



Illinois Sheriffs' Association

\$500 Scholarship

The Illinois Sheriffs' Association will be awarding over 100 scholarships throughout the State of Illinois to students wishing to pursue higher education during the 2026-2027 academic year. The student must be enrolled full-time at a certified institution of higher learning.

Eligibility

There shall be no restriction on any applicant by reason of race, age, creed, color, sex or national origin. The only limitations are the following:

- Applicants must be permanent Illinois residents.
- Online learning is also eligible.
- Students must be enrolled as a **full-time** college student during the 2026-2027 school year (excluding summer session).

Please read the following very carefully. Failure to comply with the rules will result in disqualification.

How to Apply

Applications are available at your local sheriff's offices or on the Illinois Sheriffs' Association website at <https://www.ilsheriff.org/youth-2/>. Fill out the application, complete the written essay and return all documentation to the **sheriff's office in the county of your permanent residence by March 13, 2026** (must be postmarked by this date).

Distribution of Monies

The scholarship funds will be paid **directly** to the school on behalf of the recipient. The total scholarship award will be divided as follows: 1/2 credited to the fall semester and 1/2 credited to the spring semester. *Funds cannot be used for summer courses and must be used during the 2026-2027 academic year.*

The recipient must instruct the college they are attending to notify the Illinois Sheriffs' Association (ISA) office in writing regarding their full-time enrollment status before any scholarship funds will be disbursed. The ISA office must receive this written confirmation from the school on official school letterhead (a school schedule is not acceptable) by September 15, 2026.

EMAIL: Megan Sergent at MEGAN@ILSHERIFF.ORG

Deadlines

The deadline for all application submissions to the **applicant's permanent county Sheriff's office** is **March 13, 2026**. If you are awarded a scholarship: the ISA office must be contacted by the school with written enrollment verification before **September 15, 2026**, or scholarship checks will **not** be issued, and your scholarship will be awarded to the first alternate.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: ISA scholarship funds are intended to assist students with the cost of tuition, books, and fees. No funds can be used for housing or any other incurred expenses. Funds must be used during the regular school year and cannot be used for summer courses. Books must be purchased from a learning institution campus bookstore and directly billed through that institution's bursar's office. If tuition is paid in full by any other scholarship, grant or other financial aid, the ISA scholarship cannot be used to reduce the other funding.

Illinois Sheriffs' Association Scholarship Program Guidelines

The Illinois Sheriffs' Association plans to award over 100 scholarships of a minimum \$500 during the 2026-2027 academic year. This effort is a meaningful expression of the Association's confidence in, and respect for, education and training.

The Association's goal is to aid worthy students in furthering their education and training with resources made available through the Associate Membership Program of the Illinois Sheriffs' Association. Illinois Sheriffs considers this scholarship program to be an investment in the future which will provide for better communications with the residents of the communities served.

The sum of \$ 58,000.00 has been allocated from the 2026 budget to carry on the program for the 2026-2027 academic year. The scholarship will be awarded statewide with distribution based on the number of Associate Members in participating counties. One scholarship will be provided for each county with an Associate membership (1-500 members). One additional scholarship will be awarded per every 500 Associate Members in the county. Scholarships will only be awarded in counties where the Sheriff has authorized the Associate Membership Program.

Scholarship funds are intended to assist students with the cost of tuition, fees, and books only. No funds can be used for housing or any other expenses incurred. If a lesser amount (less than \$500) covers all tuition, books and fees required of the student chosen, that lesser amount will be awarded.

The scholarship funds will be paid directly to the school on behalf of the recipient with the instructions that 1/2 is to be credited to the fall semester and 1/2 to the spring semester. However, books must be purchased from the learning institution's campus bookstore and directly billed through the institution's bursar's office.

Funds cannot be used for summer courses and must be used during the regular 2026-2027 school year. The recipient must instruct the college they are attending to notify the Illinois Sheriffs' Association (ISA) office in writing regarding their full-time enrollment status before any scholarship funds will be disbursed. The ISA office must receive this written confirmation

from the school on official school letterhead (a school schedule is not acceptable) by September 15, 2026. If this deadline is not met, the scholarship will be forfeited. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS.**

There shall be no restriction on any applicant by reason of race, age, creed, color, sex or national origin.

The only limitations are the following:

- 1) Applicants must be permanent Illinois residents.
- 2) Students must be enrolled as full-time students for 2026-2027.
- 3) Full-time online learning is acceptable.

Only the immediate family of the Sheriff is ineligible to apply. Families of Sheriff's office employees are eligible to apply.

Completed applications shall be submitted to the Sheriff of the county of the applicant's permanent Illinois residence by the **March 13, 2026** deadline. A Sheriffs directory is available on our website, <https://www.ilsheriff.org/sheriffs-directory/>. Applicants must be eligible for admission to the school indicated on the application. The award will only be paid for full-time attendance at certified schools.

