



TEXAS HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

Chief of Staff

P.O. Box 12788 Austin, Texas 78711

REY RODRIGUEZ
Deputy Commissioner
Chief of Staff
(512) 427-6134
Fax (512) 427-6127

LIZ BOLIN
Deputy Chief of Staff
(512) 427-6227
Fax (512) 427-6127

KEN MARTIN
Assistant Commissioner for Financial
Services/Chief Financial Officer
(512) 427-6173
Fax (512) 427-6169

ZHENZHEN SUN
Assistant Commissioner for Information
Solutions & Services/Chief Information Officer
(512) 427-6259
Fax (512) 427-6447

CHARLES CONTERO-PULS, Ed.D.
Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Student
Financial Aid Programs
(512) 427-6365
Fax (512) 427-6423

GLENN TRAMEL
Senior Director
Human Resources
(512) 427-6193
Fax (512) 427-6510

JOHN WYATT
Senior Director
External Relations
(512) 427-6586
Fax (512) 427-6127

AMY PETERSON
Senior Director
Strategic Finance Policy
(512) 427-6226
Fax (512) 427-6127

TO: The Honorable Greg Abbott, Governor
The Honorable Dan Patrick, Lt. Governor
The Honorable Dennis Bonnen, Speaker, Texas House of Representatives
Members, Texas Senate
Members, Texas House of Representatives

FROM: Charles W. Contero-Puls, Ed.D.
Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Student Financial Aid Programs

DATE: April 15, 2020

SUBJECT: Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program

The 81st Texas Legislature created the Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program (TASSP) to encourage students to participate in Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) programs at Texas institutions of higher education. The program also encourages students to become members of the Texas Army National Guard or the Texas Air Force National Guard, or commissioned officers in any branch of the armed services of the United States.

Each year, the governor and the lieutenant governor may each appoint two students, and each state senator and state representative may appoint one student to receive a TASSP scholarship. Students must meet specific requirements to be eligible for nomination and to receive a scholarship. Prior to receiving the scholarship, students must agree to certain conditions including a four-year commitment as a member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Merchant Marine or a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services of the United States. The scholarship becomes a loan if the conditions are not met.

Nominations for the TASSP open April 15 for the next academic year (fall 2020/spring 2021). The Coordinating Board respectfully requests that you make a TASSP nomination between **April 15, 2020** and **August 31, 2020**. The scholarship amount for the 2020-2021 academic year is estimated at a maximum of \$10,000 but is subject to change based on available funding and will vary by student.

Details on the nomination process are found on the attached overview document. You or your designee may submit a formal nomination at the following link:
<https://www1.thecb.state.tx.us/apps/tassp/>.

We understand the COVID-19 pandemic may impact student nominations, and the Coordinating Board will work to provide flexibility surrounding application deadlines as needed. However, we wanted to provide this information now to ensure you can begin identifying eligible students. Please contact the External Relations Department at (512) 427-6111 or er@theccb.state.tx.us should you have any questions or require additional assistance. Thank you for your commitment to the students of Texas and for your continued support to strengthen higher education.

Attachment

OVERVIEW: TEXAS ARMED SERVICES SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



APRIL 2020

The Texas Legislature created the *Texas Armed Services Scholarship Program* (TASSP) to encourage students to participate in Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) programs at civilian colleges. A student must meet specific eligibility criteria in order to receive an initial scholarship award. In addition to the eligibility criteria, a student must enter into an agreement requiring a four year commitment as a member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Merchant Marine or a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services of the United States. Annually, the governor and the lieutenant governor may each appoint two students, and each state senator and each state representative may appoint one student to receive a conditional TASSP. A maximum of 185 students may be appointed annually.

ELIGIBILITY FOR NOMINATION

In order to be considered for a TASSP award, a **student enrolling in higher education directly from high school** must meet **two** of the following **four** academic criteria at the time of application:

- ✓ Be on track to graduate, or has graduated high school and complete the curriculum requirements of the Distinguished Level of Achievement Plan, or the International Baccalaureate Program (IB);
- ✓ Have a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale;
- ✓ Achieve a college readiness score on the SAT (1070) or ACT (23);
- ✓ Be ranked in the top one-third of the prospective high school graduating class.

