



FROM ASPEN

JD-Next Impact Scholarship Official Rules

Because Rules Matter -- in Law and in Life

Before becoming a lawyer, you'll need to learn one of the profession's most important lessons: rules exist for a reason. In law, rules promote fairness, efficiency, and order -- essential elements for the administration of justice.

As an admissions assessment and gateway into the legal profession, JD-Next never misses an opportunity for a teachable moment. The JD-Next Impact Scholarship isn't just about rewarding promising attorneys; we're also using this contest to help future lawyers practice following directions with the same precision courts demand in filings, motions, and briefs.

Think of this as your first (and friendliest) lesson in civil procedure.

Rule #1. Word Count Limit = 600 Words, No Exceptions.

Lawyers live by page limits, font sizes, word counts, and filing caps. Why? Because these rules ensure fairness and promote efficiency.

To make sure our scholarship contest runs smoothly, your essay must not exceed 600 words. Exceed that limit, even by one word, and your entry will be disqualified without being read. No matter how persuasive or poetic, allowing exceptions would unfairly penalize other entrants who followed the rules.

Legal Lesson: In law, precision counts. Literally.

Rule #2. Follow the Prompt.

Every case has an issue before the court, and every essay prompt has one too. Stay on point.

We know it's tempting to save time by submitting the personal statement you used to apply to law school, but that's not the assignment. Essays must directly address the prompt listed on the Impact Scholarship page and submission form. Failure to do so will result in immediate disqualification, no matter how beautifully written.

Legal Lesson: Irrelevant arguments, no matter how eloquent, get struck.

Rule #3: Meet the Deadline — May 15, 2026, at 12:00 PM EST.

Deadlines in law aren't suggestions; they're jurisdictional. Miss a filing deadline, and even the most deserving claim for relief will go unheard.

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Entries must be submitted by **12:00 PM Eastern Time on May 15, 2026**. Late submissions will not be accepted. No extensions. No grace periods. No exceptions.

Legal Lesson: Respect deadlines now, or risk learning the hard way later.

Rule #4: Provide Verification of Enrollment and Attendance.

If you're selected as a finalist, you must provide proof of acceptance to an ABA-approved law school by providing a copy of an official offer letter or email from your law school. This scholarship opportunity is reserved for students beginning law school in Fall 2026. If you have not reserved your seat by June 15, or if you defer admission until 2027, your selection will be rescinded, and the next eligible alternate will be chosen.

Legal Lesson: Just as courts verify standing before hearing a case, we confirm eligibility before awarding funds.

Rule #5: Review Publication, Public Engagement, and Final Award Decisions.

Finalists' names, photos, essays, and law schools may be featured on JD-Next and shared across official social media channels by JD-Next, UWorld, and Aspen Publishing. By submitting your entry, you agree to this usage.

The public will be invited to offer feedback on their favorite finalist, but the final decision rests solely with the leadership teams at JD-Next and Aspen Publishing.

Legal Lesson: Like amicus briefs, public opinion may be persuasive, but it's not binding.

Rule #6: One Entry Per Person.

Each applicant may submit only one entry. Multiple submissions from the same applicant will be deemed non-compliant and all will be discarded.

Legal Lesson: Courts don't allow duplicate filings. Neither do we.

Rule #7: Submit Original Work Only.

Your essay must be your own original writing. Plagiarism or use of AI-generated content will result in immediate disqualification.

Legal Lesson: In the legal profession, your integrity and reputation are non-negotiable.

Rule #8: Consider Judging Criteria.

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Entries will be reviewed for clarity, originality, depth of reflection, and adherence to the rules. The judges' decisions are final.

Legal Lesson: Like most judicial rulings, our decisions are final and not subject to appeal.

Rule #9: Review Prize Distribution.

Scholarship prizes will be paid directly to your law school as a tuition credit toward Fall 2026.

Legal Lesson: Just as courts distribute damages through proper channels, we pay tuition credits through your school, not directly to you.

Rule #10: Read the Fine Print.

Lawyers know that details matter, so here are some other things you should consider when submitting an entry:

- Payments made through the JD-Next Impact Scholarship may affect other financial aid or scholarship awards you receive from your law school. Check with your law school's financial aid office to understand whether external awards like the Impact Scholarship may negatively impact your eligibility to receive institutional aid.
- Scholarship funds are non-transferable and may not be deferred or reassigned to another academic year.
- Winners are responsible for any tax implications associated with receiving the JD-Next Impact Scholarship award.
- By submitting your contest entry, you grant JD-Next, UWorld, and Aspen Publishing the right to share your essay and likeness for promotional purposes.

Legal Lesson: Lawyers must always read the fine print.

Final Thoughts

The law rewards those who read carefully, think critically, and follow directions precisely. Consider this your first exercise in which compliance is part of the challenge. The Impact Scholarship isn't just about what you write, but how well you respect the rules that make this contest work.