



SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM



OFFICIAL SITE OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Almost all male U.S. citizens regardless of where they live, and documented or undocumented immigrant men residing in the U.S., are required to be registered with Selective Service if they are at least 18 years old but are not yet 26 years old. Men who are 26 years old and older are too old to register.

Why Register?

It's the Law

- Virtually all male U.S. citizens, regardless of where they live, and male immigrants, whether documented or undocumented, residing in the United States, who are 18 through 25, are required to register with Selective Service.
- The law says men must register with Selective Service within 30 days of their 18th birthday. That means men are required to register with Selective Service sometime during the 30 days before their 18th birthday, their 18th birthday, and the following 29 days after their 18th birthday – that is a 60-day registration period.
- Men who do not register with Selective Service within the 60-day window are technically in violation of the law and should register as soon as possible. Late registrations are accepted up to the 26th birthday. However, once a man reaches his 26th birthday and still has not registered with Selective Service, it is too late!
- It's important to know that even though a man is registered, he will not automatically be inducted into the military. Registering with Selective Service does not mean you are joining the military.
- In a crisis requiring a draft, men would be called in a sequence determined by random lottery number and year of birth. Then, they would be examined for mental, physical, and moral fitness by the military before being deferred or exempted from military service or inducted into the Armed Forces.

Reasons to Register

- Registration is the Law — A man's only duty right now under the Military Selective Service Act is to register at age 18 and then to let Selective Service know within 10 days of any changes in the information he provided on his registration form until he turns 26 years old.
- Fairness and Equity — By registering all eligible men, Selective Service ensures a fair and equitable draft, if ever required. However, there has not been a draft since 1973.
- Insurance for the Nation — By registering, a man's voluntary participation helps provide a hedge against unforeseen threats. It is a relatively low-cost insurance policy for our nation.
- Civic Duty — It's your responsibility to ensure that young men 18 through 25 understand the law so they can make an informed decision about registration compliance. Currently, more than 90 percent of eligible young men are registered. It's a civic duty of every young man to comply with the law.
- Protect Eligibility for Future Benefits — It's what a man's got to do. By registering, a young man stays eligible for jobs, college loans and grants, job training, driver's license in most states, and U.S. citizenship for immigrant men.
- Benefits of Registering and the Penalties for Failing to Register

A young man who fails to register with Selective Service may be ineligible for opportunities that may be important to his future. He must register to be eligible for federal student financial aid, state-funded student financial aid in many states, most federal employment, some state employment, security clearance for contractors, job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act), and U.S. citizenship for immigrant men.

- For more information on the benefits linked to registration, as well as what the penalties are for failing to register with the Selective Service System, see [BENEFITS AND PENALTIES](#).

Legislation Supporting Registration

Many states have passed legislation that supports the Selective Service registration requirement. Generally, these state laws require that a man be registered (or prove he is exempt from the requirement) before he can receive state student financial assistance or be eligible for state government jobs. For more information, see our website for [STATE - COMMONWEALTH LEGISLATION](#).

Selective Service - Who Must Register

NOTE: With only a few exceptions, the registration requirement applies to all male U.S. citizens and male immigrants residing in the United States who are 18 through 25 years of age.

Category	YES	NO
All male U.S. citizens born after Dec. 31, 1959, who are 18 but not yet 26 years old, except as noted below:	X	
Military Related		
Members of the Armed Forces on active duty (active duty for training does not constitute "active duty" for registration purposes)		X*
Cadets and Midshipmen at Service Academies or Coast Guard Academy		X*
Cadets at the Merchant Marine Academy	X	
Students in Officer Procurement Programs at the Citadel, North Georgia College and State University, Norwich University, Virginia Military Institute, Texas A&M University, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University		X*
ROTC Students	X	
National Guardsmen and Reservists not on active duty / Civil Air Patrol members	X	
Delayed Entry Program enlistees	X	
Separatees from Active Military Service, separated for any reason before age 26	X*	
Men rejected for enlistment for any reason before age 26	X	
Immigrants**		
Lawful non-immigrants on current non-immigrant visas. A complete list of acceptable documentation for exemption may be found at https://www.sss.gov/Portals/0/PDFs/DocumentationList.pdf .		X
Permanent resident immigrants (USCIS Form I-551)	X	
Seasonal agricultural workers (H-2A Visa)		X
Refugee, parolee, and asylee immigrants	X	
Undocumented immigrants	X	
Dual national U.S. citizens	X	
Confined		
Incarcerated, or hospitalized, or institutionalized for medical reasons		X*
Handicapped physically or mentally		
Able to function in public with or without assistance	X	
Continually confined to a residence, hospital, or institution		X
Transgender People		
U.S. citizens or immigrants who are born male and have changed their gender to female	X	
Individuals who are born female and have changed their gender to male		X

*Must register within 30 days of release unless already age 26.

NOTE: To be fully exempt you must have been on active duty or confined continuously from age 18 to 26.

**Residents of Puerto Rico, Guam, Virgin Islands, and Northern Mariana Islands are U.S. citizens. Citizens of American Samoa are nationals and must register when they are habitual residents in the United States or reside in the U.S. for at least one year. Habitual residence is presumed and registration is required whenever a national or a citizen of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or Palau, resides in the U.S. for more than one year in any status, except when the individual resides in the U.S. as an employee of the government of his homeland; or as a student who entered the U.S. for the purpose of full-time studies, as long as such person maintains that status.

NOTE: Immigrants who did not enter the United States or maintained their lawful non-immigrant status by continually remaining on a valid visa until after they were 26 years old, were never required to register. Also, immigrants born before 1960, who did not enter the United States or maintained their lawful non-immigrant status by continually remaining on a valid visa until after March 29, 1975, were never required to register.