



**Congressman H. Morgan Griffith**  
**Ninth Congressional District of Virginia**

**U.S. Service Academy Nominations**  
**Frequently Asked Questions**

Thank you for your interest in the U.S. Service Academies. The honor of attending a Service Academy comes with an obligation and commitment to serve in the military for a minimum of five years upon graduation. As your Ninth District Representative in the U.S. House, each year I have the privilege of nominating a limited number of outstanding young people to four of the five Service Academies. By nominating highly qualified and dedicated candidates, I hope to have as many young men and women from the Ninth District as possible admitted to the Academies. Best wishes to you as you pursue your goal of attending a U.S. Service Academy and serving our country.

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1) How many Service Academies are there?

There are five Service Academies.

U.S. Military Academy

Office of Admissions

606 Thayer Road

West Point, NY 10996-1797

Phone: (800) 822-ARMY

Web: [www.usma.edu](http://www.usma.edu)

U.S. Air Force Academy

Office of Admissions

2304 Cadet Drive, Suite 200

USAF Academy, CO 80840-5025

Phone: (800) 443-9266

Web: [www.usafa.edu](http://www.usafa.edu)

U.S. Naval Academy

Office of Admissions

117 Decatur Road

Annapolis, MD 21402

Phone: (888) 249-7707

Web: [www.usna.edu](http://www.usna.edu)

U.S. Merchant Marine Academy

Office of Admissions

300 Steamboat Road, Wiley Hall

Kings Point, NY 11024-1699

Phone: (866) 546-4778

Web: [www.usmma.edu](http://www.usmma.edu)

U.S. Coast Guard Academy

Admissions Office

(860) 444-8500 \*\*Congressional nominations are not required for admission to the Coast Guard Academy. For more information regarding admission, please contact the Admissions Office.

## 2) Are the entrance requirements the same for all of the Service Academies?

No. Although many of the qualifications are similar, each Academy operates under its own admission guidelines. You may view each Academy's entrance requirements on its website. Additionally, admission to a Service Academy is a two-step process. First, the candidate must apply directly through the desired Academy and meet its minimum standards for admission. The standards include medical, physical and academic qualifications. The second step involves securing a Nomination. An individual must receive a Nomination from an authorized Nomination Source in order to be offered an Appointment to the Academy.

## 3) What is a Nomination?

Members of Congress may nominate applicants who meet the eligibility requirements established by law. A candidate may seek a Nomination from the President of the United States, from the Vice-President of the United States, from a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives who represents the Congressional District in which the candidate resides, from both U.S. Senators from the candidate's state, or from some qualified ROTC organization.

As a Congressman, I am permitted to fill five vacancies at each Academy. These vacancies are "charged" to Virginia's Ninth District. I may only nominate young men and women to a particular Academy when a vacancy occurs in one of these "charged" slots, either by reason of graduation or withdrawal.

## 4) What is your method of Nomination?

I primarily use the Competitive Nomination method, which is preferred by the Academies and used by most Members of Congress. This process allows me to nominate up to ten qualified candidates for each available vacancy. The candidates are then ranked in order of merit in accordance with the specific Academy's system. The most highly qualified is selected for an offer of admission ("an Appointment") to fill the vacancy. The Academy itself will make the final selection.

5) Why do you use an Academy Advisory Committee?

The non-partisan committee is able to closely evaluate applicants and therefore make educated recommendations for nomination. The board ensures that the process is fair and impartial.

6) What criteria does the committee use in selecting candidates?

Nominations are based on a “whole person” evaluations. Factors such as academic achievements, extra-curricular activities, leadership skills, physical aptitude, character, and motivation are considered and compared with other applicants.

7) What are the basic eligibility requirements for a Nomination?

- **Age:** Must be at least 17 years old, but not have passed the 23<sup>rd</sup> birthday
- **Citizenship:** Must be a U.S. Citizen
- **Marital Status:** Must be unmarried, not pregnant, and without any legal obligation to support children or other dependents
- **Residence:** Must reside within the boundaries of the Ninth Congressional District of Virginia
- **Skill/Fitness:** Must meet the medical, physical and academic requirements of the individual Academy.

8) What must be included in my Nomination file?

