



First-Year Student Admission

Admission Process

Complete applications for admission, accepted between September 1 and May 1, are reviewed on a rolling basis. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their complete application by the priority deadline of December 31, as this will expedite the review process and increase an applicant's chance for scholarship consideration. There is no application fee. The Admission Committee does not interview candidates for admission.

After submitting your application, you'll receive a confirmation email with instructions to track your application status online. **The Office of Law Admission checks your application for completeness and will contact applicants via primary email if their application is incomplete or requires additional documentation.** Complete applications undergo holistic review, and decisions (admit, waitlist, or deny) are sent via email and mail. Admitted students are automatically considered for scholarships and notified of awards within 48 hours of admission. After admission, students receive a series of onboarding emails to prepare them for law school. Waitlisted applicants remain under consideration based on class space; denied applicants may re-apply next cycle. Applicants should note that all admission decisions are final. **Admission decisions typically take 6-8 weeks.**

Admission Policy

Applicants must provide complete, accurate, and truthful responses to all questions. Submitting false, incomplete, or misleading information may lead to serious consequences, including revocation of admission, disciplinary action by the law school, or denial of permission to practice law in the state where you seek bar admission. Additionally, Samford University reserves the right to revoke admission, expel, withhold degrees, or recommend revocation of any degree earned by applicants who provide inaccurate or incomplete information.

To avoid these outcomes, carefully read and follow the application instructions. Ensure your responses are thorough and accurate and note that some questions may require additional documentation.

Applicant Eligibility & Requirements

To be considered for admission to Samford University's Cumberland School of Law as a first-year law student, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Possess a bachelor's degree from a college or university with [institutional accreditation](#) prior to entering law school.
- Take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) within the past five years.
- Register with the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) and enroll in the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) at lsac.org, ensuring LSAC receives and compiles your letters of

recommendation, transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, and LSAT score into a CAS report.

- Submit Cumberland School of Law's official application by the specified deadline, including a personal statement, résumé, any required addenda, and a completed CAS report. Additional details about the application can be found in the "Application Materials" section.

Applicants seeking admission to the law school under the accelerated law degree program (3+3 program) use the normal law school application process. Upon admission to Cumberland School of Law, the Office of Law Admission will contact the student to confirm the designated overseer of their 3+3 program requirements. The Office of Law Admission will then send a 3+3 Approval form to the designated person for signature. This form confirms that the student has completed or will complete all required 3+3 program courses, is authorized to pursue the 3+3 program, and that their university will accept credits earned at Cumberland School of Law to confer a bachelor's degree upon successful completion of the first year of law school. The signed form must be returned by the specified deadline to finalize enrollment.

Applicants previously enrolled in an ABA-accredited law school must submit an official transcript and a letter of good standing from that institution, while those not in good standing or academically dismissed from such a school are ineligible.

International applicants must hold a degree equivalent to a U.S. bachelor's degree, evaluated by World Educational Services (WES) or AACRAO through LSAC's Credential Assembly Service. The evaluations must be sent to Samford University, Cumberland School of Law (Attention: Office of Law Admission) at 800 Lakeshore Drive, Birmingham, Alabama, 35229. Those from non-English-speaking countries must demonstrate English proficiency with an iBT TOEFL score of 90 (minimum 20 per section) or an IELTS score of 7.0 (minimum 6.0 per sub-score).

Applicant Status

Applicants may choose to attend law school under full- or flex-time status, and the admission process is identical for both programs.

The full-time option is our most common status with 98% of our applicants selecting this status when applying. In the first year, students will take 15 credit hours each semester and courses are pre-determined. The second and third years allow flexibility in course selection.

The flex-time option allows a reduced course load, ideal for those with flexible work schedules. These students take a minimum of eight credit hours and a maximum of nine credit hours each semester, and classes are during the day, Monday through Friday. Flex-time students pay an hourly tuition rate and are ineligible for scholarship assistance during their first two semesters. Using this option, it will take approximately two years to complete the required 30 credit hours of foundation courses which are equivalent to credits earned in the traditional first year of law school. In the third and fourth years, students move to full-time status with approximately 15 credit hours per semester. However, in these last two years of law school, students have more flexibility in building their class schedule around their time constraints. Flex-time students must complete their law degree within four years.

