2025-26 Law School Rural Applicant Profile

A High-Volume Application Cycle

- ✓ **82,000+ applicants** during the 2025-26 admission cycle
- ✓ Roughly **20% of people in the U.S. live** in a rural community, only **2.98% of law school applicants** reported growing up in one.

  That represents approximately **1 in every 34 applicants**. Although fewer than 3% of applicants grew up in rural communities, rural applicants bring distinctive educational, socioeconomic, military, and demographic experiences to the law school applicant pool.

Rural Applicants Are More Likely to Be First-Generation Students

Educational Background	Rural Applicants	All Applicants
First-Generation College Graduate	35.6%	28.2%
First-Generation Law Student	80.9%	73.9%
Pell Grant Recipient	40.9%	32.7%

Key Takeaway: Rural applicants are more likely to be first-generation college graduates, first-generation law students, and Pell Grant recipients.

Military Service Is More Common Among Rural Applicants

Military Backgrounds of Applicants

- 3.5% of rural applicants currently serve in the military compared to 1.6% of all applicants.
- 6.1% of rural applicants are veterans compared to 2.5% of all applicants.

Key Takeaway: Rural applicants are more than twice as likely to have a military background.

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Age

Age	Rural Applicants	All Applicants
22 or younger	36.3%	26.9%
23 to 26	32.1%	42%
27 to 30	11.4%	13.9%
31 to 39	11.7%	10.9%
40 or older	8.5%	6.3%

Key Takeaway: Rural applicant representation is higher at both ends of the age spectrum, among younger applicants and among applicants over age 30.

Race and Ethnicity

Who makes up the rural applicant pool? Rural applicants are predominantly white, but American Indian and Alaska Native applicants are disproportionately represented. White applicants make up 67.3% of rural applicants compared to 42.4% of all applicants. At the same time, American Indian and Alaska Native applicants make up 4.5% of rural applicants compared to 1.4% of the overall applicant pool.

Rural Background	Rural Applicants	All Applicants
American Indian or Alaska Native	**4.5%**	**1.4%**
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Australian	0%	0%
Asian	1.6%	9.9%
Black or African American	7.0%	12.4%
Hispanic or Latina/é/o/x	5.1%	11.4%
Indigenous Person of Canada	0.1%	0.1%
Middle Eastern or North African/Arab	0.1%	2.9%
Multiracial / Ethnoracial	5.6%	11.8%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.3%
White	**67.3%**	**42.4%**
Did Not Indicate	8.2%	7.4%

What percentage of each racial and ethnic group comes from rural communities?
While just 2.98% of all applicants grew up in rural communities, 9.3% of American Indian and Alaska Native applicants did. Thus, American Indian and Alaska Native applicants are more than three times as likely as applicants overall to have grown up in a rural community.

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Rural Representation by Race and Ethnicity	Grew Up in Rural Communitiess
American Indian or Alaska Native	9.3%
Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Australian	0%
Asian	0.5%
Black or African American	1.7%
Hispanic or Latina/é/o/x	1.3%
Indigenous Person of Canada	4.7%
Middle Eastern or North African/Arab	0.1%
Multiracial / Ethnoracial	1.4%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	4.4%
White	4.7%
Did Not Indicate	3.3%

Rural applicants are more likely to be:

- First-generation college graduates
- First-generation law students
- Pell Grant recipients
- Military-affiliated
- American Indian or Alaska Native

Rural or Limited Access Does Not Mean Limited Aspiration

- 61% of LSAT test takers from rural communities said they first thought about law school before college, compared to 51% of all test takers.
- 60% of LSAT test takers from rural communities indicated that they are motivated to go to law school in order to help others, compared to 54% of all test takers.

(*Sources:* Law school application population is from the 2025-26 LSAC applicant data. LSAC Applied Research uses USDA guidance that categorizes populations by metropolitan, micropolitan, and rural areas. This report uses a metro-nonmetro framework because it better reflects regional labor markets and access to metropolitan areas than population density alone. **Rural Classifications - What is Rural? | Economic Research Service**.)

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