

The [Education Freedom Scholarship \(EFS\)](#) new student application for the 2026-27 school year offers eligible students the opportunity to apply for participation in the EFS program for the upcoming academic year.

Who is an eligible student for an EFS in the 2026-27 school year? Any Tennessee student who is a U.S. citizen or lawfully present, as defined in State Board of Education (SBE) Rule 0520-01-24-.02(13), and who is entitled to attend a public school in grades K-12 in 2026-27 is eligible to apply. The student must enroll in an EFS registered Category I, II, or III non-public school located in Tennessee prior to funds being awarded.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS for All Applications

Applications must meet **ALL** of the below requirements:

- Tennessee Residency (*two (2) documentations of proof required*)
- Student's Proof of U.S. Citizenship (*one (1) proof required*)
OR Lawful Presence in the U.S. (*two (2) proofs required*)
- No more than 13 years in school and entering grades K-12
- Student must be five (5) years old by September 30, 2026

Priority Categories: Families may opt to provide additional documentation to demonstrate eligibility for priority categories of applications. For more information, please see page 3.

ALL APPLICATIONS must include:

Two (2) Proofs of Tennessee Residency Documents

Both documents must include the:

- 1** Name & Current Address listed on the application for the Parent/Guardian or Eligible Student (Please note that P.O. boxes are not allowable for proof of residency.)
- 2** Required Date Range from Groups I, II, or III below
- 3** Effective dates on documents do not meet the requirement unless they also clearly show the date the document was issued or generated. *For example, an insurance policy card that demonstrates a year-long coverage period only meets this requirement if it also includes an issuance date within the last 90 days.*

Tennessee Proof of Residency Approved Documentation (*This is an exhaustive list.*)

GROUP I (*Only listed documents issued within the last 90 days – Effective dates not allowable*)


- Utility Bill or Connection Notice (*internet, gas, electric, water, garbage*)
- Installment Loan Statement (*auto, mortgage, personal, student, bank*)
- Insurance Bill or Policy (*homeowner's/renter's, auto, health*)
- [Affidavit of Residence](#) (*landlord signed & notarized*)
- Fiscal Documentation (*paycheck stub, bank statement*)
- Agency Documentation (*social security, disability, TANF, SNAP, public assistance/government benefits*)
- Court Documentation

GROUP II (*Only listed documents issued within the last 365 days – Effective dates not allowable*)

- Rental or Mortgage Contract (*deed of sale for property, mortgage contract, rental or lease agreement (signed by landlord & resident)*)
NOTE: Handwritten contracts or agreements must be notarized.
- Tennessee Vehicle or Voter Registration
- Tax Documentation (*2024 IRS tax return (Form 1040), real estate/property tax receipt*)

GROUP III (*Only the listed cards that are Non-Expired are accepted*)

- Tennessee Identification Cards (*driver's license, identification license or card, handgun carry permit*)

<p>One (1) Proof of Student's United States (U.S.) Citizenship</p>	<p>OR</p>	<p>Two (2) Proofs of Student's Lawful Presence in the U.S.</p>	
<p><i>Be sure the name on the document(s) is the student identified on the application.</i></p>			
<p>Documents for Student's U.S. Citizenship</p>		<p>Documents for Student's Lawful Presence in the U.S.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A valid Tennessee Driver's License or Photo Identification License issued by the Department of Safety <i>containing a Real ID Marker</i> • A valid Driver's License or Photo Identification License from another state where the issuance requirements are at least as strict as those in Tennessee, as determined by the Department of Safety • An official Birth Certificate (not the Mother's Copy) issued by a state, jurisdiction or territory of the United States, including <u>Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, Swains Island, Guam; Puerto Rican birth certificates issued before July 1, 2010, shall not be recognized</u> • A U.S. Government-Issued Certified Birth Certificate • A valid, unexpired U.S. Passport • Certificate of Report of Birth issued by U.S. Department of State (<i>DS-1350</i>) • Report of Birth Abroad issued by U.S. Department of State (<i>FS-240</i>) • A Certificate of Citizenship (<i>N560 or N561</i>) • A Certificate of Naturalization (<i>N550, N570 or N578</i>) 		<p>Pursuant to TCA 4-58-103(d)(1), an applicant shall present two (2) forms of documentation of identity and immigration status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government-Issued Identification (<i>may only serve as one form of documentation</i>) • U.S. Permanent Resident Card (<i>I-551</i>) • Foreign Passport stamped by the U.S. Government indicating that the holder has been "Processed for I-551" • Permanent Resident Re-entry Permit (<i>I-327</i>) • Arrival Departure Form I-94 with "Temporary I-551" stamp and holder's photograph affixed • Travel Document issued to Permanent Residents (<i>I-327</i>) • Travel Document issued to Refugees (<i>I-571</i>) • Form I-94 stamped with one of the following statuses: <i>Asylee, Parolee or Parole, Refugee, Asylum, HP-humanitarian parolee or PIP-public interest parolee</i> • I-797 Approval Notice of I-914 Petition for T Nonimmigrant Status • Office of Refugee Resettlement Eligibility Letter for benefits under Trafficking Victims Protection Act • I-797 Prima Facie Case for I-360 Special Immigrant Petition pursuant to Violence Against Women's Act (VAWA) • I-797 Approval Notice of Application for I-360 Special Immigrant • Petition pursuant to VAWA • Prima Facie Determination Letter for I-360 Special Immigrant Petition pursuant to VAWA 	