Application Materials

Applying to Cumberland School of Law's Juris Doctor (JD) program is a straightforward process designed to help you present your strongest application. The application consists of two main components: the electronic application and the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) Report.

1. **Electronic Application:** Our free electronic application is accessible through two convenient platforms: this website and the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) website at lsac.org. This application allows you to showcase your unique qualities beyond grades and test scores. Along with basic application questions, you will include the following:
 - **Personal Statement:** Applicants must write a 2–3-page, double-spaced essay detailing your motivation for pursuing a legal education, highlighting what drives your passion for law. The essay may include sharing experiences, values, or goals. Proofread thoroughly for clarity and professionalism.
 - Prompt:

“The personal statement is a key component of your application to Cumberland School of Law, providing an opportunity to share who you are beyond your grades and accomplishments. The Admission Committee seeks to admit students with a broad range of abilities, perspectives, backgrounds, interests, and experiences, and your personal statement should highlight the unique qualities and insights you will bring to our community. Please share your motivation for pursuing a legal education, highlighting what drives your passion for law. You may wish to reflect on significant life experiences, personal challenges you’ve overcome, leadership roles, community involvement, or other attributes that demonstrate your potential to enrich Cumberland’s intellectual and cultural environment. You may also explain how your background equips you for success in the study and practice of law or describe how you plan to use your legal education to serve the public good. Your personal statement should be clear, concise, and well-organized, serving as a sample of your writing ability. It will help us evaluate your potential to succeed at Cumberland School of Law and in the legal profession. Your statement should not exceed three typed and double-spaced pages and should be carefully proofread.”
 - **Résumé:** Applicants must submit a résumé that chronicles their employment, educational and extracurricular history during and after college. Résumés should highlight academic honors, leadership positions and volunteer or community work completed, along with any professional licenses an applicant has obtained. Dates of involvement and a brief description of one’s participation are required for all entries. For employment held during and after college, note whether the position was full- or part-time. Résumés should not be more than two pages.
 - **Addenda (if applicable):** Applicants may use the addenda section for other information they want to share, such as explanations for academic/criminal misconduct, drastic changes in LSAT score or withdrawal/failure/changes in undergraduate grades and courses.

Character and Fitness Responses and Requirements

Every American jurisdiction where one might practice law upon law school graduation requires applicants to meet specific character and fitness requirements as a condition of eligibility for admission to the bar. This involves truthful, accurate, and complete reporting of past conduct, which bar examiners consider relevant to one's fitness to practice. This typically includes (but is not limited to):

- All criminal arrests, charges, plea agreements, convictions, or instances of being taken into custody (juvenile or adult).
- All traffic violations (except minor parking citations).
- Involvement in civil litigation.

- Acts of fraud, dishonesty, or lack of candor.
- Educational discipline or misconduct.
- Failure to pay financial obligations.
- Substance abuse.

Many jurisdictions also require disclosure of all criminal arrests, charges, plea agreements, or convictions (juvenile or adult), even if the record has been expunged.

While bar admission boards require complete disclosure of requested information, in many instances past relevant conduct, particularly if isolated and/or not recent, has not resulted in denial or delay of admission to the bar in a particular jurisdiction. However, failure to truthfully, accurately, and completely respond to a character and fitness inquiry is itself a serious violation and may be more detrimental to bar admission prospects than the undisclosed or incorrectly disclosed underlying conduct. (This is not to suggest or predict how any jurisdiction's bar admissions board would respond to any applicant's particular conduct disclosures going forward).

Applicants are encouraged to research the character and fitness requirements of their intended practice jurisdiction(s) before or during the law school application process. A good resource to review is the Standard NCBE Character and Fitness Application, titled Request for Preparation of a Character Report, of the National Conference of Bar Examiners, which is used by many jurisdictions' bar admission authorities. Addresses for all relevant agencies are available at ncbex.org.

When a character and fitness question on the electronic application necessitates a "yes" response, applicants must attach separate addenda providing detailed explanations. Simply attaching court records is insufficient; applicants must explain the circumstances that gave rise to each occurrence, any charges received and the outcome of those charges. Those who provide unclear responses will be asked for clarification and/or additional information.

