

Letters of Recommendation Tips

What is a Letter of Recommendation?

Letters of recommendation, also known as letters of evaluation, or letters of reference, are statements typically written by an employer, professional business connection, teacher, coach or by someone who can recommend an individual's work or academic performance. They are used to support an applicant's accomplishments and abilities from an objective perspective.

- Not all graduate programs require a letter of recommendation, contact your graduate department for departmental requirements and instructions
- They are submitted by the recommenders themselves; they cannot be completed or submitted by the applicant or another party on behalf of the recommender
- The deadline to submit a recommendation is the same date as the application deadline. Please make sure that your recommenders are able to adhere to this deadline.
- You may start your Cal State Apply application and send the recommendation requests at any time before the deadline.
- You must send your recommendation requests before submitting your Cal State Apply application.
- **You may complete and submit your Cal State Apply application before your recommenders submit their letters. Please be sure to check back in the Cal State Apply system to ensure that the recommenders submit by the deadline.**

Things to take into consideration

- **All recommendations can be submitted electronically** by recommenders using [Letters by Liaison](#), Cal State Apply's recommender portal.
- **Research each program's requirements** - You should determine whether your programs have specific requirements regarding recommender roles or

relationships before listing recommenders on your application. Many programs have strict guidelines and completed recommendations cannot be removed or replaced.

*Not all programs require letters of recommendation.

- **Inform your recommenders of what to expect** - Once you choose your recommenders, be sure to inform them about the process and that they will be completing the recommendation electronically. We recommend obtaining the email address that the recommenders monitor daily. They should expect an email from calstateapply@liaisoncas.com. It is especially important that they pay attention to any junk or spam folders in case the emails somehow end up there.

Submit a Request

1. Once you have started your Cal State Apply application for Cal State East Bay, navigate to the “program materials” section of the application to find the recommendation section.
2. In the **Recommendations** section, click **Create Recommendation Request**.
3. Enter the recommender's full name and email address.
4. Select the date by which you would like this recommendation completed. This date should be before your program(s) deadline.
5. Enter a brief message or note for the recommender.
6. Select whether you want to waive your right of access to the recommendation. See **Waiver** below.
7. Click the checkboxes to indicate your permission for us (and programs) to contact your recommenders.
8. Click **Save This Recommendation Request** to submit it. Once you do so, an email is immediately sent to the recommender.
9. Confirm with your recommenders that they received the email notification.

After the Recommendation Has Been Submitted

- Use the **Check Status** tab to monitor the status of your recommendations. Completed recommendations are marked as "Complete" and have a Complete

Date listed. Follow up with your recommenders if their recommendations are still marked as "Requested" or "Accepted."

- It is your responsibility to ensure that recommendation requests are received and completed on time. Cal State Apply will not notify applicants about missing recommendations.
- Please note that after a recommender has made a submission, it cannot be changed.

Troubleshooting

Resend the Recommendation Request

If you need to resend a request:

1. In the **Recommendations** section, locate the request you wish to resend.
2. Click the **pencil icon** to edit the request.
3. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click **Resend this Recommendation Request**.

Change the Recommender's Email Address

If you entered an incorrect email address for any recommenders (or if any recommender asks that you send the request to a different email address), you must delete these requests and then re-add them with the correct email.

Changing Your Recommender

- If you need to change your recommender, please log in to Cal State Apply and navigate to the Program Materials portion of the application.
- Delete the request for the person you are no longer using. Enter the name and email address for the new recommender.
- Please keep in mind that the deadline for recommendations is the same as the application deadline.



Waiver

The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) gives you the right to access recommendations unless you choose to waive your right of inspection and review. Prior to requesting any recommendations, you are required to indicate whether you wish to waive your rights. Cal State Apply will release your decision to waive or not waive access to your recommenders and designated programs. Your waiver decision serves the same purpose as a legal signature and is binding.

Selecting **Yes** indicates to programs that your recommender completed their recommendation with the understanding that you would not be able to view it. This means you will not be able to see the content of the recommendation. Programs may view this type of recommendation as a more accurate representation of an applicant's qualifications.

Selecting **No** indicates to programs that your recommender completed their recommendation with the understanding that you may choose to view it in the future. Selecting this option does not allow you to view your recommendation via the application. If you do not waive your right to view the recommendation, you may ask your recommender for a copy of the recommendation. Programs may view this type of recommendation as a less accurate representation of an applicant's qualifications.

Once you make a selection, you can't change it, so consider the choices carefully.

Help Center

For additional information and the most updated Applicant Guides visit the [Cal State Apply Applicant Help Center](#).

For questions, and technical assistance, they offer a live chat feature on their [Cal State Apply Customer Service](#) page. Alternatively, contact us at 857-304-2087 or CalStateApply@liaisoncas.com

Also, please visit the website for the most updated information and application guides.