

# **2025 PayrollOrg Money Matters Scholarships Official Rules**

The API Fund for Payroll Education, Inc., dba PayrollOrg has adopted the following procedures for the awarding of six (6) scholarships to individuals under their Money Matters sponsorship in 2025. The scholarship will be administered by PayrollOrg.

## **1. Scholarship Program**

PayrollOrg fund scholarships to help promote and support financial literacy education targeted to students preparing to enter the workforce. The scholarships may be used at any accredited university, college, community college, technical school, or vocational school in the United States. In 2025, there will be two scholarship windows. One window will be in the spring and the other will be in the fall. For each window, three (3) scholarships will be offered – one (1) in the amount of \$5,000, and two (2) in the amount of \$1,000 each. Contest entrants must be a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States. If an entrant is less than 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian must also sign the application form.

*Certain individuals related to scholarship sponsors ineligible.* Employees, directors, or officers of the API Fund For Payroll Education, Inc. (or any entity under the direction and control of PayrollOrg) or members of their immediate families or households are eligible for scholarships.

## **2. Deadlines:**

Spring scholarship submissions must be received by 11:59:59 PM ET on May 31, 2025.

Fall scholarship submissions must be received by 11:59:59 PM ET on October 10, 2025.

## **3. How to Apply**

To be considered for a scholarship, you must complete the following steps:

- Read the complete scholarship rules.
- Complete your submission package, which includes a written or video essay and a signed entry form. A parent or legal guardian must also sign the form if the entrant is less than 18 years of age.
- Upload all materials at [www.nationalpayrollweek.com/money-matters-scholarship-entry](http://www.nationalpayrollweek.com/money-matters-scholarship-entry) by the scholarship deadline.

## **4. Selection Process and Essay Judging**

- A panel of judges, selected by PayrollOrg, will review all of the entries determined to be complete and timely submitted.
  - Entrants may choose to enter an essay in one of two categories: written or video.
  - All written essays will be judged, with a winner and an alternate being chosen.
  - All video essays will be judged with a winner and an alternate being chosen.
  - The judges will review the winning written essay and winning video essay and determine the \$5,000 scholarship winner. The entrant who submitted the other

first place essay will receive a \$1,000 scholarship and the alternate in the same category as the winning essay will receive a \$1,000 scholarship.

- If a candidate is not able to accept a scholarship, or does not timely respond to PayrollOrg communications, the scholarship will be offered as follows:
  - If it is the \$5,000 scholarship that is forfeited, an additional \$4,000 will be offered to the winner in the other category and a \$1,000 scholarship will be offered to the alternate.
  - If it is the \$1,000 scholarship that is forfeited then it will be offered to the alternate in that category.
- If there are not enough candidates for the written or video essay categories, PayrollOrg may offer the scholarship to the entrants in the other category (e.g., if no written essays are received, PayrollOrg may offer three (3) scholarships to video essay entrants).

### **Essay Judging**

The judges will evaluate the written and video essays based on the following criteria:

- Originality/creativity
- Clarity of the message
- Degree to which the candidate addressed the scholarship question
- Thoroughness of research and accuracy of presentation

Judges will review each entry and assign a score for each of the above listed criteria. The highest scoring written essay and video essay will be determined the category winner and the second highest will be the alternate. In the event of a tie (between written essays or video essays) the essay that receives the higher score from the judges in the category of addressing the scholarship question will be selected as the winner.

## **5. Granting the scholarship**

Spring Scholarship winners will be selected and notified by email by June 26, 2025.

Fall scholarship winners will be selected and notified by email by November 6, 2025.

The awards will only be granted once candidates successfully verify their enrollment in an accredited university, college, community college, technical school, or vocational school in the United States. Proof of enrollment must be provided by December 31, 2025, for an academic term beginning no earlier than January 1, 2025, and no later than September 1, 2025.

If the student is not old enough to enroll in an accredited university, college, community college, technical school, or vocational school in the United States, the student's legal guardians must provide proof by December 31, 2025, of a qualified Section 529 savings plan into which PAYO will deposit all scholarship fund.

If any candidate does not provide the required proof of enrollment or a qualified Section 529 plan by December 31, 2025, their scholarship will be forfeited.

## **6. Written Essay and Video Essay Requirements**

## **2025 Written Essay and Video Essay Prompt**

How can understanding your paycheck help you handle your money better as a student?

### **Written Essay Requirements**

Candidates are to prepare an original written essay that is no more than one thousand five hundred (1,500) words in length. Only one written or video or essay per candidate per submission window will be accepted. Subsequent entries will be disqualified.

Written essays must also:

- Not be derogatory, offensive, threatening, defamatory, disparaging and libelous or contain any content that is inappropriate, indecent, sexual, profane, impolite, slanderous or discriminatory in any way.
- Be an original, unpublished work that does not contain, incorporate or otherwise use any content, material or element that is owned by a third party or entity.

### **Video Essay Requirements**

Candidates are to prepare an original video that is 1-2 minutes in length. When filming the video, Candidates must obtain written permission from property owners when not filming at their home. If a candidate incorporates music elements in the video, the music must be original or written permission by the music's composer/author must be provided. Only one video or written essay per candidate per submission window will be accepted. Subsequent entries will be disqualified.

