



INSTRUCTIONS: Letters of Recommendation for BSW Applicants

1. Ask two (2) individuals if they will be willing to write you a letter of recommendation.

These individuals should be able to speak to your ability to be successful in the USA BSW program. Consider asking current or previous employers, professors, or the supervisor who performed your service-learning hours in SW 214.

DO NOT use family members or friends as recommenders. DO NOT use USA social work instructors as recommenders, as they serve as reviewers for the admissions process.

2. Complete the “To Be Completed by the Applicant” portion of the USA BSW Letter of Recommendation Form PRIOR to sending it to your recommender.

You (the applicant) should complete and sign the top “**To the Applicant**” portion of the USA BSW Letter of Recommendation Form. This should be completed PRIOR to sending it to your recommender. This section contains the applicant’s information as well as the “Waiver of Access” (FERPA), designating whether or not you wish to waive your rights to read your letters of recommendation. Forms that have not been properly completed may not be accepted.

3. Send the Letter of Recommendation Form and instructions for submitting letters of recommendation to your recommenders.

After you have completed and signed your required portion of the USA BSW Letter of Recommendation Form, you must send it to your references. Be sure to provide your recommenders with directions on how letters can be submitted (e.g. picked up by the student, mailed off or emailed by the letter writer) and the deadline for submission.

*Important: If your recommender chooses to **MAIL** in the recommendation letter and form, you must provide recommender with a **stamped envelope, labeled with the correct mailing address** (instructions for submission located below AND on the Letter of Recommendation Form).*

Applicants should receive recommendations from TWO (2) individuals. Each individual must submit a letter of recommendation and complete the Letter of Recommendation Form. It is solely the student’s responsibility to ensure that recommenders have been provided the deadline for letters of recommendation and instructions for submission. Letters and forms not received by the application deadline may not be accepted.

Tips and Recommendations

1. If possible, ask in-person!

It is more valuable to ask an individual to write you a letter of recommendation in-person. This will also allow you to have a discussion with them about your goals, aspirations, and any specifics you'd like for them to include in the letter. It also helps to establish a personal connection, making the individual more inclined to write you a supportive letter.

2. Send a formal email request. Make sure to include your resume and Personal Statement.

If you are unable to ask the individual in-person, send them a formal email. Your email should be professional, polite, and include ALL relevant details. You should state WHAT you are requesting, WHY you are requesting it, and provide the DEADLINE for submission. Be sure to include details on why you chose to ask that specific individual. Here is an example:

Dear [Professor /Dr. / Mr. /Ms. Last Name],

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to request a letter of recommendation for my application to the Bachelor of Social Work Program at the University of South Alabama.

As you are familiar with my [academic achievements/employment background/character], I believe you would provide strong support for my qualifications to be successful in the BSW program at USA. Attached, you will find my resume and the Personal Statement I have written for the BSW application. These materials should provide you with some additional background information and my reasons for choosing the social work major.

This letter is due by [insert deadline]. If you are willing to provide a letter of recommendation, I will provide you with additional information and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for considering my request. I appreciate your time and support.

Best regards,

[Your Full Name]

3. Send your recommender a copy of your Resume and Personal Statement

After making the initial request and confirming the individual who will write your letter, make sure to follow-up with them. Send them any important information, like the deadline for submission and anything else you think is necessary. Following-up ensures that the recommender has all of the information they will need, along with showing that you are organized and value their time.

4. Send a THANK YOU letter.

A thoughtful email, or even better, a handwritten thank you letter, is a courteous way to conclude the process of requesting letters of recommendation and helps establish a positive relationship for the future.

Instructions for Submitting Materials

Each recommender should submit: (1) Letter of Recommendation and (1) Letter of Recommendation Form

Applicants: Please remember that you must have letters of recommendation from TWO (2) individuals. Each recommender should submit a written letter of recommendation and a completed USA BSW Letter of Recommendation Form, provided by the applicant. In total, the applicant should have 4 documents submitted on their behalf (2 written letters of recommendation and 2 completed USA BSW Letter of Recommendation Forms; 1 letter and 1 form PER recommender). For any questions regarding the instructions provided, please email Dr. Nancy Kelley at nkelley@southalabama.edu, or call the office at (251) 460-6347.

A. Submission via email: socialwork@southalabama.edu

- Use subject line: “**Student Name – Letter of Recommendation Materials for BSW Application**”
- Materials **MUST** be emailed from the RECOMMENDER’S email address!

B. Submission via mail:

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, & Social Work
Attention: Dr. Nancy Kelley
5991 USA Drive North, HUMB 34
Mobile, AL 36688-0002

- Materials must be POSTMARKED by the application deadline.
- Materials must be in one sealed envelope containing the letter of recommendation and the letter of recommendation form.
- Materials **MUST** be mailed by the RECOMMENDER, but applicants should assume the responsibility of providing proper postage and other materials required for mailing.

C. Submission in-person:

- Materials must be in one sealed envelope, containing the letter of recommendation and the letter of recommendation form, **PRIOR** to being picked up by the applicant.
- Applicant must **PICK UP** materials from the Recommender. Then, the applicant should deliver materials to the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, & Social Work (address listed above).

It is solely the student’s responsibility to ensure that recommenders have been provided instructions and the deadline for submitting letters of recommendation and forms. Letters and forms not received by the application deadline may not be accepted.