



U.S. Representative
MARK POCAN
2ND DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

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 specified by public law. As a cadet/plebe 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 of active duty. For graduates of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, the obligation will be with the U.S. Navy Reserve.

I. General Guidelines

Each candidate must:

- be at least 17 years old, but have not passed their 23rd Birthday (25th Birthday for the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy);
- be a citizen of the United States;
- be unmarried, not pregnant, or have any legal obligation to support children or dependents; and
- be a legal resident of the 2nd Congressional District.

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 other extracurricular activities;
- take the SAT or ACT assessment;
- be in good physical and mental health;
- pass a comprehensive medical examination; and
- 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 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 Office Addresses

The Department of Defense

U.S. Military Academy
606 Thayer Rd
West Point, NY 10996
Phone: (845) 938-5719
Website: www.usma.edu

U.S. Air Force Academy
2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 3100
Colorado Springs, CO 80840
Phone: (800) 443-9266
Website: www.usafa.edu

U.S. Naval Academy
121 Blake Rd
Annapolis, MD 21402
Phone: (410) 293-1000
Website: www.usna.edu

The Department of Transportation

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy
300 Steamboat Road
Kings Point, NY 11024-1699
Phone: (516) 726-5800
Website: www.usmma.edu

The Department of Homeland Security

U.S. Coast Guard Academy
31 Mohegan Avenue
New London, CT 06320
Phone: (800) 883-8724
Website: www.uscga.edu

NOTE: The U.S. Coast Guard Academy does not require a congressional nomination. Appointments are considered solely on the basis of an annual nationwide competition.



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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 public law; however, the academies look at the “whole person” when considering admission. Character, leadership, physical aptitude, medical fitness, goals, 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. I do recognize that some high schools do not rank students.

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

The service academies consider it more valuable to achieve distinction in a specific activity rather than to merely participate in a number of activities without any evidence of leadership.

If you have a part-time job that affects your level of involvement in school activities, 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 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

(719) 333-3562

Website: <https://dodmerb.tricare.osd.mil/>

V. Extracurricular Activities and Leadership

Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extracurricular activities, scouting, ROTC, 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.

VII. Service Obligation

Graduation from a United States Service Academy obligates you to serve five (5) 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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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 at West Point, or the Merchant Marine Academy. A Congressional nomination is not required to attend the U.S. Coast Guard Academy. All applicants interested in the Coast Guard Academy must contact this academy directly by mail or online. 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 own 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 Academy Requirements section of this packet as well as complete a nomination file with Congressman Pocan office by **October 17**.

A nomination file consists of the following items:

- Application to Congressman Pocan
- High School and/or College Transcripts
- ACT/SAT Official Scores
- Personal Statement
- 3 Letters of Recommendation
- Resume

II. Application

Please complete the application included in the packet and return it and all related materials to:

Congressman Mark Pocan
ATTN: Military Academy Nominations
10 East Doty Street, Suite 405
Madison, WI 53703

Deadline: October 17, 2025, 5:00 pm

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 high school guidance 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.

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 composite if you take a test more than once. Historically, the best candidates have taken their test of choice multiple times. You must submit an official copy of these test scores.

V. Personal Statement

Please submit a typed personal statement, no longer than one page, 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.



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This essay can take any direction you wish. Please be advised you're submissions will be closely scrutinized by an internal selection board. To that end, please be sure to carefully review, revise, and edit your application materials, especially your essays, knowing that they will be carefully evaluated.

VI. Letters of Recommendation

Please select three people to write letters of recommendation on your behalf. Your references may include teachers, coaches, neighbors, employers, clergy, and community leaders. Please do not ask immediate family members such as parents, siblings, or grandparents.

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 return this packet or you may ask your references to mail their letters directly to:

Congressman Mark Pocan
ATTN: Military Academy Nominations
10 East Doty Street, Suite 405
Madison, WI 53703

These letters must also arrive in my district office on or before the October 17 deadline or they will not be accepted. It is your responsibility to make sure your references mail their letters on time. Out of courtesy to your references and consideration for their time, get started early to ensure that your letters of recommendation arrive on time and in good order.

VII. Resume

The resume should be a brief account of the candidate's education, awards, volunteer service, and work experience. The resume should be no more than one page 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

In mid-November, after your file is complete, a staff member from Congressman Pocan district office will contact you to arrange a 15-minute interview with the Academy Selection Board. This board is comprised of several community leaders from across the 2nd Congressional District who will advise Congressman Pocan on his nominations and offer their recommendations to him.

IX. Timeline

The following is an approximate timeline of a standard nomination and appointment process. The deadlines are subject to extenuating circumstances – they are not fixed or concrete.

October 17,	2025	Deadline to submit completed application to Congressman Pocan's Madison District Office
November 8,	2025	Interview Day with Selection Committee
December	2025	Notification to those receiving nominations
January-June	2026	Await acceptance by service academy

X. Questions:

All questions concerning academy nominations made through Congressman Pocan's office should be directed to the Madison District Office, 608-258-9800.

