

# Civic Organization Toolkit

# Selective Service System



**U.S. SELECTIVE  
SERVICE SYSTEM**

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“...National interests are served by the Selective Service System. Registration provides a hedge against a catastrophe we do not yet anticipate. The SSS is a means to sustain this legacy by reminding our youth that public service is a valid part of American Citizenship.”

[Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense, 2013]

# INTRODUCTION

**Selective Service System (SSS) appreciates the dedicated leadership and contribution your organization provides through local civic engagement. We salute your efforts in forwarding community involvement and civic responsibility. As your organization has significant influence throughout the community, we would like to elaborate on the opportunities provided to young men when registering with the Selective Service.**

The Civic Organization Toolkit is a resource utilized among community groups, parent teacher associations, civic leagues, and more. Each section of the toolkit will provide information on how your organization can promote registration and raise awareness in your community. We continue to deliver inspiring and positive messaging to our communities, ensuring young men understand the benefits associated with registering.

The support provided in helping communities learn this essential civic duty is invaluable to the future of our youth. Thank you for providing this vital information to your community and educating the public on the value of registering with the Selective Service System.

**The Selective Service System has been a distinguished part of history for over a century, spanning throughout eras of conflict, as well as peacetime. Our small but extraordinary mission is to provide personnel during a time of national crisis; in short, the Selective Service System is our Nation's best insurance policy. Federal law requires all men ages 18-25 who are U.S. citizens and those who have dual citizenship living abroad to register within 30 days of their eighteenth birthday.**

Selective Service registration ensures our government is equipped with the task force needed in the event of a national emergency and to register men and maintain a system that, when authorized by the President and Congress:

- (1) Rapidly provides personnel in a fair and equitable manner
- (2) Manages an alternative service program for conscientious objectors

The Military Selective Service Act (MSSA) requires men to register within 30 days of their 18th birthday. Once a man turns 26, he is unable to register with the Selective Service System and may become ineligible for the following:

- Many student loans, scholarships, and grants
- Free job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)
- Millions of Federal and State government jobs
- A streamlined process for citizenship

# HOW TO REGISTER

## HOW TO REGISTER

Men ages 18-25 can register one of the following ways:

- Online by visiting [www.sss.gov/register](http://www.sss.gov/register) (must have Social Security Number).
- Using the printable registration form <https://www.sss.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/Form-1-Redesign-inside.pdf>.
- At any U.S. post office by filling out the SSS Form 1.
- Some Department of Motor Vehicle (DMV) offices when obtaining a driver's license (visit [sss.gov/register/state-commonwealth-legislation](http://sss.gov/register/state-commonwealth-legislation) to learn more)

The registration process is not complete until an instant confirmation is received online or a printed acknowledgment is received in the mail. A registration acknowledgment card will include the Selective Service number and will be mailed four to six weeks after registration. This is an important document and should be retained by the registrant. Once a man has registered, his only responsibility is to notify Selective Service within ten days of any changes to his address or other information in his registration record. After January 1 of the year in which he will reach age 26, a registrant is no longer required to notify Selective Service of changes to his registration record.

Learn more about registration through state-commonwealth legislation by states, territories, and the District of Columbia at [www.sss.gov/register/state-commonwealth-legislation/](http://www.sss.gov/register/state-commonwealth-legislation/).

**“...it shall be the duty of every male citizen of the United States, and every other male person residing in the United States, who...is between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six, to present himself for and submit to registration....”**

**[Section 3(a), Military Selective Service Act]**

# BENEFITS OF REGISTRATION

## **BENEFITS OF REGISTRATION**

Selective Service registration is a requirement for access to the benefits listed here.

### **Student Aid**

The law provides that only men who register with Selective Service are eligible to receive some types of student financial aid.

Most states have enacted legislation requiring young men to register to be eligible for state education funds. Some states also require registration to receive in-state tuition rates and entry into state colleges or universities. Learn more about state-commonwealth legislation by states, territories, and the District of Columbia at [www.sss.gov/register/state-commonwealth-legislation/](http://www.sss.gov/register/state-commonwealth-legislation/).

### **Federal Job Training Programs**

A man participating in training and employment programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), signed on July 22, 2014, must be registered with Selective Service to receive a job or training benefits.

The WIOA helps strengthen and improve our nation's public workforce system and helps Americans, including youth and those with significant barriers to employment, providing high-quality jobs, careers, and helps employers hire and retain skilled workers.

### **Federal Employment**

A man must be registered with Selective Service to be hired within many Federal and Local Government areas. Agencies requiring registration as a condition of employment eligibility include all Departments and Agencies within the Federal Government's Executive Branch, including the Central Intelligence Agency, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Postal Service.