Please consider the following when preparing to complete your application:

- **User Accounts:** Please ensure your user account is set up and accessible in the application portal by visiting https://app.efs.tnedu.gov/users/sign_in.
- **Completeness & Accuracy:** Applications must have all required fields completed and documentation uploaded. Documentation must be clear and legible.
- **Document Uploads:** Documents are only considered within the section in which they are uploaded. For documents originally produced in languages other than English, only certified English translation copies will be accepted. Documents must be saved and uploaded individually into the application. Each file upload should capture only a single document. Acceptable file formats include: jpg, gif, png, pdf, hevc, heic.
- **Multiple Children Applying:** Individual applications must be submitted with the necessary documentation for each child. The online application portal allows for the copying of family information across multiple new applications.

Refer to the following pages to see more detailed descriptions of each proof of documentation. Sample types for each required documentation can be found at the end of this document.

OVERVIEW of Scholarship Availability & Prioritization

If the department receives more applications for 2026-27 than scholarships are available, scholarships will be awarded in the following order:

Priority 1: Current EFS Recipients at the time of application;

Priority 2: Eligible students based on household income (100% of federal free or reduced-price lunch limit), IEA eligibility, or ESA eligibility, in the order in which the department receives completed applications;

Priority 3: Eligible students based on household income (300% of federal free or reduced-price lunch limit), in the order in which the department receives completed applications;

Priority 4: Eligible students who, at the time of submitting a completed application, are currently enrolled in a Tennessee Public School or who are eligible to enroll in kindergarten in a Public School for the 2026-27 school year, in the order in which the department receives completed applications; and

Priority 5: Eligible students, in the order in which the department receives completed applications.

PRIORITY 2

May be demonstrated through **ONE** or more of the following:

→ **Income Eligibility**

Income levels at or below 100% of the Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Guidelines
(2024 federal income tax Form 1040 Line 9)

OR Eligibility for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program

OR Eligibility for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

→ **Individualized Education Account (IEA) Program Eligibility**

[Find more information about the IEA program here.](#)

→ **Education Savings Account (ESA) Program Eligibility**

[Find more information about the ESA program here.](#)

	PRIORITY 2	PRIORITY 3
Household Size	Line 9 Max Income (100%)	Line 9 Max Income (300%)
2	\$37,814	\$113,442
3	\$47,767	\$143,301
4	\$57,720	\$173,160
5	\$67,673	\$203,019
6	\$77,626	\$232,878
7	\$87,579	\$262,737

PRIORITY 3

→ **Income Eligibility**

Income levels at or below 300% of the Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch Guidelines
(2024 federal income tax Form 1040 Line 9)

PRIORITY 4

→ **Selection of Tennessee Public School & District**

Options will appear in a drop-down menu. If entering kindergarten in 2026-27, you will need to select kindergarten as the grade level for 2026-27 on the Student Information page.