U.S. Service Academy Nomination Application

Full Name _____
(Last) (First) (Middle)

Social Security Number _____

Permanent Address _____
(Number and Street)

(City) (State) (Zip Code)

Telephone () _____ E-mail _____

Age _____ Date of Birth _____ Place of Birth _____
(Month/Day/Year) (City) (State)

Current Employment: _____

Are you now serving on military active duty? YES NO If Yes, which branch _____

Please select the following if you are seeking additional nominations:

President _____ Vice President _____ Senator Johnson _____ Senator Baldwin _____

Family/Guardian Information

Father's Name _____ Daytime Phone () _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____

Mother's Name _____ Daytime Phone () _____

Employer _____ Occupation _____

Has any member of your family attended an academy and/or served in the military? If so, please make any notations here: _____

Attach
photo here.

Athletic Participation

(Please circle each item to indicate involvement)

	Years	Captain
Baseball	9 10 11 12	Yes
Basketball	9 10 11 12	Yes
Bowling	9 10 11 12	Yes
Cheerleading	9 10 11 12	Yes
Cross Country	9 10 11 12	Yes
Football	9 10 11 12	Yes
Golf	9 10 11 12	Yes
Gymnastics	9 10 11 12	Yes
Hockey	9 10 11 12	Yes
Lacrosse	9 10 11 12	Yes
Rugby	9 10 11 12	Yes
Soccer	9 10 11 12	Yes
Softball	9 10 11 12	Yes
Swimming/Diving	9 10 11 12	Yes
Tennis	9 10 11 12	Yes
Track/Field	9 10 11 12	Yes
Volleyball	9 10 11 12	Yes
Wrestling	9 10 11 12	Yes
Other: _____	9 10 11 12	Yes
Other: _____	9 10 11 12	Yes
Other: _____	9 10 11 12	Yes

Non-School Athletics

Leadership Positions

Extra-Curricular Activities

(Please circle each item to indicate involvement)

Band/Orchestra	Boys/Girls State	Choir
Class Office Holder	Church Group/Club	Drama
Debate	DECA	Drill Team
Editor, Newspaper	Editor, Yearbook	Food Pantry/Bank
Forensics	Habitat for Humanity	Key Club
Media	National Honor Society	Peer Leadership
Robotics	Science Club	Tutoring
Civil Air Patrol	Current Rank _____	
ROTC	Current Rank _____	
Scouting	Current Rank _____	
Other: _____		
Other: _____		
Other: _____		

High School and College Education

High School _____
(Name) (Number and Street) (City) (State) (Zip)

H.S. Counselor _____ Phone Number () _____

GPA _____ Anticipated Graduation Date _____

Have you completed any college-level courses? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, which subjects? _____

Academy Preference

Please circle the number indicating your first choice, second choice, etc. If you have no interest in a particular Academy, circle 'N' for not interested. Please also circle either 'Y' for yes or 'N' for no regarding whether you have opened a file with an Academy.

U.S. Air Force Academy
Colorado Springs, Colorado
(Commissioned into Air Force)
N 1 2 3 4
Opened a file? Y N

U. S. Merchant Marine Academy
Kings Point, New York
(Commission into Naval Reserves)
N 1 2 3 4
Opened a file? Y N

U.S. Military Academy
West Point, New York
(Commissioned into Army)
N 1 2 3 4
Opened a file? Y N

U.S. Naval Academy
Annapolis, Maryland
(Commissioned into Navy/ Marine Corps)
N 1 2 3 4
Opened a file? Y N

Awards

List all awards in the space provided:

Application Agreement

It is my sincere desire to attend a U.S. Service Academy, and I intend to pursue a vigorous academic course of study if appointed. I understand that attending a service academy also requires a minimum of five years of military service following graduation, and I fully commit to this responsibility. I have read the information explaining Congressman Pocan's nominating procedures and the information I am submitting is accurate. I certify that I am a U.S. citizen and a legal resident of the 2nd Congressional District of Wisconsin. I will be at least 17 years, but not yet 23 years of age on July 1 of the attending year. I am not pregnant, nor do I have any child support obligations. I understand that my application must be completed and returned to Congressman Pocan before the end of business on October 17, 2025, 5:00 pm to be given full consideration.

Signature _____ Date _____

Mail or deliver completed packet of materials to:

**Congressman Mark Pocan
ATTN: Military Academy Nominations
10 East Doty Street, Suite 405
Madison, WI 53703**

Questions about the nomination process can be directed to:

**608-258-9800
Pocan.staff@mail.house.gov**

Checklist

Completed a signed application to Rep. Pocan	Photograph - (space provided)
ACT/SAT Official Scores	3 Letters of Recommendation
Transcript(s)	1 Page Personal Statement
Resume	Disciplinary Record (if applicable)
Requirements that do not need to be submitted to my office:	
Application to Academy (s)	Medical Exam (DODMERB)