



ACE Award Rules and Guidelines

Submission deadline for the ACE Awards Program is May 29, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. EST. Award winners will be announced in the summer of 2026.

Please review the General Rules and Guidelines and Criteria sections before submitting your nomination.

General Rules and Guidelines:

- All applications must be submitted by May 29, 2026. Please note that the American Health Care Association (AHCA) has the right to extend the deadline.
- Nominees for the Leader of the Year and Noble Caregiver awards may be submitted to AHCA through Award Force. **In order to submit a nomination, you must create an account in Award Force.** State associations may establish their own rules and criteria to select an individual or community from their state for consideration in any category. Please check with your state affiliate for proper submission of all nominations.
- To be eligible for consideration, an individual nominated must be employed at an AHCA member facility or company that is a member in good standing with AHCA at the time of the nomination. All nomination forms received directly from long term care facilities or individuals will be verified with the appropriate state affiliate to ensure that all nominees are members in good standing.
- Nominees must have worked in a member facility for at least one year immediately prior to the nomination.
- All AHCA member facilities are encouraged to apply, including skilled nursing facilities, short and long term care facilities, Not for Profit (NFP) long term care providers, intellectual and developmental disabilities (ID/DD) residential services providers (including intermediate care facilities for individuals with intellectual disabilities (ICFs/IID), and other individuals who work in the long term care field, including direct care, education, research, and resident advocacy.
- Nominations may also come from AHCA members, AHCA staff, AHCA state affiliates, and other individuals who work in the long term care field, including direct care, education, research, and resident advocacy.

- All materials, essays and photos submitted become the property of AHCA/NCAL and may be used in its publications and websites. Submitted materials will not be returned to applicants.
- **A headshot of the nominee must be included. Please ensure that the nominee's headshot has a neutral background and they're not dressed in costume or theme attire. If the nominee is selected as an award recipient, it will be ONLY used for AHCA/NCAL promotional materials.**
- All incomplete nominations will be disqualified.
- AHCA reserves the right not to make a national award if few nominations are submitted for each category or if applicants do not meet award eligibility criteria.
- Previous winners of any category are not eligible to win the same award more than twice and are not eligible to win in consecutive years.
- All activities demonstrated by the nominee and used in the nomination must have been performed in compliance with applicable state and federal labor laws.
- Winners will be selected this summer and notified by AHCA. The state affiliate(s) and nominators will also be notified at the same time. The awards will be presented at Delivering Solutions 26, AHCA/NCAL's 76th Convention & Expo in Boston, Massachusetts October 11-14, 2026.
- Once notified of their win, award recipients must provide a photo of themselves, if the photo submitted with the entry doesn't meet size and picture quality requirements.
- Winners may select one individual to attend Convention as their guest. The winners and their guests will each receive round trip airfare from their home city, per diem, hotel accommodations, and Convention registration.