



City of Vista

Youth Scholarship Program Guidelines

Program Overview

Purpose: The City of Vista Youth Scholarship Program provides financial assistance to Vista youth for participation in City-approved recreational or enrichment activities.

Funding Source: Under the direction of the City Council, the City of Vista allocates excess cannabis tax revenue to fund the Youth Scholarship Program.

Main Scholarship Details: As of January 6, 2025, all scholarship applications must be submitted on the online portal at <https://awards.vista.gov>. Applicants (or a parent/guardian if under 18) must complete and sign the application, certify that they meet the income qualifications, are under the age of 25, and understand they may need to provide income documentation. Acceptable proof of income includes tax returns, Medi-Cal or CalFresh cards, pay stubs, or other relevant documents.

The scholarship operates according to an annual **scholarship calendar** (see below). Applications are accepted during eight enrollment months, with four months designated as review periods during which new applications are not accepted.

Eligible applicants may receive up to \$500 per City of Vista fiscal year (July 1 to June 30). Scholarship funds are paid directly to the organization or vendor on behalf of the recipient. **Funds are never disbursed to the applicant directly, including refunds.**

Applications are reviewed based on the criteria outlined herein and are subject to change at the City's discretion. The City Manager or their designee may approve special eligibility requests on a case-by-case basis.

Contact Information:

Email: scholarships@vista.gov

Phone: (760) 643-5324

Address: 200 Civic Center Drive, Vista, CA 92084

Continue below to see the full guidelines

Applicant Eligibility Requirements

Standard Eligibility - Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be under the age of 25
- Reside within the City of Vista's city limits
 - Applicants must provide an approved document proving Vista residency (see Approved Documents List)
- Meet income qualifications (See Income Eligibility Chart)
- Apply for an organization or activity located within the City of Vista (see Eligible Activities & Vendor Information)
 - Applicants must provide documentation proving organization or activity price, or enrollment (see Approved Documents List).
- The cost of the desired activity and/or items is \$500 or less.
 - The \$500 limit applies to all the applicant's awarded scholarships combined within the City of Vista's fiscal year (July 1 – June 30).
 - Activities that cost more than \$500 can be awarded a scholarship for partial payment if partial payment is allowed by the vendor.

Special Eligibility – Applicants may meet the following special criteria:

- **Vista Fire Department Cadets:** Current or soon-to-be Cadets need to only be under the age of 25 and meet income qualifications. Standard documentation is still required. Scholarships can only be awarded in accordance with their cadet training.
- **Vista Public Works Interns:** Current or soon-to-be Interns need to only be under the age of 25 and meet income qualifications. Standard documentation is still required. Scholarships can only be awarded in accordance with their internship.
- Applicants may request an exception to apply for activities that are located outside the City of Vista. The only exceptions that will be considered are:
 - The desired activity is unique enough to where no comparable activity exists within the City of Vista.
 - The applicant has very specific needs that only an organization outside the City of Vista can properly meet.

All Applicants who apply for special eligibility may be asked to provide extra documentation to prove they meet the special criteria. Applicants who claim a specialty status will be reviewed internally by the City Manager or their designee. The timetable for special applicant approval and payment may be longer than standard applications

Application Steps

- **Register:** click “Register” on the portal and complete the registration form.
- **Login:** Use your email and password to login
- **Create:** Go to your dashboard. In the dropdown bar, select the current application period. Click “Create.” Complete the online application. The required fields are marked with an asterisk (*). The application has five sections:
 - **General:** Contact information for the applicant and/or parent/guardian.
 - **Eligibility:** Income category, household information, vendor list and specialty status.
 - **Scholarship:** Program details, cost, and links to required equipment websites (if applicable).
 - **Uploads:** Proof of residency, proof of cost/registration, and other documents.
 - **Attestation:** Agreement to the scholarship terms. Sign and date.
- **Save:** You can save your application as **Draft** at any time. A green check will appear next to the heading of each section when they are completed.
- **Submit:** Once completed, save your application as Final and download a copy for your records. Applications cannot be edited by the applicant once submitted as **Final**. If corrections on the application are needed, staff will return the application to **Draft** status, and the applicant will receive an email from staff with the needed corrections. Corrections must be completed properly by the applicant and resubmitted as **Final** when finished. Applications saved as **Draft** are considered incomplete and will not be reviewed.
- **Approval:** Once the application meets all requirements, the application will be tagged as “Approved” and an email notification of the approval will be sent to the applicant.
- **Payment:** Once approved, the application will be queued for payment. Payment can take up to 4 weeks to process from the time of approval. Paid in Full email

notifications will be sent to the applicant once payment for registration(s) and/or item(s) has been made.

Eligible Activity & Item Information

Eligible Activities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Sports Leagues
- Dance Classes
- Art or music programs
- Camps
- Tutoring
- Test preparation
- Gym Memberships

****For a list of current approved vendors that service eligible activities, please see the Current Vendor List below****

Important Activity Information:

- All vendors providing eligible activities must be located within the City of Vista, unless otherwise approved through a specialty status.
- Any vendor has the right to refuse the City of Vista's Scholarship for any reason.
- The City of Vista can refuse to award scholarships of activities from vendors that violate City standards for proper and ethical business.