The law school application is a "continuing application," requiring applicants to update their responses to application questions as needed throughout the admission process and for the duration of law school. If an event occurs—before or after receiving an admission decision—that changes a response to any application question, applicants must immediately notify the Office of Law Admission in writing at lawadm@samford.edu. Beginning on the first day of classes, students must report any changes to their application responses, particularly regarding character and fitness, in writing to the Office of the Registrar at tzenker@samford.edu.

2. **CAS Report:** The Credential Assembly Service (CAS), managed by the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), is a centralized system that collects, authenticates, and distributes your key application materials to law schools. The CAS Report is a comprehensive document that compiles your academic and testing records, ensuring consistency and accuracy in the admission process. Register at lsac.org and pay a one-time fee plus per-school report fees. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all items are received by LSAC. The CAS Report consists of the following items:
 - **LSAT score(s), taken within the last five years:** We receive all LSAT scores, however we will give weight to your highest score during review. Applicants can elect to have their application withheld from review until a new LSAT score is received. Please note that without notification that the applicant will retake the LSAT, the Admission

Committee will consider the highest score on an applicant's CAS report. June 2027 is the final accepted LSAT date.

- **LSAT writing sample**
- **Letters of recommendation:** Two recommendations are required, but up to four letters will be accepted.
 - Letters of recommendation from family members, no matter how far removed in lineage, will not count towards the two required recommendations. Recommenders should send their letters to LSAC and not to the law school.
 - A meaningful recommendation will inform the admission committee of an applicant's academic ability, accomplishments and character. One letter of recommendation should be an academic reference from a faculty adviser or professor in one's major field of study.
 - Those applicants who have been in the military or workforce may substitute a letter from a commanding officer or employer. The second letter of recommendation should be another academic reference, if the applicant plans to attend law school directly after his or her bachelor's degree, or a character reference from someone who has personal knowledge of the applicant's integrity.
- **Transcripts:** Transcripts from all institutions of higher education where an applicant has earned academic credit, both undergraduate and graduate, must be sent **directly to LSAC** for inclusion in the applicant's CAS report. Applications that are missing transcripts will not be reviewed for admission until all missing transcripts are included in the applicant's CAS report.

Selection Process

Each year, the number of applications received by Samford University's Cumberland School of Law far exceeds the openings available in the first-year class. The goal of the law school is to select the most qualified applicants possible and to award those applicants a seat in the entering class. It is our belief that we best serve the law school, our alumni and the current student body by choosing wisely those who will carry on the law school tradition.

Along with an applicant's LSAT score and undergraduate GPA, the Admission Committee considers additional factors to measure an applicant's potential to succeed in law school and the legal profession. These include:

- The rigor of the undergraduate major pursued.
- Upward trends in academic performance.
- Involvement in extracurricular activities, athletics, and/or employment during and after undergraduate studies.
- Any graduate studies completed.

Additionally, applicants whose backgrounds bring unique and enlightening perspectives to the school will be recognized by the Admission Committee.

Notification from Office of Law Admission

Applicants will be contacted via email, phone, regular mail or SMS, as needed throughout the admission cycle. Applicants must provide contact information that will remain valid and update it to ensure that they are receiving all communications. All mailings will be sent to the applicant's permanent address.

Emergency contact information is vital to the safety of the students at Cumberland School of Law and must be accurate and current. This information will be used only by authorized Samford University personnel in case of emergency.

Deferring Admission

Deferment is only offered to applicants called into active military duty or students in other extreme extenuating circumstances as determined by the Office of Law Admission. Outside of those situations, applicants who wish to attend Cumberland School of Law at a later date must reapply or reactivate their file; these applicants are considered along with all other applicants for admission and are given no special preference.

Financial Aid & Scholarship Assistance

Information about financial aid and scholarship assistance can be found [here](#).

Equal Opportunity

In accordance with applicable federal and state laws, such as Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act and ADA Amendments, the University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, religion, or any other protected status under federal, state or local law applicable to the University, in its education policies, programs, and activities, in its admissions policies, in employment policies and practices, and all other areas of the University. As a faith-based institution, the University is exempted from certain laws and regulations concerning discrimination.

Questions

Direct questions to the Office of Law Admission:

- 205-726-2702
- lawadm@samford.edu
- Office of Law Admission
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800 Lakeshore Drive
Birmingham, AL 35229