

Application Submission Requirements

*Any application not in compliance with the following requirements **will be disqualified**:*

1. We highly recommend that all application materials are uploaded through the online application system.

All application materials are due and must be RECEIVED by 5:00 p.m. Central Time (6 p.m. ET/3 p.m. PT) on February 26, 2025, whether received through the online application portal or via mail. Materials received after 5 p.m. CT (6 p.m. ET/3 p.m. PT) on February 26 will not be accepted. **The only exception to this requirement:** Application materials shipped via special service (e.g., an overnight courier service) with a *guaranteed, scheduled delivery date* on or before February 26* will be accepted even if received after the deadline.

** IMPORTANT NOTE:* If you wish to send your materials via the U.S. Postal Service, note that Priority Mail **does not guarantee** a specific delivery date; however, Express Mail will guarantee the delivery date. If you use Express Mail, or any other courier service (such as FedEx or UPS), *be sure to verify the guaranteed delivery date*. Be aware that mail brought to the U.S. Post Office or the courier office late in the day may not go out until the following day. Late application materials **will not be accepted** if the guaranteed delivery date **is after February 26, regardless of when they were mailed**.

Address for mailed applications and application materials

U.S. Presidential Scholars Program
One Scholarship Way
Saint Peter, MN 56082
507.931.8345

DO NOT SEND ANY PORTION OF YOUR APPLICATION TO WASHINGTON, DC. To do so risks missing the deadline for receipt of all materials in the Minnesota office and the disqualification of your application.

TIMELY SUBMISSION OF ALL APPLICATION MATERIALS IS ULTIMATELY THE CANDIDATE'S RESPONSIBILITY. Candidates must ensure that school officials upload or submit their portions in time to be received by the deadline. Start early, and make sure your school uploads or submits early. If the school chooses to mail the Secondary School Report (SSR) and application materials, recommend that they use a courier that *guarantees a delivery date* on or before February 26, 2025. You will be disqualified if *any* portion of your application and application materials are not received on time with the appropriate signatures, regardless of who submits them.

2. **All components** of the application must be received by the stated deadline, **including the photograph for your essay, as well as all required information from your school**. Even if your school sends the SSR and transcript separately from the rest of the application package you uploaded or mailed, it is you, the candidate, who is responsible for ensuring that your school submits their materials well before the deadline and uses a courier service to guarantee timely delivery. **Candidates who have submitted their applications on time but whose schools have missed the deadline must be disqualified.**

For **any application materials submitted in hard copy**, whether by you or your school, the use of a courier mail service (such as FedEx or UPS) with a *guaranteed delivery date** on or

before February 26 is strongly encouraged. **The receipt deadline as described in #1 above will be strictly enforced.** Your application will be disqualified if all application materials are not received by the deadline even if the materials were mailed “in plenty of time.”

3. **No part of the application will be accepted via email or fax.** All pieces must be submitted either through the online application portal or in hard copy. Be sure your school is aware of this in plenty of time to comply with the deadline requirement.
4. The candidate **may not submit additional pages or supplemental materials** of any kind (e.g., extra pages for the essays, student resume/list of activities, letter(s) of recommendation, slides, etc.). **Candidates who do so must be disqualified.** If you cannot fit your activities, etc., in the space provided, you must choose what is most important to you to include. ***Please note*** that any supplemental materials about the candidate that are submitted by the school will **not** disqualify your application; however, those materials will be removed from your file before evaluation.
5. Do not alter any aspect of this application (e.g., amount of space provided for responses). **Applications that have been altered in any way must be disqualified.**
6. To be eligible, the candidate must receive either a diploma or GED between January 1, 2025, and August 31, 2025.
7. To be eligible, the candidate must have U.S. citizenship or permanent legal U.S. residency by February 26, 2025.

Online Application Form-Specific Instructions

**Upload & Receipt Deadline: February 26, 2025
5:00 p.m., Central Time (6 p.m. ET/3 p.m. PT)**

FOR STUDENTS:

Required Signatures – If you are under 18 by February 26, 2025, your parent’s or guardian’s signature is required to approve the release of information from the secondary school and the application submission. During the application process, you will enter their name and email address; the parent/guardian will be sent an email with a link which will enable the parent/guardian to provide authorization. All candidates are required to enter their signature at the end of the application before the application is submitted.