The following are approved vendors for item purchases:

- Amazon
- Dick's Sporting Goods
- Nike
- Big 5 Sporting Goods
- Under Armour

Item information:

- a. Requested items must be relevant to the applicant's chosen program. Staff may use discretion to determine relevance and may remove unrelated items from the application.

- Maximum of 10 items allowed per application.
- Items must come from the approved item vendor list shown above (unless it meets the conditions of non-approved vendors. See below).
- Items being requested must be linked under the “Scholarship” tab on the box titled “Link to Website for Purchase.”
- Item descriptions that are listed in the description box on the application will be considered the primary source for the item details. If no item description is listed, then whatever the item description details are on the link will be used.

Items from non-approved vendors may be purchased under the following conditions:

- The desired item(s) is not in stock or offered by any of the approved vendors
- The desired item’s price through the approved vendor is significantly higher than a non-approved vendor offering the same or equivalent product.

Item only applications:

- Applicants can apply for a scholarship to purchase items only. Item only applicants must still meet the eligibility requirements, either standard or special.
- Applicants must still provide proof of cost and/or enrollment for the activity they are wanting to purchase items for.
- The activity the applicant wants to participate in is allowed to be outside the City of Vista.

Payment, Refund, & Return Policy

Payment policy & information for activities:

- Once a scholarship is approved, it is queued for payment. Processing payment for activities on a standard scholarship can take up to four (4) weeks.
- Scholarship applications with a specialty status may take longer than the standard four-week payment timeframe.
- Payment is made directly to the vendor providing the activity. **Payment is never made directly to the applicant or applicant parent/guardian.**
- The City of Vista prefers approved vendors to use the City’s payment platform. Vendors can choose not to use it without affecting their approval status, but using

other payment methods may result in longer payment processing times, beyond the standard four weeks.

- Some vendors require full payment for their activities. Applicants requesting a scholarship for a partial payment may have their scholarship denied. It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm whether the vendor accepts partial payments for the activity.
- The Scholarship Team will contact vendors up to three (3) times to arrange payment for an approved applicant's activity. If the vendor does not respond, the applicant may choose a different vendor offering a similar activity. This must be done within the enrollment months outlined in the Scholarship Calendar (below).
- Once payment is made, the applicant will receive an email confirmation from the Vista Scholarship Team. Applicants are responsible for contacting their vendor to confirm payment and discuss any other details related to the activity.

Refund policy & information for activities:

- **The City of Vista does not issue refunds directly to applicants or their parents/guardians.**
- Any refund requests must be handled between the applicant and the activity vendor.
- The City of Vista will defer to the vendor's refund policy.
- If the vendor refunds a scholarship award, it must be returned to the City of Vista before the refund is processed.
- Once the refund is received, the City of Vista will credit the applicant's scholarship account, and the funds can be used again. (Applicants must still comply with the Scholarship Calendar and fiscal year restrictions).

Payment policy & information for items:

- Items can be purchased from any of the five preferred item vendors or, from non-approved item vendors if eligible (see Eligible Activity & Item Information section).
- Taxes and shipping costs for items are included as part of the total cost.
- Processing payments for items may take up to four (4) weeks.
- Once purchased, items will be sent to the Civic Center. Applicants will be notified when the items are purchased and when they are ready for pick-up.
- The applicant or their parent/guardian listed on the application must pick up the items. If someone else is picking up the items, written permission from the applicant or their parent/guardian is required.

- The person picking up the items must sign and date the Item Pick-Up slip, confirming they received the correct items for the correct applicant.

Return policy & information for items:

- Items must be retrieved within 30 days of delivery notification. If not retrieved, the items will be returned, and the applicant will not regain those funds.
- Defective or incorrect items can be returned within 30 days of retrieval. This is subject to the item vendor's return policy.
- Applicants can choose to select another item to be ordered that is comparable to the item they need returned.
- City staff will process returns and re-orders as fast as possible, however, there is no set time frame on when items get returned and/or reordered. **An Item Return Form must be completed to process returns and reorders.**
- The City of Vista will defer to the vendor's item return policy for any discrepancy in item returns and/or re-orders.

Income Eligibility

Income Eligibility Table:

Income Category	4/1/2025 HUD Method – San Diego County							
	# of Persons in Household							
	1 person	2 persons	3 persons	4 persons	5 persons	6 persons	7 persons	8+ persons
Extremely Low 30%	\$34,750 or less	\$39,700 or less	\$44,650 or less	\$49,600 or less	\$53,600 or less	\$57,550 or less	\$61,550 or less	\$65,500 or less
Very Low 50%	\$34,751-\$57,900	\$39,701-\$66,150	\$44,651-\$74,450	\$49,601-\$82,700	\$53,601-\$89,350	\$57,551-\$95,950	\$61,551-\$102,550	\$65,501-\$109,200
Fairly Low 60%	\$57,901-\$69,480	\$66,151-\$79,380	\$74,451-\$89,340	\$82,701-\$99,240	\$89,351-\$107,220	\$95,951-\$115,140	\$102,551-\$123,060	\$109,201-\$131,040
Low 80%	\$69,481-\$92,700	\$79,381-\$105,950	\$89,341-\$119,200	\$99,241-\$132,400	\$107,221-\$143,000	\$115,141-\$153,600	\$123,061-\$164,200	\$131,041-\$174,800
Moderate 120%	\$92,701-\$109,850	\$105,951-\$125,550	\$119,201-\$141,250	\$132,401-\$156,950	\$143,001-\$169,500	\$153,601-\$182,050	\$162,201-\$194,600	\$174,801-\$207,150