A **non-freshman student** applying for an initial award must meet the continuing eligibility requirements outlined below that also apply for continuing receipt of the award.

Students must be enrolled in a college or university in the fall 2020/spring 2021 academic year in order to be nominated for a TASSP award during the current nomination cycle.

ELIGIBILITY FOR RECEIPT OF INITIAL AWARD

To receive an initial conditional award through the TASSP, a selected student must:

- ✓ Be enrolled in a Texas public or private accredited institution of higher education;
- ✓ Be a member in good standing of a ROTC program while enrolled in the institution, as certified by the institution;
- ✓ Enter into a written agreement with the Coordinating Board agreeing to:

- Complete four years of ROTC training or the equivalent of four years of ROTC training if the institution awards ROTC credit for prior service in any branch of the U.S. Armed Services or the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard, United States Merchant Marine, or another undergraduate officer commissioning program;
- Graduate no later than six years after the date the student first enrolls at an institution of higher education;
- No later than six months after graduation, provide the Coordinating Board with verification of:
 - (i) A four-year commitment to be a member of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Merchant Marine; or
 - (ii) A contract to serve as a commissioned officer in any branch of the armed services of the United States;
- Meet all prescreening requirements of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Merchant Marine or the branch of the armed services with which the student enters into a contract; and
- Repay the award if the student fails to meet the requirements for obtaining the award.

ELIGIBILITY FOR CONTINUED AWARDS (AS FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE)

Dependent on funding availability, a student may continue to receive an annual conditional TASSP if the student:

- ✓ Maintains satisfactory academic progress as determined by the Coordinating Board;
- ✓ Continues to be a member of a ROTC program; and
- ✓ Has not earned a baccalaureate degree or a cumulative total of 150 credit hours, including transferred hours.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much will each selected student receive through the TASSP?

The TASSP award amount for the 2020-2021 academic year is a maximum of \$10,000. In no case will the award exceed the student's cost of attendance less the total amount to be paid to a student for being under contract with one of the branches of the armed services of the United States and other financial assistance. A student may continue to receive a TASSP if the student meets continuing eligibility requirements and has not earned a baccalaureate degree or a cumulative total of 150 credit hours, including transferred hours. TASSP rules allow students to receive a scholarship for up to four of the six years allowed for graduation.

Can non-freshman students be nominated for an initial TASSP?

Yes. Students already enrolled at an institution of higher education may be nominated for a TASSP. Students must still complete four years of ROTC training or the equivalent of four years of ROTC training if the institution awards ROTC credit for prior service in any branch of the U.S. Armed Services or the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard, Texas State Guard, United States Coast Guard, United States Merchant Marine, or another undergraduate officer commissioning program.

What is the deadline for legislators to submit to the Coordinating Board their student selection?

The Coordinating Board respectfully requests that legislators make a TASSP appointment by **August 31, 2020** for the 2020-2021 academic year. Formal appointments must be made by the legislator or legislator's designee through an online process approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board at <https://www1.thecb.state.tx.us/apps/tassp/>.

What is the student deadline to complete their school initiated TASSP application after being appointed by a legislator?

Students must complete their TASSP online applications by **October 15, 2020**.

How may interested students get more information to be considered for a TASSP?

Interested students may contact a legislator for more information. Each legislator may set-up additional requirements for their selection process and may use any application process the legislator wishes to use to seek student nominations. To be considered for a scholarship students may contact the Office of the Governor, Office of the Lt. Governor, Office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, or a Texas State Senator or a Texas State Representative. Students may locate area legislators by visiting this link and typing in their home address under Who Represents Me?: <https://capitol.texas.gov/>.

For more information: Office of External Relations 512-427-6111 er@theccb.state.tx.us