Many states, local government agencies, police departments, and state bar examiners require applicants to register for eligible employment or state education funds. Such conditions are established by local law and policy and may vary from state to state. Learn more about federal job opportunities at [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov).

### **Citizenship**

Male immigrants seeking U.S. citizenship must be registered with Selective Service to qualify for citizenship if they first arrived in the U.S. before turning 26. Failure to register can delay a man's citizenship process by up to 5 years.

# WHO MUST REGISTER

CATEGORY	YES	NO
All male U.S. citizens who are 18 but not yet 26 years old, except as noted below:	X	
<b>MILITARY RELATED</b>		
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, University of North Georgia, 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	
<b>IMMIGRANTS**</b>		
Lawful non-immigrants on current non-immigrant visas		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	
<b>CONFINED</b>		
Incarcerated, or hospitalized, or institutionalized for medical reasons		X*
<b>PHYSICAL OR MENTAL DISABILITY</b>		
Able to function in public with or without assistance	X	
Continually confined to a residence, hospital, or institution		X
<b>TRANSGENDER OR NON-BINARY PEOPLE</b>		
U.S. citizens or immigrants who are born male and have changed their gender to female or non-binary	X	
Individuals who are born female and have changed their gender to male or non-binary		X



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

A complete list of acceptable documentation for exemption may be found at [www.sss.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/DocumentationList.pdf](http://www.sss.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/DocumentationList.pdf).

# RAISING REGISTRATION AWARENESS

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## OUTREACH LETTER

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*Our Agency has comprised an example letter that can be utilized as a tool to be included in your next community newsletter. This letter will help you share the Selective Service System mission with your community and better communicate the importance and benefits of registration.*

[Dear Parents],

Registration with the Selective Service System (SSS) is not only crucial for the safety of our country but ensures young men have the opportunity to receive benefits linked to Selective Service registration.

Just like voting is a civic duty, registering with the Selective Service System is equally valuable and provides many opportunities and benefits for young men. Our small but extraordinary mission is to provide personnel during a time of national crisis; in short, the Selective Service System is our Nation's insurance policy. To date, approximately 17 million men have already registered with the Selective Service System and benefited from opportunities that include:

- Student loans, scholarships, and grants
- Millions of Federal jobs & nearly 500,000 U.S. Postal Service jobs
- Streamlining the process for citizenship

To learn more about Selective Service registration, please visit [sss.gov/parents](https://sss.gov/parents). Thank you for your support in improving and protecting our community and country.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name]



“The Congress further declares that in a free society the obligations and privileges of serving in the Armed Forces and the Reserve Components thereof should be shared generally, in accordance with a system of selection which is fair and just, and which is consistent with the main tenants of an effective national economy.”

[Section 44 Military Selective Service Act]

## SOCIAL MEDIA OUTREACH

*This section can be utilized as a tool to bring registration awareness to young men through various social media platforms. We have listed several social media examples as a guide.*

TOPIC/FACT	SAMPLE FACEBOOK POST	SAMPLE TWITTER POST
Who needs to register?	Do your mentees need to register with the Selective Service? Watch and share this quick video to discover simple facts about Selective Service registration and how it affects their future.  <a href="https://youtu.be/w-6KhJkQQK8">https://youtu.be/w-6KhJkQQK8</a>	Hello Mentors! Watch and share this quick video to find out more information about @sss_gov and how it affects your mentees. <a href="https://youtu.be/w-6KhJkQQK8">https://youtu.be/w-6KhJkQQK8</a>
Message to young men	Young people play an important role in our community’s development. By registering with the Selective Service, you could continue making a positive impact in our community. Registration keeps men eligible for many local and federal jobs. Learn more at sss.gov.	Young people play an important role in our community’s development. By registering with @sss_gov, you could continue making a positive impact in our community with a Federal government career. Visit sss.gov to learn more.
Message to parents	With the spring semester fast approaching, are you wondering how to keep your son eligible for Federal jobs when he graduates? Watch Uncle Sam explain at <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44ITserOq7Q">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44ITserOq7Q</a>	Are you wondering how to keep your son eligible for Federal jobs when he graduates? <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44ITserOq7Q">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=44ITserOq7Q</a>
Message to parents	#Parenting in 2022 is no easy task, and helping your son register with the Selective Service should be quick and easy. Grab your son and head over to sss.gov. It takes less than 1 minute and sets him up for a successful future.	#Parenting in 2022 is no easy task, and helping your son register with @sss_gov should be quick and easy. Grab your son and head to sss.gov. It takes less than 1min and sets him up for a successful future.

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **WHAT IS SELECTIVE SERVICE REGISTRATION?**

Registration helps us maintain a list of names to draw in case of a national emergency requiring rapid expansion of our Armed Forces. By registering all young men, the SSS ensures that a future draft would be fair and equitable.