- All income ranges in this table are considered scholarship eligible.
- To find your income range, match the **number of persons in your household** to your **household's gross annual income** to see if you are in the qualifying table.
- **The City of Vista reserves the right to ask for income verification documentation if there are discrepancies regarding the income category selected by the applicant. Proof of income can include but is not limited to: Tax Returns, Pay Stubs, Cal Fresh or Medi-Cal Cards, or any other document proving income.**

Current Vendors

Current Vendor List:

A Step Above Dance Studio	Moonlight Cultural Foundation
Alta Vista Botanical Gardens	Musical Experience Learning Center
Altitude Trampoline Park	Nike (ITEMS ONLY)
Amazon (ITEMS ONLY)	North Coast Jiu Jitsu
Anthem Church	North County Self Defense
Big 5 Sporting Goods (ITEMS ONLY)	Optimist Club/Boy Scouts Troop 747
Boys & Girls Club	Panther Foundation - VHS Basketball
California Karate Academy	RBV High School - Band & Pageantry
Cannettic Energy (Cannetta Bradford)	Rancho Buena Vista High School Cheer
Clay N Latte	Rhino's Boxing
COV Basketball	Sand N Straw
COV Cheer	Savage Boxing Gym
COV Girls Volleyball	SD Beach Volleyball Club
COV Gym Kids	Shadowridge Country Club
COV Jazz Hip-Hop Combo	Tempest Freerunning Academy
COV Kenpo Karate	Tierra Caliente Academy of Arts
COV Kids In The Kitchen	Tiffany's International Soccer Organization
COV Modern Ballet Combo	Tri-City Christian School
COV Musical Theater	Under Armour (ITEMS ONLY)
COV Preschool	Vista American Little League
COV Summer Day Camp	Vista Athletic Club
COV Tennis	Vista Baseball Academy
COV Yoga for Kids	Vista Christian School
COV Youth Flag Football	Vista Fire Department

COV Zumba for Kids	Vista Girls Softball
Dick's Sporting Goods (ITEMS ONLY)	Vista High School ASB
Gym Tech Cheer	Vista High School Football Club
Halau Hula (Suzanne Kuliha'apai)	Vista High School Regimental Band Boosters
Happy Minds Tutoring	Vista Little League
Heritage Homeschool Club	Vista Music
Karate Kids in America	Vista Pop Warner
Lighthouse Players	Vista Public Works
Longhorn Baseball Booster Club - RBV Baseball	Vista Storm Soccer Club
Master Sports	Vista Unified School District
Mathnasium	Wave Waterpark

- Applicants will have the choice to select "Other" on the application if their desired vendor is not on the Current Vendor List
- COV = City of Vista. These are programs run by Vista's RCS Department or contracted out by RCS.

Youth Scholarship Calendar (FY 2025 – 2026)

July 2025	Accepting New Applications
August 2025	Accepting New Applications
September 2025	Review Period – No New Applications
October 2025	Accepting New Applications
November 2025	Accepting New Applications
December 2025	Review Period – No New Applications
January 2026	Accepting New Applications
February 2026	Accepting New Applications
March 2026	Review Period – No New Applications
April 2026	Accepting New Applications
May 2026	Accepting New Applications
June 2026	End of FY 25-26 – No New Applications

- The highlighted months are the review periods. **During the review periods, no new applications will be accepted.** During the review periods, staff will still be processing applications that were submitted prior to the enrollment deadline.
- ***The City of Vista reserves the right to start, extend, or update the scholarship calendar throughout the year at any point in time, to better adapt to any**

departmental or City Council needs and/or suggestions that impact the City of Vista's Youth Scholarship Program*

Approved Documents

Proof of Residency Documents List:

- Utility Bill
- Lease/Mortgage Statement
- Tax Returns
- Pay Stub
- School Records
- Cell Phone Bill
- Cal-Fresh/Medi-Cal Statement

The residency document must show the following information to be accepted:

- Same name of applicant or parent/guardian that is listed on the application
- Be dated within the last 12 months from the time of application submission

****If additional documentation is required to prove Vista residency, applicants or their parent/guardian may be asked to submit a residency affidavit. ****

Proof of Registration/Cost document must include:

- Cost of the requested activity/item
- Name of the organization or activity

****If necessitated by the vendor, it may be required for the applicant to provide proof of registration/enrollment. ****

Contact Information

For any questions, please reach out to the Vista Scholarship Team at:

Email: **Scholarships@vista.gov**

Phone: (760) 643 – 5324

Address: 200 Civic Center Drive, Vista, CA 92084