

As American Legionnaires, we fully believe that education is the cornerstone upon which the future of America is built. Education becomes the first requisite of good citizenship and the relationship of The American Legion to Pennsylvania citizens is of prime importance as a means of keeping us a free civilization.

Our approach to supporting solid educational principles is direct and positive. We agree with the current PA Department of Education initiative of "writing across the curriculum" and reward the efforts of involved students through our annual essay scholarship program.

Through the annual Department of Pennsylvania American Legion Essay scholarship contest, students are provided an opportunity to show case their talents and abilities in English by using originality, accuracy and research as evidence, while learning that the responsibilities and duties of good citizenship can be both rewarding and fun.

Since the inception of the Department of Pennsylvania state Essay Contest in 1935, The American Legion has awarded well over \$500,000 in scholarships, while local American Legion Posts, counties, Districts and Sections have also offered suitable awards and prizes for their respective best essay winners as well.

For more information on participating in the Department of Pennsylvania's American Legion Essay Contest, visit <https://pa-legion.com/programs/student-and-youth/essay-program/>

## The American Legion Essay Committee

**Chairman:** James Fulton, Sr.  
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Plum, PA 15239  
(412) 216-4063  
[jfulton65@yahoo.com](mailto:jfulton65@yahoo.com)

### Sectional Vice Chairmen:

**East:** Aaron Campbell, 60 Hawthorne Ln,  
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**West:** Rodney Daughenbaugh, 924 Fronheiser St  
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**Central:** John Minito, 705 Quaker Cir, Apt 1  
Lewisberry, PA 17339 (717) 576-1726  
[jminito@ptd.net](mailto:jminito@ptd.net)

### POSTS

*If HAVE county representation please  
Call your County Commander for the winner  
to move to the next level. (As listed in the  
current American Legion Directory).*

*If NO county representation please  
Call your District Essay Chairperson for the  
winner to move to the next level. (As listed  
in the current American Legion Directory).*

*If anyone has any questions or concerns  
about rules or procedures PLEASE  
Call the Essay Chairman or another  
Committee member listed above.*



**"Why is the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment  
Important in Today's  
America?"**

**2026**

**PENNSYLVANIA**

**AMERICAN LEGION**

**91<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL**

**ESSAY CONTEST**

FOR GRADES 9-12

**The American Legion  
Department of Pennsylvania  
PO Box 2324  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2324  
(717) 730-9100  
[www.pa-legion.com](http://www.pa-legion.com)**

## 2026 ESSAY CONTEST RULES & REGULATIONS

### *“Why is the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment Important in Today’s America?”*

Any student enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in a public, private or parochial, cyber school or who is home schooled in Pennsylvania is eligible to participate.

Students **MAY NOT** use any AI for any assistance with the essays.

All essays **MUST** have a **COVER PAGE** containing the following:

- **The Essay Title (As stated above WITH NO CHANGES),**
- **Student’s Name, address, telephone, & email address (if applicable),**
- **School Name and Address if applicable,**
- **Teacher’s verification of Student’s Grade Level,**
- **Sponsoring American Legion Post Number & address,**
- **Parent or guardian’s name, address and phone number,**
- **Student’s signature.**

ALL essays (typewritten preferred but not required) **MUST be no less than 500** words and **no more than 1,000** words.

The title **MUST** appear on **all pages** of the essay as well as the cover page.

Essays shall be judged on the following:

- **Proper English structure.**
  - **Accuracy.**
  - **Extent of information.**
  - **Originality** - *Any material not original must be cited in a bibliography for the information of the judges, stating publication, volume, page, date, publisher and author. Anything cited from the internet must include a verifiable internet address such as: <http://pa-legion.com/about/our-history/>*
- No reference shall be made, for or against, any political candidate or political party affiliation.

#### **DEADLINE DATES:**

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1. **BEFORE JANUARY 7, 2026** - **STUDENTS** must submit their Essays to a **LOCAL AMERICAN LEGION POST**. Each high school may select **one (1) winner for each American Legion Post in their school district**. To locate a post <https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Find-a-Post> & and enter your zip code.
  2. **BEFORE JANUARY 21, 2026** - The American Legion Posts shall have selected and forwarded their winning essays to their **COUNTY Essay Chairperson**.

3. **BEFORE FEBRUARY 4, 2026-COUNTIES** shall have forwarded their winning essays to their appropriate **DISTRICT Essay Chairperson** (as listed in the current American Legion Directory).
4. **BEFORE FEBRUARY 25, 2026 – DISTRICTS** shall have forwarded their winning essays to their **SECTIONAL Essay Vice Chairperson**.
5. **BEFORE MARCH 11, 2026** – each **SECTION** (East, Central, West) shall have selected and forwarded their winning essay to the Department Essay Chairperson.
6. The Department of Pennsylvania’s Essay Program’s top three winners will have been judged and selected by **MARCH 25, 2026**.

The Department of Pennsylvania will award the following prizes to those top three (3) winning Essays.

- **First Place Winner will be awarded a \$3,500, a plaque and a trip to the PA American Legion Convention in July** to read the winning essay to the assembled delegates.
- **The Second Place Winner will receive \$3,000 and a plaque.**
- **The Third Place Winner will receive \$2,500 and a plaque.**