Documentation Required for Priority Categories 2 and 3 must ALSO include One (1) of the following:

Income Documentation OR IEA Eligibility OR ESA Eligibility

Income Documentation (2024 Form 1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return **OR TANF OR SNAP**)

Note: A handwritten Form 1040 or a tax transcript is not acceptable.

For income documentation, you will need to submit your Form 1040 filed by the parent/guardian that lists the eligible student as a dependent or filed in their name. Forms for both parents/guardians must be included if either of the following apply:

Parents/guardians of the eligible student share equal residential custody pursuant to a custody order.

OR

Parents/guardians of the eligible student share a household but file taxes as "married, filing separately" or as "head of household."

Household Size	2	3	4	5	6	7
100% of Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	\$37,814	\$47,767	\$57,720	\$67,673	\$77,626	\$87,579
300% of Federal Free or Reduced-Price Lunch	\$113,442	\$143,301	\$173,160	\$203,019	\$232,878	\$262,737

Line 9 on the 1040 Tax Return will be the income considered for eligibility. The student's name must be listed on the 1040.

OR Documentation for TANF OR SNAP (must be within 365 days and include the name of the parent/student)

To obtain TANF or SNAP documentation:

Log into the One DHS portal to retrieve your information. You can also get a copy of the eligibility letter online [here](#).

OR

Call the Family Assistance Service Center at (866) 311-4287 for assistance.

OR

You can also get a copy of the eligibility letter from the Families First office.

TANF Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program

SNAP Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

OR IEA Eligibility (IEP Documentation)

Find more information about the IEA program, awards, and qualifications [here](#).

For IEA eligibility, you will need to submit:

The front page of the student's most current, active Individualized Education Program (IEP) from their public school

OR

2025-26 IEA Approval Documentation

OR ESA Eligibility

Find more information about the ESA program, awards, and qualifications [here](#).

For ESA eligibility, you will need to submit:

2025-26 ESA Approval Documentation

OR

A completed [ESA Eligibility Worksheet](#) **AND** 2024 Form 1040 U.S. Individual Income Tax Return ("Form 1040 Tax Return") filed by the parent/guardian that lists the eligible student as a dependent or filed in their name. Forms for both parents/guardians must be included if either of the following apply:

Parents/guardians of the eligible student share equal residential custody pursuant to a custody order.

OR

Parents/guardians of the eligible student share a household but file taxes as "married, filing separately" or as "head of household."

Household Size	2	3	4	5	6	7
200% of Federal Free Lunch Guidelines	\$53,144	\$67,132	\$81,120	\$95,108	\$109,096	\$123,084

Line 9 on the 1040 Tax Return will be the income considered for eligibility.

Refer to the following pages to see more detailed descriptions of each proof of documentation. Sample types for each required documentation can be found at the end of this document.

EDUCATION FREEDOM

Required Proof of Documentation Samples

Tips for All Residency Documents

- Documents must show ISSUE date, NOT due date or effective date.
- Not accepted documents include: credit card bills, cell phone bills, medical bills, insurance cards, and Explanations of Benefits (EOBs).
- Only a tax form 1040 is accepted (no Form 1098, Form W-2, tax transcripts, etc.).
- Service location on documentation must match the address on the application.
- Paycheck stubs must include a home address that matches the address on the application.
- Documents are only considered within the section in which they are uploaded.

Sample types for each required documentation can be found on the following pages. These examples show acceptable document types and the required information needed for each. The dates shown are for example purposes only—refer to the charts on previous pages for the correct date requirements.

Examples of Proof of Tennessee Residency

MLGW Utility Bill

MEMPHIS LIGHT GAS AND WATER DIVISION
EDITABLE
 For: FLORENCE E. FORD
 Service at: 600 Dr. M. L.K. Jr Blvd, Nashville TN 37243 January 30, 2018 at 08:26 Account Number 00012-3456-7890-123

Page 1 of 2
UTILITY BILL
 Date: January 31, 2018
 Amount Due: \$11,700.00
 Due Date: February 16, 2018

Previous Balance	\$ 10,423.00
Adjustments	-0.27
Balance Forward	10,422.73

GAS 1/30/18 12/29/17
 G-1 Residential gas 6052 6040 12 16.62
 Includes Purchased Gas Adjustment of -0.0340000/ect **16.62**

