

# What You Need to Know About Registering with Selective Service

## [Q] What is Selective Service?

[A] Selective Service is a government agency whose job is to provide untrained manpower for the Armed Forces if there's a national emergency.

## [Q] What is Selective Service registration?

[A] By registering, you add your name to a list of all the men in the nation, ages 18 through 25. The list would be used to identify men for possible military service in case of a national emergency.

## [Q] What happens if there's a draft?

[A] There hasn't been a draft since 1973. If there were an emergency sufficient for congress to order another draft, Selective Service would conduct a birth date lottery to decide the order in which to call men. Those who turn 20 during that calendar year would be called first in a sequence determined by the lottery. If more men were needed, those 21 to 25 would be called, youngest first.

## [Q] Who is required to register?

[A] The law says that all 18-year-old men (including U.S. citizens living abroad and non-citizen immigrant males 18-25 residing in the U.S.) must register. The only young men exempt from registration are non-citizen males who are in the U.S. temporarily as tourists, diplomats and their family members or foreign exchange students; incarcerated or institutionalized men; men on active duty in the Armed Forces; and students at U.S. military academies.

## [Q] Why don't women have to register?

[A] Our nation only registers men. This has always been the case. Selective Service law as it is presently written refers specifically to "male persons" in stating who must register and who could be subject to a draft. Therefore, Selective Service procedures do not apply to women. In order for women to be required to register with Selective Service, congress would have to change the wording of the law.

## [Q] What if I don't register?

[A] You are breaking the law. If prosecuted, you could be sent to prison for up to 5 years and may be fined up to \$250,000. In addition, if you fail to register, you cannot qualify for federal student grants or loans for college, job training benefits, and many state and federal jobs.

## [Q] Is registration hard?

[A] No. In fact it's never been easier. A young man can register with Selective Service in less than 2 minutes via the Internet at: [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov). You can also register by going to your local post office and completing a registration form. It's as simple as filling in your name, address, telephone number, date of birth and social security number. Registration forms should be available in your local recreation or social service center, school's guidance or registrar office, or you may receive a form in the mail. Simply complete it and mail the form to Selective Service.

## [Q] When should I register?

[A] Within 30 days of your 18th birthday. If you cannot register on time because you are hospitalized or in prison, you have 30 days in which to register after you are released. If 30 days have already passed since your 18th birthday, register immediately, either online or at your post office. Although Selective Service will accept a late registration, the longer you wait, the longer you are breaking the law and jeopardizing your future benefits.

## [Q] How do I prove I registered?

[A] When registering via the Internet, you will receive your Selective Service registration number immediately. That number is your proof of registration - for safekeeping, jot it down. You will receive a Selective Service card by mail within 2 weeks confirming that number. (Note: If you registered by mail, you will receive a card confirming your registration within 60-90 days.) If you don't get your card within 90 days, write to:

**Selective Service System  
Registration Information Office  
P.O. Box 94638  
Palatine, IL 60094-4638**

**Or call 1-847-688-6888**



**Register with  
Selective Service**  
**[www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov)**