all required documents **by 5:00 p.m. on October 29, 2020** will be scheduled for an interview with Congressman Brooks' Service Academy Nomination Advisory Board. Interviews will be conducted in late November/early December 2020 and nominations will be extended shortly thereafter.

What documents must be included in my applicant file?

A complete file consists of the following items:

- Congressional nomination form
- High school and, if applicable, college transcripts
- American College Testing Program (ACT) results and/or College Board Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) results
- Résumé
- Essay
- Three (3) completed personal recommendation forms completed by adult non-family members (i.e. teacher, counselor, employer, coach, clergy, scoutmaster).
- Recent, color picture in the space provided on the third page of the nomination application

Why does Congressman Brooks use a nominating board?

This board evaluates applicants and recommends candidates for nomination. This well-qualified, non-partisan board will ensure a fair and impartial process. Most members of this Board are Academy alumni.

What criteria does the board use in selecting candidates?

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

What "method of nomination" does Congressman Brooks' office use?

Nominations will be determined using the competitive method with all nominees submitted unranked to the academies, allowing equal opportunity for each candidate nominated from the district. This method allows Congressman Brooks to nominate up to 10 qualified candidates for each available opening. The Academy itself will make the final selection.

How do I open an admissions file with the academies?

All students must contact the academies they are interested in attending directly to open an admissions file.

Is the application process the same for all of the service academies?

No. Although many of the qualifications are similar, each Academy has its own selection process for admittance. Applicants must complete the application process for each Academy that they are considering attending. Visit the Academy of your choice via the websites noted for each academy's admissions qualifications. Nominations are required for all except the U.S. Coast Guard Academy.

If I receive a nomination will I automatically be selected by the Academy?

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. It is possible to receive more than one nomination depending on how well you have competed among this year's pool of candidates. It is recommended to apply to at least two academies. It is also recommended to apply to both the Merchant Marine and Coast Guard academies in addition to the Air Force, Naval and Military academies. **The most successful candidates apply to at least three academies, thereby giving themselves the most option of earning an appointment.**

When will I know if I have been offered an appointment by an academy?

Some academies will begin to notify candidates of their admission status as early as January. All offers of appointment are generally sent out by mid-April. The Academies will award appointments after the candidate file is reviewed and the candidate is determined "fully qualified." Academies review files weekly, so it is in the candidate's best interest to have their file at the Admissions Office completed by early January.

How many service academies are there?

There are five. Three reside within the Department of Defense:

- The U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York
- The U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis, Maryland
- The U.S. Air Force Academy at Colorado Springs, Colorado

One resides within the Department of Transportation:

- The U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, New York

One resides within the Department of Homeland Security

- The U.S. Coast Guard Academy at New London, Connecticut

Can a family member submit letters of recommendation on my behalf?

No. All recommendations must come from outside of your immediate or extended family. Typical recommendations are from principals/teachers, counselors, scout leaders, clergy, employers and athletic coaches. All recommendations must be submitted in a sealed envelope signed across the flap and returned to the applicant for inclusion in his/her application packet.

Recommendations can also be mailed directly to Congressman Mo Brooks' Huntsville district office.

Do I have to have all the required paperwork collected before submitting it to Congressman Brooks?

No. You can either submit your entire candidate nomination packet to Congressman Brooks' office or you can choose to submit individual items as you receive them. Congressman Brooks' Service Academy Liaison Sandy Garvey will inform students of any items missing from their nomination packet before the deadline.

Does Congressman Brooks' office use SAT/ACT superscores?

Yes, Congressman Brooks' office uses SAT/ACT superscores in the nomination process. Superscoring means that our office takes your best section scores from all the test dates you submit. Because of this, it is highly recommended that students take the tests multiple times to improve your scores.

Please remember that for your application to be considered complete, you must either send an official copy of your scores or have the testing centers send your scores to my office. The codes for my office are: SAT: 1226, ACT: 7215.

For more information, please visit Congressman Brooks' website located at <http://brooks.house.gov>.

