



NEW HAMPSHIRE BAR FOUNDATION HIGH SCHOOL CIVICS ESSAY CONTEST 2026 CONTEST RULES

The contest is open to all New Hampshire students who are enrolled in grades 11-12 in public, private, parochial, charter schools located within the State of New Hampshire. The contest is also open to all New Hampshire homeschooled students of equivalent grade status.

Students should be mindful of the contest topic and should review the essay prompt carefully; essays not responsive to the topic will be disqualified from the contest.

Students (including homeschooled students) may submit essays directly to the New Hampshire Bar Foundation (the Foundation). The name of a responsible adult familiar with their work (such as a teacher, guidance counselor, administrator, parent, tutor, or mentor) must be listed on the Student Entry Form.

Each student may only submit one entry.

Entries must be submitted **via email no later than 5:00 pm on February 6, 2026**. We highly encourage submission before that date to allow time for confirmation that submitted materials are complete. **Late entries after 5:00pm will not be accepted.**

All entries must be the student's original work with no outside help. Any passages paraphrased or quoted from other sources must be referenced in a "Works Cited" page in MLA or APA format. Failure to do so may result in the disqualification of the essay. Such disqualifications may be made at the discretion of either the staff of the New Hampshire Bar Foundation or the contest judges.

Email the essay, the *Student Entry Form*, and the *Student and Parent/Guardian Release Form* to nhbessaycontest@nhbar.org. All forms must be received by the deadline to be eligible.

Criteria:

1. Use of 12-point Cambria or Times New Roman font, double-spaced text with one-inch margins.
2. Length must be between 750 – 1,000 words.
3. **Include page numbers.** Do not include a title page or page headers or footers.
4. **Please save and submit the essay in PDF format.** Submissions should be named as follows: First name Last name.pdf (example: John Smith.pdf). Each submission will then be assigned an identification number by the Foundation. This is so that entries may be screened and judged anonymously.
5. Student's name CANNOT be included in the essay itself.
6. Any submission that includes identifying information (school, teacher/counselor, grade level, age, etc.) in the body or title of the essay will be disqualified.
7. Essay submissions must include a completed *Student Entry Form* and completed *Student and Parent/Guardian Release Form* to be considered. If both forms are not received by the deadline the entry will be disqualified.