



2026 NAEHCY Scholarship FAQs

Q. How do I apply for a scholarship award?

You must submit all of the following materials by the deadline:

- Completed application ([click here to submit online](#))
- Personal essay
- Unofficial school transcript
- Letter verifying current or former homeless status
- A minimum of one letter of recommendation

Q. How many scholarships will NAEHCY award this year, and for how much?

The NAEHCY Scholars Program will award at least ten scholarships this year of up to \$3,000 each to postsecondary students who have experienced homelessness* and are actively pursuing their post-secondary education. Selected scholars are chosen from a pool of applicants who meet all eligibility criteria and submit all required materials by the deadline.

Q. When is the deadline for submitting an application this year?

Friday, July 31, 2026 (by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time) is the final submission deadline in order to be considered for a scholarship award.

Q. When are letters of recommendation and school transcripts due? Can they be sent separately from my application?

We strongly encourage you to [submit the application form online](#), and then email all supporting application materials within one email. This helps the NAEHCY staff with processing your materials. Your email should include these four attachments:

- Personal essay
- Unofficial transcript (If there are barriers to obtaining a transcript, contact us at scholarship@naehcy.org)
- Letter verifying current or former homeless status
- Minimum of one letter of recommendation

If you send multiple emails, make sure to include the applicant's full name and date of birth with each message to ensure our reviewers can accurately identify materials.

Q. What types of files am I allowed to include as attachments?

Accepted file formats include PDF, Word, JPG and PNG.

Q. Do my letters of verification and recommendation have to be written by teachers, or can they come from anyone?

One letter verifying your current or former homeless status is required and must be from a local homeless education liaison, school official, outreach worker, shelter provider, religious leader, or other homeless service provider. This individual must include their contact information and signature on the letter.

Your letter of recommendation may be written by anyone who knows you well and can attest to your experiences, character, leadership ability, commitment to education while homeless, and/or academic achievement. This may include someone such as an employer, coach, or mentor. It cannot be your parent, guardian, or other relative. This individual must include their contact information and signature on the letter.

Q. What standardized test results are required? How and when do I submit my scores?

Testing scores are required for the application; please list your most recent ACT or SAT scores. If you are enrolling in a test optional postsecondary program and do not have test scores to report, please indicate that on the application.

Q. Do I have to be a U.S. citizen or permanent resident in order to apply for a scholarship award?

No. All students who meet the scholarship application criteria are able to apply.

Q. If I have received a scholarship from NAEHCY in the past, am I still eligible to apply this year?

Students who have received a scholarship from NAEHCY within the past three years are not eligible for a 2026 award.

Q. What are the eligibility requirements for applying?

To be eligible for the scholarship, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Applicants must be under the age of 23, as of July 31, 2026.

- Applicants must be actively pursuing undergraduate post-secondary education or trade schools.
- Applicants must be eligible for McKinney-Vento assistance or have experienced homelessness* (while in school) within the last six years. (Applicants must submit a letter verifying their homeless status as part of their application materials.)

Please note, undocumented students who meet the above criteria ARE eligible. However, previous recipients of a NAEHCY scholarship within the past three years are NOT eligible.

**The applicant's homeless status is defined by the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Act, which defines a person considered to be homeless as one who "lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence." This includes people living in shelters, cars, motels/hotels, campgrounds, or places not meant for human habitation. The definition includes children and youth who are living with friends/relatives temporarily (doubled-up) because they lack permanent housing.*

Q. Can I use the scholarship money at any college and for any major?

The scholarship may be used at any degree-granting accredited college or university (or certificate-granting trade program) within the United States. Recipients may study any academic discipline of their choice.

Q. If I am awarded other scholarships or financial aid, does it affect my eligibility for the NAEHCY Scholarship?

You are eligible for a NAEHCY scholarship even if you receive other scholarships and/or financial aid.

Q. Will I receive confirmation that my application was received?

Yes, you will receive an auto-generated email confirmation if you submit your application form online.

By early September, you should expect to receive an email confirming whether or not you are being considered for an award. (Incomplete applications will not be considered for an award.) Due to the volume of applications, we cannot guarantee that you will receive this email prior to September 1, 2026.

Q. When are the winners notified? Are applicants who are not awarded also notified?

Winners will be notified in late August. Those who are not selected will receive notification by early October 2026.

Q. Where does the funding for the NAEHCY Scholars Program come from?

The scholarships are funded by the NAEHCY Scholar Fund, a 501(c)3 charity and through generous donations from friends and partners.

Q. Will I receive all of my money at one time?

If selected for an award, you will have three options for the distribution of funds.

Option 1: NAEHCY pays an amount designated by you to your school, the remainder of the scholarship is paid via check to you.

Option 2: NAEHCY pays you a portion of the scholarship now via a mailed check, and maintains the rest for distribution to you as needed via later checks.

Option 3: NAEHCY pays 1/2 of the scholarship to you now, and 1/2 of the scholarship via check at the start of the next academic semester.

Q. What happens if I receive an award?

If selected for an award, you will be required to provide an official copy of your school's transcript as well as proof of postsecondary school or program enrollment prior to the release of funds. You will become part of a small cohort of award recipients, and a 2025-26 NAEHCY Scholar.

NAEHCY will financially support you to attend our annual conference (this year's location is Nashville, TN) from October 1 - 31, 2026 where your cohort will participate in enrichment and professional development activities, share experiences with NAEHCY stakeholders, and participate in an awards ceremony.

NAEHCY Scholars will be invited to participate in two additional convenings designed to support your educational journey and provide personal and professional enrichment as well as mentorship opportunities.