Video essays must also:

- Not be derogatory, offensive, threatening, defamatory, disparaging and libelous or contain any content that is inappropriate, indecent, sexual, profane, impolite, slanderous or discriminatory in any way.
- Not contain content, material or any element that displays any third-party advertising, slogan, logo, trademark or otherwise indicates a sponsorship or endorsement by a third party.
- Be an original, unpublished work that does not contain, incorporate or otherwise use any content, music, material or element that is owned by a third party or entity. Failing to provide proper documentation of permission to use such materials will result in the entry being disqualified.
- Be in a format compatible with online posting, such as .WMV, .AVI, .MOV or .MPG.

## **7. Terms and Conditions Under Which Scholarships Are Provided**

Once notified, scholarship recipients are required to communicate acceptance thereof to PayrollOrg within 1 week of initial contact. Failure to reply to an email within one week of initial contact with an acceptance will result in the scholarship being forfeited and an alternate recipient being selected. Terms and conditions include: specific purpose of the scholarship, its duration, the total amount of the scholarship, requirements for providing any required reports

(e.g., tuition invoices, acceptance letters), and the dates for providing such reports.

## **8. Procedure for Exercising Supervision Over the Scholarships**

The following conditions must be met to ensure that the scholarships are being used for the purpose intended by PayrollOrg:

- The scholarship is subject to the provisions of Section 117(a) of the Internal Revenue Code and is to be used for study at an educational institution which normally maintains a regular faculty and curriculum and normally has a regularly organized body of students in attendance at the place where its educational activities are carried on. This may include educational activities that are carried out over the internet as online education.
- The scholarship is paid to the educational institution (or, if the student is not old enough to be enrolled in an educational institution, a qualified Section 529 plan).
- The educational institution agrees to use the scholarship funds to defray the recipient's expenses or pay funds to the recipient only if he or she is enrolled and attending classes at the educational institution.

## **9. Additional Financial Details**

- These are non-needs based scholarships.
- There is no application fee for these scholarships.
- The scholarship will be paid out in U.S. dollars.
- The winner will be solely responsible for any federal, state, or local taxes associated with the scholarship.

## **10. Intellectual Property Rights**

All written and video entries become the shared property of API Fund for Payroll Education, Inc., dba PayrollOrg and the Entrant. Entrants grant permission to PayrollOrg to use their names, likenesses and their written and video essays for purposes related to the Money Matters Scholarships and events such as award ceremonies following the announcement of the winning entries. By submitting an entry, entrants (i) represent that their entries constitute original works of creativity that do not violate the property rights of any other person, and (ii) grant PayrollOrg the right to televise, post the written essay or video on PayrollOrg websites, and publish them on its social media platforms. Entrants retain all other rights and are free to independently publish their video on social media, host on other video platforms, and enter it in other video competitions or film festivals.

## **11. Warranty**

By entering, Entrant represents and warrants to PayrollOrg that the submitted written essay or video is the Entrant's own original work; that the Entrant is the sole owner of the video and all

of the rights associated with it; that the video does not violate any rights of others; and that the video does not display any inappropriate material. In addition, Participant releases and holds harmless PayrollOrg, their respective affiliates, directors, officers, employees, attorneys and representatives from any and all liability for any injuries, loss claim, action, demand, or damage of any kind arising from participation in the 2025 Mony Matters Scholarship.

## **12. Entry Errors**

PayrollOrg shall have no liability for any malfunction in scholarship submission site or any late, lost, damaged, misdirected, incomplete, illegible, undeliverable or destroyed videos due to system errors, failed, incomplete or garbled technological malfunctions, or other telecommunication transmission malfunctions.

## Media Release

I, \_\_\_\_\_, hereby grant to PayrollOrg the right and permission to use any written essay, video, photographs, or digital representations submitted by or taken of me or the minor named below on whose behalf I am signing, and with respect to any PayrollOrg videos, print materials, or digital communications in connection with the 2025 Money Matters Scholarships, and to use my name, or the name of the minor on whose behalf I am signing, in connection with the 2025 Money Matters Scholarships. I agree that PayrollOrg may use such photographs, images, or videos of me, or the minor named below on whose behalf I am signing, with or without my name or minor's name and for any lawful purpose, including for example purposes of publicity, illustration, advertising, and Web content. I hereby release, discharge and agree to indemnify and hold harmless PayrollOrg, its legal representatives or assigns and all persons acting under its permission or authority, from all claims and demands whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the foregoing, and waive any right to review, inspect, or approve any uses of my likeness, or the likeness of the minor on whose behalf I am signing, for these purposes.

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Signature of Entrant (or Parent/Legal Guardian if Contest Entrant is a minor)

Date

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Printed Name of Entrant

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Printed Name of Parent/Legal Guardian (if applicable)

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Email (Printed)

Phone

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Residence/Address

### Parent/Guardian Certification

I hereby certify that I am the parent and/or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, a minor under the age of eighteen years, and hereby consent on behalf of said minor to the use of any of the media and/or photographs submitted by or taken of said minor pursuant to the terms set forth in this Media Release Form, including without limitation, the release, discharge and hold harmless provisions thereof.

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Signature Parent/Legal Guardian

Date

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Printed Name & Address