- Current Photo
- High School Transcript
- American College Testing Program (ACT) results OR College Board Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) results
- Resume (with extra-curricular, athletic, employment, or other notable accomplishments)
- Letters of Recommendation (minimum of three)
- Essay---why you want to attend a Service Academy (500 words or less)  
\*\*\*THIS SHOULD BE THE ESSENCE OF YOUR APPLICATION PACKET, DEMONSTRATING YOUR ABILITY TO WRITE AND EXPLAINING YOUR MOTIVATION TO SERVE IN THE MILITARY\*\*\*

\*\*\*YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE TO ENSURE THAT ALL ITEMS ARE RECEIVED AND INCLUDED IN YOUR NOMINATION FILE. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY CAUSE AN INCOMPLETE APPLICATION\*\*\*

9) Who should I ask to write a Letter of Recommendation on my behalf?

Possible suggestions include, but are not limited to:

- Teachers
- Counselors
- Employers
- Coaches
- Clergy
- Scout Leaders

I do not require a specific recommendation form. A Letter of Recommendation is sufficient.

10) How should I submit my ACT/SAT scores?

Test results should be sent directly to my office by the testing service. The Ninth District of Virginia institution code for SAT scores is 5987 and for ACT scores, the code is 7732.

11) When do I apply for a Nomination?

My Nomination application period opens on April 1 each year for those candidates who are high school juniors and will be seniors the following school year, or who have already graduated.

12) Who do I contact to request a Nomination application packet?

All correspondence and questions related to Academy Nominations should be directed to:

Office of Congressman H. Morgan Griffith  
Attn: Josh Hess  
323 W. Main St.  
Abingdon, Virginia 24210  
(276) 525-1405  
Email: [josh.hess@mail.house.gov](mailto:josh.hess@mail.house.gov)

13) What is the deadline for completing a Nomination packet?

The deadline for submitting a Nomination application packet to my Abingdon or Christiansburg District Office is October 15. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that their Nomination application files have been received by my office and are complete. Please contact my Abingdon office at (276) 525-1405 to verify so that your application is given full consideration.

14) What happens after I complete my Nomination packet?

Applicants who submit a completed Nomination packet will be scheduled to meet with my Academy Advisory Committee. The interviews will be conducted in late October or November. After the application deadline passes, you will be notified of the interview schedule.

15) When will I be notified of whether or not I will be receiving a Nomination?

You will be notified before the end of January.

16) Will I automatically be selected by the Academy after I receive a Nomination?

No. You will be placed among a select group of nominees, and the Academy of your choice will make the final decision. You must meet all entrance requirements for the Academy in order to qualify for an offer of admission. If selected, you will receive an offer of admission (an Appointment) directly from the Academy.

17) What if I choose more than one Academy? Will I be limited to a single Nomination?

No. You can choose a single Academy or multiple Academies and you may be nominated to multiple Academies depending upon how well you have competed among the pool of candidates. It is also possible to receive multiple Appointments.

18) When will I know if I have been offered an Appointment by an Academy?

Academies will begin to notify candidates of their admission status in February. All offers of Appointment are generally sent by May.

19) Are there other options for receiving a nomination?

Yes, there are several other ways that a candidate can receive a Service Academy nomination. A candidate may apply to both Virginia Senators for consideration for a nomination as well. Each Senator has an application process for candidates to follow.

There are several types of non-congressional nominations that are available as well. The President makes direct appointments in several military-affiliated categories, including children of career military personnel, deceased or disabled veterans, military or civilian personnel in missing status, and Medal of Honor recipients.

The Vice President makes nominations at large, and candidates may apply for those through each Department of Defense Service Academy.

The Service Secretaries nominate individuals who serve as enlisted members of the regular and reserve components of their respective military branches, as well as participants in the reserve officer training corps of the service they oversee. The service secretary for USMA is the Secretary of the Army; USNA, Secretary of the Navy; and USAFA, Secretary of the Air Force.

The Service Academy Superintendents nominate candidates from the country at large.

The Governor of Puerto Rico may nominate one individual who is a native of Puerto Rico.

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

**NOMINATION APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED.....APRIL 1**

**NOMINATION APPLICATION DEADLINE.....OCTOBER 15**

**ACADEMY ADVISORY COMMITTEE INTERVIEWS.....LATE OCT.—NOV.**

**CONGRESSMAN GRIFFITH’S NOMINATIONS ANNOUNCED.....LATE DEC.- JAN.**

### **CHECKLIST**

- Application completed and mailed**
- Submitted official High School transcripts**
- Provided minimum of three (3) reference letters**
- Submitted ACT or SAT scores**
- Submitted recent photo**
- Submitted resume of activities**
- Submitted essay**