

# Concord 250th Call to Poets: Reimagining America's 1776 Declaration of Independence

## Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to submit a poem, you must meet the following criteria:

- **Residency:** You must be a primary resident of Massachusetts.
  - **Age:** You must be at least 18 years old.
  - **Originality:** The poem must be entirely your own original work.
  - **Publication Status:** Your poem must not have been previously published or appeared on any website.
  - **Language:** The poem must be written in English.
  - **Word Count:** Your poem must be no more than **260 words**. Please note that the title, dedications, and epigraphs are *not* included in the word count.
  - **Content:** The subject matter, language, and vocabulary of the poem must be appropriate and easily comprehensible for the general public.
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## Submission Rules

Please follow these rules carefully, as failure to do so may result in disqualification:

- **Anonymity is Key: Do not include any personal information (like your name, address, or email) on the poem itself.** Entries with personal information will be disqualified.
  - **Word Count Enforcement:** Poems exceeding the **260-word limit** will be disqualified. Titles, dedications, and epigraphs are not part of the word count.
  - **Formatting:**
    - **Line Spacing:** Single-line spacing is required, except between stanzas, where it should be double-spaced.
    - **Word Count Confirmation:** Include the **exact word count** at the bottom of your poem.
    - **Submission:** Please type or copy and paste your poem into the submission form; do not include the title in the body of the text
  - **Submission Period:** The "Call to Poets" submission page on the Concord 250th website will be open from **June 16, 2025, to October 31, 2025**.
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## Judging Process

- A Concord committee of three judges will review all poems anonymously.
  - The judges' decision is final, and they are unable to comment on individual entries.
  - "Call to Poets" leaders reserve the right to change the panel of judges without notice.
  - The names of the judges will be published on the "Call to Poets" webpage after the awards are selected.
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## Copyright

- Worldwide copyright of the submitted poem remains with the author.
  - However, Concord 250th has unrestricted rights to publish online or in print the awarded 1st, 2nd, and Highly Commended poems.
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## Results, Awards & Award Event

- **Notification:** First Place Prize, Second Place Prize, and Highly Commended poets will be notified by email in **March 2026**.
- **Monetary Awards:**
  - **First Place Prize:** \$1,000
  - **Second Place Prize:** \$350
  - **Three Highly Commended Prizes:** \$150 each
- **Required In-Person Reading at Award Event:**
  - The First Place, Second Place, and three Highly Commended poets are **required** to be present at the **Concord Free Public Library Main Branch in the Goodwin Forum** on **Sunday, May 3, 2026, from 3:00 PM to 4:15 PM**.
  - During this event, award-winning poets will read and comment on their poems.
  - Refreshments will be served, and the event will be recorded by local media.
- **Broadcast Opportunity:** Awarded poets may also be asked to record their poems for broadcast.