During the application process, you will provide the email address of a guidance counselor or teacher who you would like to complete the Secondary School Report (SSR) on your behalf. You should select someone who knows you well; a teacher may work with a counselor or vice versa but, only one person can fill out the SSR. After the SSR has been completed, it will be sent to your principal for verification.

To begin the online application process you must enter the unique Nomination ID that was assigned to you. The Nomination ID is required to submit an application through our online application system. **Enter the Nomination ID in the proper format, including dashes, and click “Continue.”**

Next, register your email using login.gov. Using the provided link, click “Create an account.” Enter a valid active email address* click “Submit” to receive a verification email. You must click the link in the login.gov email to verify your account and proceed to the password creation step.

After creating your password, you will choose one or more additional authentication factors, such as text or phone call. You will need to verify your identity every time you log in, so be sure to choose a method you can access easily and repeatedly. Once you have finished setting up your authentication method(s), return to the Register a Candidate Account browser tab, enter the requested information, and click “Submit.” You will see a confirmation screen and receive a new email confirming your registration and sending you a link to the application itself.

Click the link and then select “Sign in with LOGIN.GOV.” You will be prompted to share your information with the U.S. Department of Education to connect your account to the application. Click “Agree and continue.” You must agree to the terms of service, and then you will be in the application form.

*It is recommended that you do NOT use your email account linked to your school.

Many of the fields will prepopulate with the information we received from your nomination source. Some of the fields may be updated/changed by the candidate; however, information used to determine your eligibility for the program is locked and cannot be changed by the candidate. If you need to change the information in a locked field, i.e., your legal state of residence you must contact our office at PSP@scholarshipamerica.org or call 507.931.8345 or to verify your continued eligibility in the program and to make the update.

Candidate Essay Form and Supporting Information Form – You may cut and paste your answers to the long and short essay questions from a word processing application. If you choose to do this, **proof your work carefully AFTER you paste it into the form, paying close attention to special characters such as apostrophes and double quotes.** You may find the character counting in our online application is different from that of your word processing application, so leave yourself plenty of time to make any edits that might be necessary.

Secondary School Report (SSR) – Choose someone from your school to be your Recommender. The recommender must complete this form on your behalf. The Recommender should be someone who knows you well, such as a teacher or counselor. Only one person can submit the SSR. However, a teacher may work with a counselor and vice versa in order to submit a complete SSR. Do this as soon as possible to allow that person adequate time to complete and submit the SSR and supporting materials. During the application process, the candidate sends a request to their Recommender via email through the online application portal. Your recommender will also need to register using login.gov.

Again, we recommend that all parts of the application be submitted online through our online application portal; however, the SSR may be completed in hardcopy form and mailed, if preferred. Note that **all application materials, including the SSR and supporting materials must be RECEIVED by the deadline**, whether through the online application portal or via mail. Your application will be disqualified if *any* portion of your application and supporting materials are not received on time, regardless of who submits them.

No part of the application will be accepted by email or fax.

FOR TEACHERS & SCHOOL OFFICIALS:

Secondary School Report – The student is to select **one** person to complete the Secondary School Report (SSR) as the Recommender. Recommenders may need to get information the school's Guidance or Counseling Office. You may cut and paste your answers from a word processor. If you choose to do this, **proof your work carefully AFTER you paste it into the form, paying close attention to special characters such as apostrophes and double quotes.** **Note that character counting is not consistent across all applications.** You may find the character counting in the online application portal is different from that of your word processing application, so leave yourself plenty of time to make any edits that might be necessary.

Required Signatures – Authorization to submit the Secondary School Report must be provided online before the principal will be allowed to review/approve the SSR if the student is under 18 by the application deadline (February 26, 2025). This important step is also explained in the student's instructions. All students are required to provide their signature in order to submit the application. If the student is under 18 by the application deadline, the student's parent or guardian must provide their signature. The candidate enters the parent's or guardian's email address while completing the application. The parent/guardian will be sent an email with a link. The parent/guardian is required to provide their signature before submitting the form. **The required parent/guardian signature must be provided before the SSR link will be sent to the chosen recommender. The student's application will be disqualified if the SSR and other supporting materials are not submitted either online or in hard copy by the February 26 deadline. The February 26 deadline is a receipt deadline, not a postmark deadline.**

Supporting Materials – A transcript is required. If your school's transcripts include social security numbers, medical records, the student's date of birth, or other confidential data not relevant to their academic performance please redact this information before uploading.

