

Congressman John K. Delaney

Service Academy Nomination - General Information

An appointment to one of the United States Service Academies is a distinct and rare honor. Acceptance of an academy appointment involves at least a nine-year service obligation, including four years at an academy and five years of active duty service. In order to process and review your application, we need your complete cooperation. Each Congressional office uses a unique selection process that is designed to meet its particular standards. The information provided below is to help you expedite your application, so please review it carefully.

I. **Nomination:**

- a. The competition for nominations in the Sixth Congressional District of Maryland is especially competitive; therefore, you are encouraged to apply for a nomination from every available nominating source.
- b. For each vacancy I have at the U.S. Air Force, Naval, Military, and Merchant Marine Academies, I may nominate up to ten candidates to compete for that vacancy. Under the competitive appointment process that I use, the academies will select from my slate of nominees the one candidate they believe to be the most qualified for an appointment. The remaining nominees will then compete for other available appointments in a nationwide pool.
- c. Other nomination sources:
 - i. President Barack H. Obama nominates children of career military personnel, deceased or disabled veterans, military or civilian personnel in missing status, and Medal of Honor recipients;
 - ii. Vice President Joseph R. Biden nominates five individuals from across the United States per year;
 - iii. The Secretary of the Army, Navy, or Air Force nominates members of regular military, reserve components, and participants of the ROTC; and
 - iv. Senators Barbara Mikulski and Benjamin Cardin of Maryland
- d. Since academies may award more appointments than are available through Congressional vacancies, more than one nomination is neither required nor of assistance in achieving an appointment.
- e. If someone else nominates you, please notify me immediately so that I may allow other candidates the opportunity for nomination.

II. **Eligibility:**

- a. Must be an American citizen.
- b. Must be at least 17 years old and not yet 23 years old on July 1 of the year you enter an academy (25 years old for U.S. Merchant Marine Academy).
- c. Must not be married, pregnant, and/or have any legal obligation to support children or other dependents.
- d. Must be a legal resident of the Sixth Congressional District of Maryland (except the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy).

If you are uncertain if you meet these requirements, please contact our district office for verification.

- III. **Academy Evaluation Criteria:** The academies consider evidence of character, scholarship, leadership, physical aptitude, medical fitness, personal goals, and motivation in performing each nominee's "whole-person" evaluation. These are also the criteria I use to determine nominations.
- a. **Character:** Absolutely critical in the course of evaluating a candidate. Absence of good moral character is a cause for disqualification. Candidates are considered to have good moral character unless evidence exists to suggest otherwise.
 - b. **Scholarship:** Each element of a candidate's academic record is carefully evaluated by a service academy's admissions board. The elements evaluated include a complete high school record (and college record, when applicable), class standing, and either the SAT or ACT scores. All strengths and weaknesses in a candidate's academic background are taken into account.
 - c. **Leadership:** Participation and achievement in organized athletics, student body and class government, clubs and class extracurricular activities, scouting, and church or other community-related activities demonstrate evidence of leadership potential. Candidates who have found it necessary to work to provide family support are considered to have demonstrated desirable leadership potential.
 - d. **Physical Aptitude:** Measuring strength, endurance, agility, and coordination, the academies' fitness tests are designed to determine each candidate's readiness to undertake the rigorous athletic and physical education program at the academies. Each academy has its own test requirements. Results of the examination are evaluated, assigned a numerical score, and included in the whole-person evaluation by West Point. The Air Force, Naval, and Merchant Marine academies evaluate the results on a pass-or-fail basis.
 - e. **Medical Fitness:** A candidate who meets minimum scholastic standards will be scheduled to take a service academy qualifying medical examination at a military or civilian contract facility near the candidate's home. Although medical qualification standards vary among the academies, only one exam is required. However, different tests may be necessary depending upon the academy. Scheduling and evaluation of the exam are arranged by the Department of Defense Medical Examination Review Board (DODMERB). Medical scheduling and evaluation are time consuming processes, especially if consultation, re-testing, or corrective action is required. The process may take from six weeks to four months. Candidates who have questions about their medical exam results should direct them to: DODMERB, 8034 Edgerton Drive, Suite 132, USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-2200; (719) 333-3562.
 - f. **Motivation:** Motivation is an intangible quality and difficult to evaluate. However, since it is most frequently the factor that determines an appointee's success or failure at a service academy, I make every effort to gauge a candidate's interest level in attending an academy and serving as an officer in the Armed Forces. Motivation may also be measured through an evaluation of correspondence, personal contacts, and care with which application materials are prepared.

IV. **Service Academy Questionnaires:**

- a. Each academy uses a questionnaire to make an initial assessment of an applicant's potential for appointment. The results of this evaluation are provided by each academy to Members of Congress to assist them in screening their applicants. If you have not already completed a pre-candidate questionnaire for each academy you are interested in, please visit their respective websites, listed below:
 - i. Military Academy: <http://www.usma.edu>
 - ii. Naval Academy: <http://www.usna.edu>
 - iii. Air Force Academy: <http://www.usafa.edu>
 - iv. Merchant Marine Academy: <http://www.usmma.edu>