ELECTRIC 1/30/18 12/29/17
 E-1 Residential Electric 18806 14471 4335 381.92
 Includes TWA Fuel Cost Adjustment of -0.0197400/kWh **381.92**

WATER 1/30/18 12/29/17
 W-1 Residential Water 7624 7215 409 750.92
 9.25 Sales Tax 69.46 **820.38**

OTHER MLGW 1/31/18 1/23/18
 City of Memphis Light Fee 1.15 **1.15**

OTHER MLGW
 Share the Pennis 0.37 **0.31**

Service: Day of Service: 32
 Average Utility Cost Per Day: \$ 39.91
 Average Temperature: 31
 Billin Cycle: 21
Next Reading Date: February 28, 2018

Contact: See back of bill
 Non-MLGW
 New Service Requests 820-7878
 Transfers, Disconnects and Trouble Maintenance
 Billing Inquiries 544-MLGW(6549)
 Payment Arrangements and Service Reconnects
 Hours: Monday-Friday 7AM- 7PM
 My Account Access Code: 131143
 Pay Online! www.mlgw.com
 Pay by Phone! 1-866-315-0277

Payment Arrangements Online at www.mlgw.com/payarrange
 PAYMENTS MUST BE RECEIVED BY 5:00 PM CENTRAL TIME TO POST SAME BUSINESS DAY.

Current Charges are continued on the reverse side.
 If paying in person please present both portions of bill.
 Please detach and return in the enclosed envelop with payment.

Amount Due: \$ 11,700.00
 Due Date: February 16, 2018

Account Number 00012-3456-7890-123

FLORENCE E. FORD
 600 DR. M.L.K. JR.BLVD.
 NASHVILLE, TN 37243
 00012-3456-7890-123

Memphis Gas Light and Water Division
 P.O. Box 388
 Memphis, TN 38145

Tennessee Driver's License

USA TN
DRIVER LICENSE
 Tennessee THE VOLUNTEER STATE

DL NO. **123456789** DOB **02/11/1974**
 EXP **02/11/2026** ISS **02/11/2019**
 CLASS **D** END **NONE**
 REST **01**
 SEX **F** HGT **5'-05"** EYES **BLU**
 DD **1234567890123456** DL
SAMPLE JANICE
 123 MAIN STREET
 APT. 1

Tennessee Vehicle Registration

Tennessee Department of Revenue
CERTIFICATE OF VEHICLE REGISTRATION

Invoice	21280	License No	0A00A0	Class	1000	Base Y1	2022	Trans Code	O25	Date of Issue	1/1/2022	Expiration Date	10/31/2022
Time/Stamp	09:27:27	Title No	123456789	Make	CHEV	Model	SLV	Year	2001	PK	A	Y	
Station No	WK01	VIN	ABCDEFGHIJ1234SHIJKL	Zone		Driver License	Lease						
Clerk/Draw	CH11	Emission No		Vehicle No		County Sticker	City Sticker						
Cash	00	1		Davidson		Brenda Wynn							
Check	00	County		County Clerk		Web Use	Reg Weight						
Check #	3130												
Credit	00												
Credit #	00												
CC Auth #	00												
Voucher	00												
Change	00												

RENEW ONLINE AT www.nashvilleclerk.com

Registration	26.50
Exec Vhcn	.00
Credit	.00
Lease	.00
Trans	.00
Clerk	.00
Insurance	2.50
Title	.00
License	.00
Sales Tax	.00
S&A Tax	.00
Local Tax	.00
Admnl Tax	.00
City Wh Tax	56.78
City Wh Tax	2.50
Organ Don	.00
Postage	.00
Criminal Fee	.00
TNS Fee	.00
Total Tax	84.78
EQ Vntry	521218

OWNER'S PHONE

JOHN Q PUBLIC
 123 MAIN ST
 NASHVILLE TN 37027

10-22
 0A00A0
 TN TP

T.C.A. 55-4-108 Every Certificate of Registration shall at all times be carried in the vehicle to which it refers or shall be carried by the person driving or in control of such vehicle. Renewals of registration for all vehicles (except permanent registrations) are for twelve (12) months from the current expiration date. If the current expiration date falls on Saturday, Sunday, or a holiday, the current registration remains valid until the next business day.