General Guidelines

- 1. Signatures on application** – You will sign the application at the end before you click “Submit.” If you are under 18 on February 26, 2025, you are required to enter your parent’s/ guardian’s email address for your parent/guardian signature. You should send the request through the application portal right away when you begin working on the application. **Your school will not be able to submit your Secondary School Report, and your application will be disqualified if the required signature has not been provided.** If you are 18 or older by February 26, 2025, you do not need a parent/guardian signature. If you are under 18 at the application deadline, your parent/guardian is required to sign the release. After entering your parent’s or guardian’s email address, he or she will be sent an email with a link where they may give their consent. Your parent will also have to complete the login.gov process. If you have questions, you can contact us at PSP@scholarshipamerica.org or call **507.931.8345** for assistance. Phone calls and emails are answered from **7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday – Friday.**
NOTE: Our application help desk will be open on Monday, February 17, 2025. We will also be open on Saturday, February 22 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. CT and Sunday, February 23 from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. CT.
- 2. Printing a copy of your completed application** – Students may print a copy of the completed application; if your application has already been submitted, you can print a copy from the main Menu page prior to the submission deadline. Once the deadline has passed, you will no longer have access. Recommenders may print a copy of the completed Secondary School Report for their records.
- 3. Changes to the Deadline** – Extensions to the deadline are *extremely rare* and have occurred in the past only in cases of natural disaster. If, however, the deadline should be extended, a notice will be posted on this website. If you think there might be cause for an extension, check back frequently.
- 4. Don’t procrastinate!** There are over 5,000 students who have been invited to submit applications to become U.S. Presidential Scholars, which also involve their parents/guardians, recommenders and principals using the online application system. While this system has been developed to accommodate a high volume of users, you could experience delays as the deadline approaches. Give yourself *and your recommender and principal* plenty of time to complete your application, review it, and submit it by the deadline!
- 5. Confirmation of receipt** – If you provided an active valid e-mail address on your application, you will be sent an email confirming receipt of your submission after you submit your application online. If you submit your application in hard copy form, you will be sent a confirmation email.
- 6. Please note that these confirmations are NOT an indication that we have received all of the materials required for a complete application, so track your submission carefully.**
- 7. Corrections** – Take time to proof your work carefully before you submit it. You may make changes to your application materials until you submit your application. After you submit, we will **not** accept any changes or additions to your application.
- 8. Be sure to clear your browser history after you log out.** Your browser could contain a memory of the information you entered and/or viewed during your session. In order to protect the privacy of your information, you should clear the browser history.

9. Candidates—please use a personal email address rather than a school email address. It is best if you use an email address that will be valid indefinitely. Most high school email addresses are closed by the end of the summer.
10. ***Help is always available!*** If you have questions or need help while you are working on your application, you can contact us at PSP@scholarshipamerica.org or call 507.931.8345 from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Central Time, Monday – Friday. You can also check the FAQs at www.ed.gov/psp for answers to frequently asked questions. **NOTE: Our application help desk will be open on Monday, February 17, 2025. We will also be open on Saturday, February 22 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. CT and Sunday, February 23 from 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. CT.**

Online Application System Rules of Behavior

These rules of behavior are designed to protect your safety and that of all system users and to ensure that the online application system and all resources and data related to it are used only for their legal and intended purposes.

As an authorized user of the online application system, I agree to:

1. Exercise due care in the protection of the operating software on computers that are used to connect to Appian, including installing virus-scanning software and frequently updating virus definitions;
2. Maintain the confidentiality of Appian data at all times;
3. Never share my nomination ID and/or password with anyone else under any circumstance;
4. Never keep my nomination ID and password in a place where they may be found and used without my knowledge;
5. Either log off or lock my workstation if I am logged into the application portal and must leave my workstation;
6. Change my password every 90 days if I will be using the system for more than one application cycle*;
7. Use a password that is at least twelve characters in length, is difficult to guess, and is a mix of characters, numbers and special characters;
8. Understand that personal use of Government information resources and equipment is not authorized, and use the system only for authorized purposes; and
9. Maintain copyright licenses and comply with all copyright license requirements associated with the Appian software.

***In other words, if I am a U.S. Presidential Scholars Program staff member rather than a student, parent, recommender or principal.**

I understand that failure to abide by these rules of behavior may result in losing access to Appian.