



## **2026 NRF PROTECT SCHOLARSHIP OFFICIAL RULES**

### **1. Scholarship Program Overview**

The 2026 NRF PROTECT Scholarship Program (“Scholarship Program”) begins at 8:00 a.m. Eastern Time on February 17, 2026, and ends at 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 27, 2026 (“Scholarship Period”).

The Scholarship Program is organized by the National Retail Federation (“NRF”), located at 1101 New York Avenue, NW, Suite 1200, Washington, D.C. 20005 (“Organizer”), with the support of NRF member retail organizations and NRF industry partner member organizations.

Scholarship awards are intended solely to support selected students’ attendance at NRF PROTECT, held June 8–10, 2026, at the Gaylord Texan Resort in Grapevine, Texas.

### **2. Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be a legal resident of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- Be at least twenty-one (21) years of age on or before June 8, 2026.
- Be enrolled as a full-time undergraduate sophomore, junior, or senior, or as a graduate-level student at an accredited U.S. college or university.
- Be pursuing a major related to criminal justice, loss prevention, security, law enforcement, or related retail operational or security roles.
- Maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent standard demonstrating satisfactory academic progress as determined by your institution.
- Demonstrate an interest in pursuing a career in retail asset protection, loss prevention, corporate security, or fraud-related professions.
- Not have previously attended NRF PROTECT as a scholarship recipient.
- Be available to attend NRF PROTECT June 8–10, 2026, and be able to travel independently.
- Complete and submit all required application materials.

Applicants must also identify a faculty member or Retail Sponsor representative to serve as a reference coordinator.

Current employees of NRF retail member organizations and employees, officers, directors, or affiliates of NRF and their immediate family or household members are not eligible.

Organizer reserves the right to verify eligibility and determine ineligibility where a conflict of interest may exist.

### **3. Application Process**

During the Scholarship Period, eligible applicants must submit:

- A completed application form and certification;
- A written essay (maximum 500 words) describing interest in attending NRF PROTECT and pursuing a retail industry career; and
- A current college or university transcript (official or unofficial).

All submissions must:

- Be in English;
- Be original and not plagiarized;
- Not be generated or substantively created using artificial intelligence tools; and
- Not contain inappropriate, offensive, unlawful, or discriminatory content.

Incomplete, late, illegible, or non-compliant applications may be disqualified at Organizer's sole discretion.

### **4. Selection of Scholarship Recipients**

Following the Scholarship Period, Organizer will review all eligible submissions and may select up to ten (10) scholarship recipients based on merit and alignment with the program's purpose.

Selection will be based on the quality, clarity, and persuasiveness of the applicant's submission and demonstrated interest in the retail asset protection profession.

Organizer reserves the right to award fewer scholarships or none at all if submissions do not meet required standards.

### **5. Notification and Verification**

Applicants will be notified of selection status via email no later than April 17, 2026.

All selected applicants are subject to eligibility verification. A participant is not considered a scholarship recipient until verification is complete and official notification has been issued.

Scholarship recipients may be required to complete an affidavit of eligibility and liability/publicity release prior to receiving scholarship benefits.

### **6. Scholarship Award**

Scholarship awards consist of NRF-coordinated travel and attendance expenses for NRF PROTECT, which may include:

- Round-trip transportation within the continental United States;

- Up to four (4) nights of hotel accommodations;
- Full conference registration for NRF PROTECT 2026; and
- A \$250 gift card for approved ground transportation and meals, which may not be used for the purchase of alcohol or any intoxicating substances.

Scholarship awards must be used solely for attendance at NRF PROTECT and may not be transferred, substituted, or redeemed for cash.

Recipients are responsible for expenses exceeding the scholarship award and for any damages or incidental costs not expressly covered.

Should a scholarship award recipient fail to attend NRF PROTECT or be removed from the event for any reason, including violation of these Official Rules or inappropriate conduct as determined by NRF in its sole discretion, the recipient shall be responsible for reimbursing NRF for all Program award costs already incurred on the recipient's behalf within thirty (30) days following the last date of NRF PROTECT 2026. Organizer reserves the right to pursue all available legal remedies to recover such amounts, including collection costs and attorneys' fees.

## **7. Scholarship Responsibilities and Conduct**

Scholarship recipients must:

- Participate in required pre-conference, in-conference, and post-conference meetings;
- Attend designated sessions and scheduled engagements; and
- Maintain professional conduct throughout all program activities, including all virtual and in-person activities involving NRF, NRF PROTECT, Retail Sponsors, and Industry Partner Sponsors.

Failure to maintain appropriate professional conduct, or violation of these Official Rules, may result in removal from the Scholarship Program and forfeiture of scholarship benefits, as determined by Organizer in its sole discretion. Organizer reserves the right to report inappropriate conduct to the recipient's designated coordinator, and any further action may be taken at the discretion of the coordinator and/or Organizer.

## **8. Publicity and Privacy**

By participating, applicants consent to Organizer's use of their name, likeness, and submitted materials for promotional and program-related purposes where permitted by law.

Personal information collected will be used solely for program administration and handled in accordance with NRF's privacy policy.

## **9. Contact Information**

Questions concerning the Scholarship Program or the application process may be directed to:

David Johnston  
VP, Asset Protection & Retail Operations  
National Retail Federation  
[johnstond@nrf.com](mailto:johnstond@nrf.com)

## **10. Liability; Release; Assumption of Risk**

By participating in the Program, each applicant and scholarship recipient agrees to release and hold harmless NRF, its members, affiliates, sponsors, industry partners, and their respective directors, officers, employees, and agents (collectively, the “Released Parties”) from any and all liability for injuries, losses, or damages of any kind arising out of or related to participation in the Program, attendance at NRF PROTECT, travel to or from the event, or the acceptance, use, or misuse of any scholarship award or related benefits, except where prohibited by applicable law.

Participants acknowledge that travel and conference participation involve inherent risks and voluntarily assume all such risks. NRF shall not be responsible for the acts or omissions of any third-party providers, including airlines, hotels, transportation providers, or event vendors, or for delays, cancellations, or other circumstances beyond NRF’s control.

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Released Parties shall not be liable for any indirect, incidental, consequential, special, or punitive damages arising out of or related to the Scholarship Program. NRF’s total liability, if any, shall not exceed the value of the scholarship award provided. Participants agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from any claims arising from a Participant’s violation of these Official Rules, applicable law, or misconduct during participation in the Program or NRF PROTECT.

## **11. Miscellaneous**

By participating in the Scholarship Program, each Applicant agrees to comply with these Official Rules and all applicable federal, state, and local laws. The Scholarship Program is void where prohibited by law and outside the United States.

Applications that fail to comply with these Official Rules may be disqualified at Organizer’s sole discretion and without prior notice. Organizer reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to disqualify any individual who tampers with or attempts to interfere with the application process or the proper administration of the Scholarship Program, violates these Official Rules or applicable law, or engages in conduct that is disruptive, abusive, threatening, or otherwise inconsistent with the purpose or integrity of the Scholarship Program. Organizer further reserves the right to pursue any legal remedies available to it in connection with such conduct.

## **12. Disputes and Governing Law**

All matters related to the Scholarship Program shall be governed by the laws of the District of Columbia. Any disputes shall be resolved exclusively in state or federal courts located in Washington, D.C.

**(BUTTON TO OFFICIAL APPLICATION)**