



# Florida House of Representatives Page and Messenger Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What are the requirements for applying to the Page and Messenger Program?

This program is for any student enrolled in grades 6-12 who has an interest in state government. Signatures are required from your parent/guardian, school principal/other school personnel, and a current member of the Florida House of Representatives before your application can be submitted for final consideration.

### 2. What is the difference between a Page and a Messenger?

Pages (grades 6-8) assist the Representatives in the House Chamber whenever the House is in session. Messengers (grades 9-12) assist House staff by delivering time-sensitive messages throughout the entire Capitol Complex.

### 3. When does Regular Session take place?

**The 2020 Regular Session convenes on January 14 and adjourns *sine die* on March 13.**

### 4. How do I apply to the Page and Messenger Program?

Download the blank form to your desktop and open it from the saved file on your desktop, *not* your Internet browser. Complete everything on the application up to the green line and then select "Attach to Email" to tentatively reserve a space in the program. Then, complete the rest of the form below the green line, click "Print a Copy" and gather the three (3) required signatures. Once the signatures have been acquired, return the application via email to [HousePagesandMessengers@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:HousePagesandMessengers@myfloridahouse.gov) or via fax to (888) 864-8992. This will confirm your place in the program.

### 5. How do the Representatives select the participants of the program?

The selection process varies as the decision is ultimately up to the Representative. Some members conduct essay contests in their school districts, while others may conduct interviews or simply use a first-come first-serve basis. Representatives may also submit alternate applications to be time stamped and added to the wait list. An alternate is not considered "accepted" into the program until a spot becomes available.

### 6. Why do I need a Representative to sign my application?

This is a member-sponsored program. Each Representative can choose two students to participate for one week during the 60-day Florida House of Representatives Regular Session. If you are selected, your sponsor will sign your application and submit it to the Page and Messenger Program. Please keep a copy of the signed application for your records.

### 7. How do I find out who my current Representative is?

You can find your Representative on the Florida House of Representatives website, [MyFloridaHouse.gov](http://MyFloridaHouse.gov), via the ['Find Your Representative'](#) link.

**8. Does the Representative have to be from my district?**

No. Any current member of the Florida House Representatives can sponsor you.

**9. What if I can't find a Representative to sponsor me?**

Having a Representative sponsor you is the only way you are guaranteed placement in the program. If you choose to submit your application without sponsorship, send a completed copy with the necessary signatures from your parent/guardian and school principal to the Civics Program Coordinator at [HousePagesandMessengers@myfloridahouse.gov](mailto:HousePagesandMessengers@myfloridahouse.gov) or by fax to (888) 864-8992. Your application will then be placed on a wait list where alternate applications are reviewed in the order received as spots open up. Please be aware that alternates may not receive much advance notice. In the meantime, keep trying to find a sponsor and if you do, contact the Civics Program Coordinator immediately.

**10. Why do I have to choose three different weeks for availability?**

There are over 200 students that participate in the Page and Messenger Program every year and while the Civics Program Coordinator makes every effort to accommodate each applicant's preference for week of service, choosing three different weeks increases the likelihood that your request can be honored.

**11. How will I know if I have been selected and which week I am coming?**

You will receive a confirmation email from the Civics Program Coordinator informing you of your acceptance and which week you have been selected to serve. Follow the instructions in the email to find out when and where you are to report. Additionally, you will receive the link to the Guidebook with forms to complete and return. This book also explains the dress code and guidelines you must follow while serving in the program, so make sure to read through this before your week of service.

**12. Where will I stay and how will I get to Tallahassee if I am chosen to participate?**

The House does not provide travel or lodging accommodations for students or their families, so it is the responsibility of the parent/legal guardian to make all necessary travel arrangements. We recommend that all lodging reservations are made with an establishment that has a flexible cancellation policy as schedules may change. A comprehensive list of lodging options is available [here](#).

**13. How many hours do the Pages and Messengers work?**

Messengers are "on duty" from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, though the actual working hours vary from day-to-day based on the workload. Because Pages work in the House Chamber, their working hours mirror those of the Session schedule. However, Pages do not work in the Chamber past 5 pm, regardless of the Session schedule.

**14. What do the Pages and Messengers do when they are not working?**

Although the Page and Messenger Program's weekly schedule is entirely dependent upon the Session schedule, the Civics Program Coordinator structures educational activities to model a week-long Legislative Session of their own: the week begins with the students working independently or in groups to develop ideas and draft them in the form of a bill; by the middle of the week, the students attempt to pass those bills out of a Mock Committee where they take on roles as members of the committee, lobbyists, and members of the public; finally, the week concludes with a Mock Session where the students act as the Florida House of Representatives, deciding the fate of any bill that has successfully made it out of the committee. Depending on availability, these civic exercises are held in a real committee meeting room and the House Chamber to ensure an authentic experience.

**15. Are there opportunities to see parts of Tallahassee outside of the Capitol Complex?**

As time permits, the Civics Program Coordinator may schedule several tours throughout the week, including a tour of the Historic Capitol, the Supreme Court, the Museum of Florida History, and the Governor's Mansion. All planned activities are subject to change, but can be viewed on the weekly schedule when it becomes available. Parents and family members are encouraged to participate. Keep in mind that there will be fewer opportunities for any of the abovementioned tours or activities during the later weeks of Session as the workload of the Pages and Messengers increases.

**16. Does participating in this program qualify as earning community service hours?**

Yes. Every participant will go home with a formal letter signifying how many community service hours they have earned. Depending on the week of service, a full week of participation can earn between 35 to 40 hours of service. If you are missing school, check with your guidance counselor to make sure they will accept the hours. Sometimes a school may require further verification, so please bring any forms specific to your school with you. Likewise, some schools may require the student to write a report on their experience.

**17. What is the difference between the House of Representatives and the Senate?**

The House and Senate are separate Chambers that make up the Legislature. The House is led by the Speaker of the House and the Senate is led by the Senate President. While the Senate does offer a Page program, the requirements, schedule, and experience will vary from the House Page and Messenger Program. We encourage students to look into both programs.

**18. Can I apply to both programs, House and Senate?**

The House Page and Messenger Program does not place restrictions on participation with the Senate.

**19. When should I turn my application in?**

Spaces fill up quickly, so you are more likely to be assigned to one of your first choice weeks the sooner we receive your completed application. **The deadline to submit the application for the 2020 Regular Session is November 22, 2019.**