Application Instructions
 1. Clean debossed area in the upper right corner of plate. 2. Remove decal by folding at edge of decal and separate from registration.
 3. Rub firmly to apply decal to upper right corner of plate. 4. Keep registration with vehicle.

Examples of Acceptable Residency Documentation

Voter Registration

- Must confirm that the CARD PRINTED date (example highlighted in green) is within 365 days of application date.
- Name and address on card must match name/address on application.

Insurance

- Generated/Issue Date of document (examples highlighted in green) is required.
- Policy Period or Effective Date (examples highlighted in red) is NOT acceptable.

COVERAGE	LIMITS OF LIABILITY	UNIT 01	UNIT 02	UNIT 03	UNIT 04
A. BODILY INJURY	\$100,000 EACH PERSON				
B. PROPERTY DAMAGE	300,000 EACH ACCIDENT	54.00	46.00	54.00	
C. MEDICAL PAYMENTS	5,000 EACH PERSON	77.00	6.00	6.00	
D. UNINSURED MOTORIST BODILY INJURY	300,000 EACH PERSON	26.00	26.00	26.00	
E. UNINSURED MOTORIST PROPERTY DAMAGE	25,000 EACH ACCIDENT	25.00	25.00	25.00	
F. COMPREHENSIVE/DEDUCTIBLE PREMIUM	\$500 DED 135.00	\$500 DED 149.00	\$500 DED 85.00	\$500 DED 235.00	\$500 DED 40.00
G. COLLISION PREMIUM	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	
H. ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE REMBURSEMENT	\$75.00 EACH DEARLEMENT				
I. AUTO RENTAL EXPENSE	30 CONSECUTIVE DAYS	\$50 A DAY 28.00	\$50 A DAY 28.00		
TOTAL BY UNIT		477.00	169.00	600.00	125.00
TOTAL POLICY TERM PREMIUM		\$1,371.00			

Mortgage Statement

- Issued/Statement Date of document (example highlighted in green) is required.
- Payment Due Date (example highlighted in red) is NOT acceptable.

Examples of U.S. Citizenship

Certificate of Naturalization



Tennessee Driver's License with Real ID Marker (star upper right)



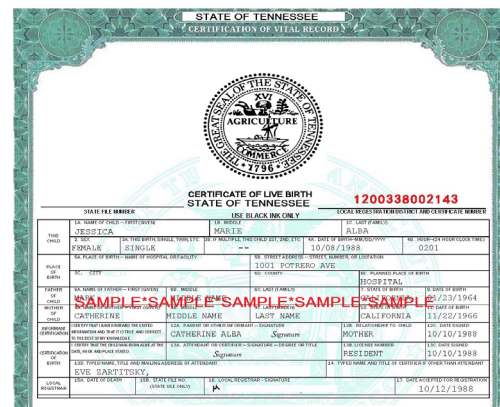
U.S. Passport



Certificate of Report of Birth issued by U.S. Department of State (DS-1350)



Birth Certificate



Report of Birth Abroad issued by U.S. Department of State (FS-240)



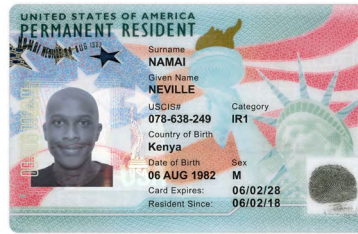
Photos not included:

- A valid Driver's License or Photo Identification License from another state where the issuance requirements are at least as strict as those in Tennessee, as determined by the Department of Safety
- A Certificate of Citizenship (N560 or N561)

Examples of Lawful Presence in the United States

Form I-94, Arrival/Departure Record
 Class of Admission must be for: *Asylee, Parolee or Parole, Refugee, Asylum, HP-humanitarian parolee or public interest parolee (PIP).*

U.S. Permanent Resident Card



Permanent Resident Re-entry Permit



Office of Refugee Resettlement Eligibility Letter for benefits under Trafficking Victims Protection Act

Prima Facie Determination Letter for VAWA

I-797 Approval Notice for T Nonimmigrant Status

Form I-797 Establishment of Prima Facie Case for VAWA Petition

Photos not included:

- Foreign Passport stamped by the U.S. Government indicating that the holder has been "Processed for I-551"
- Travel Document issued to Refugees (I-571)