Applications received in the Sheriff's office on or before **March 13, 2026**, are to be reviewed by a committee of nonpartisan citizens selected by the Sheriff. That committee of citizens will review, evaluate, and select the winner(s) and up to two alternates to represent their county.

The names of ALL scholarship winners will be announced by May 1, 2026, on our social media pages and website. Scholarship winners will also be notified in writing by the Illinois Sheriffs' Association.

Those who receive scholarships during an academic year may apply again in another year. However, such applicants will be considered along with all others who apply in the county. If for any reason, a recipient relinquishes a scholarship, that scholarship will be granted to an alternate from the same county which was selected by the local committee.

Do not send completed applications to the ISA Office.

YOU MUST MAIL THEM TO THE SHERIFF'S OFFICE OF THE COUNTY IN WHICH YOU RESIDE.

ILLINOIS SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION

Deadline: **March 13, 2026** (must postmarked by this date)Mail applications to the Sheriff's office in the county where you reside. A directory can be found at www.ilsheriff.org.**Please type or print your answers. If application is illegible, it will be returned to you.**

1.	Last Name:		First Name:	
2.	Mailing Address Street: _____			
	City: _____	County: _____	State: _____	ZIP: _____
3.	Daytime Telephone Number: ()			
4.	Date of Birth: Month Day Year			
5.	Please make sure this is an email address you check frequently and will be current after you graduate.			
	Email: _____			
6.	In the Fall of 2026, I will be attending college as a: (Check one)			
	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
	Master's Level	Technical School	Medical School Student Nursing School Student (year _____) Other: _____	
7.	I will be attending the following school in the Fall of 2026: _____			
	Proof of current student enrollment from the above school, in writing, is required by September 15, 2026. IF you are awarded a scholarship!			
8.	Grade Point Average (GPA): _____ (On a 4.0 scale) Attach proof of GPA.			
9.	ACT Score: _____ Or SAT Score: _____			
	A copy of your ACT or SAT score sheet if required for school admission.			
10.	Name and city of high school attended:			Year graduated
11.	List the name of any college you have attended. (If you have not attended college yet, go on to question 12)	Year Began	Year Ended	Year Graduated (If applicable)
	Degree Received (If applicable)			
	A.			
	B.			
	C.			
12.	What specialty/major do you plan to study in as you continue your education?			

13.	List expenses you expect to incur per semester or quarter:		Description
	A.	Tuition:	Amount: \$
	B.	Books:	Amount: \$
	C.	Room & Board:	Amount: \$
	D.	Other Expenses:	Amount: \$
	E.	Other Expenses:	Amount: \$
Comments:			
14.	List other financial assistance you will receive per semester or quarter:		Description
	A.	Personal:	Amount: \$
	B.	Other Scholarship(s):	Amount: \$
	C.	Grants:	Amount: \$
	D.	Student Loan(s):	Amount: \$
	E.	Other Financial Resources:	Amount: \$
Comments:			
15.	Do your parents still claim you as a dependent for tax purposes? _____ Yes _____ No		
Father/Guardian:		Employer/Occupation:	
Address:			
Mother/Guardian:		Employer/Occupation:	
Address:			
Total number of dependents (#claimed on taxes) in household including yourself:			
If you are not claimed by your parents or guardian, then complete this section.			
Your Occupation:		Annual Income:	
Your Spouse's Occupation:		Annual Income:	

Use an additional sheet if you need more room to list financial information requested in items 13 & 14.

16.	What are your educational and professional goals and objectives? (You can attach your resume if it has this information.)
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17.	List your academic honors, awards, and membership activities while in high school or college: (You can attach your resume if it has this information.)
18.	List your community service activities, hobbies, outside interests, and extracurricular activities: (You can attach your resume if it has this information.)
19.	If selected as a Scholarship winner may ISA publish your name and/or picture as a scholarship recipient? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

Required Essay Response

(Please attach your essay)

Have you had or seen an interaction with a law enforcement officer that has changed your perspective on the profession in a positive way? If so, please describe. What are some things we could do as a profession to encourage young people to join our team, and serve their community?

REMEMBER to submit your essay of 500 words or less with your application.

STATEMENT OF ACCURACY

I hereby affirm that all the above stated information provided by me is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I also consent that my picture may be taken and used for any purpose deemed necessary to promote the ISA scholarship program.

Signature of scholarship applicant: _____ Date: _____

ATTENTION

The deadline for this application to be received is March 13, 2026. Remember all applications are to be submitted to the Sheriff's Office in your County. **Do NOT submit to the Illinois Sheriffs' Association.** You can find a directory of Sheriff's Office addresses on our website at <https://www.ilsheriff.org/sheriffs-directory>