NOTE: Registering with Selective Service does not mean you are joining the military.

## **WHY DO WE NEED THE SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM IF A FUTURE DRAFT IS UNLIKELY?**

America's leaders agree that despite the success of the All-Volunteer Force, registration with Selective Service System must continue as a key component of national security strategy.

## **CAN MEN UNDER THE AGE OF 18 REGISTER?**

Yes. The Selective Service System accepts early registrations as young as 17 years and 3 months. If an applicant registers early, Selective Service will hold their information until 30 days before their 18th birthday. At that time, Selective Service will process their registration and the registrant will receive a registration acknowledgment card in the mail confirming their Selective Service registration.

## **DOES THE SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM SHARE ANY INFORMATION THAT WOULD INDICATE A MAN'S IMMIGRATION STATUS?**

The Selective Service System has not now, nor in the past, collected or shared any information which would indicate a man's immigration status, either documented or undocumented. SSS has no authority to collect such information, has no use for it, and it is irrelevant to the registration requirement. Consequently, there is no immigration data to share with anyone.

## **WHY AREN'T WOMEN REQUIRED TO REGISTER WITH SELECTIVE SERVICE?**

Selective Service law as it's written now refers specifically to "male persons" in stating who must register and who would be drafted. For women to be required to register with Selective Service, Congress would have to amend the law.

“...National interests are served by the Selective Service System. Registration provides a hedge against a catastrophe we do not yet anticipate. The SSS is a means to sustain this legacy by reminding our youth that public service is a valid part of American Citizenship.”

[Chuck Hagel, Secretary of Defense, 2013]

## **HOW DOES A PERSON DETERMINE IF THEY ARE REGISTERED WITH THE SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM?**

If an individual is unsure of their registration status, visit [sss.gov](https://sss.gov) and click “verify registration.” The tab will prompt the individual to enter their last name, social security number, and date of birth. This will provide the registration status with a copy of their registration acknowledgment letter form. If they are not successful in verifying their registration status online, please call the SSS Registration Information Office at 1-847-688-6888.

## **WHO IS EXEMPT FROM REGISTRATION?**

There are few cases when a man is exempt from the registration requirement. Men who are exempt do not have a Selective Service System registration number and are in compliance with federal law. The few individuals who are exempt from this requirement are those on current non-immigrant visas. A complete list of acceptable documentation for exemption may be found by visiting: <https://www.sss.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/DocumentationList.pdf>.

## **WHAT IS THE PENALTY FOR NOT REGISTERING?**

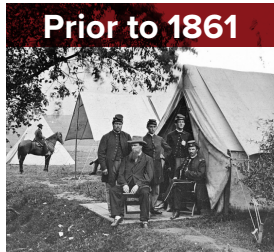
Failure to register with the Selective Service System is a violation of the Military Selective Service Act. A conviction for such a violation may result in imprisonment for up to five years and/or a fine of not more than \$250,000. However, the most likely result is the loss of federal benefits tied to SSS registration. If a draft is ever needed, it must be as fair and equitable as possible. For every young man who fails to register, another man would be required to take his place in service in the event of a draft.

**For answers to additional frequently asked questions, visit [www.sss.gov/faq/](https://www.sss.gov/faq/). If you have other questions, feel free to contact [information@sss.gov](mailto:information@sss.gov).**

# HISTORICAL TIMELINE

## Prior to Civil War

Each state maintained its own militia, with limited Federal direction guidance or regulation. All able bodied men of military age (18-45) would enroll with very lax requirements. Citizen's willingness to serve was given priority over liability.



Prior to 1861

## World War I

The first national conscription system comes into being in 1917. Congress passes a draft law based on "the liability to military service of all male citizens." The law authorized a draft of men between the ages of 21 and 31. A new classification system gave the newly created local boards a set of guidelines to determine which men should be drafted. Total # inducted: 2,810,296.



1914-1918

## Cold War

The Selective Service Training and Service Act expired in 1947. Only a year later, at President Truman's request, new peacetime draft legislation was passed to supplement voluntary recruiting.



1947-1949

## Vietnam War

In the 1950s and early 1960s, the U.S. presence in Vietnam expanded with increasing intensity. The Selective Service encountered protest about unfair deferments fueled by an anti-war sentiment. The Selective Service provided 20% of the men in uniform during the Vietnam War. Total # inducted: 1,857,304 The last man inducted entered the Army on June 30, 1973.



1950-1975

## Out of Deep Standby

In late 1979, a series of revival efforts began in an effort to upgrade the Selective Service System's capability for rapid mobilization in an emergency. In the summer of 1980 the registration requirement was resumed.



1980-Present

## 1861-1865



## Civil War

The War department was put in charge of executing the draft. All military groups were instructed to visit homes in search of eligible males. The Enrollment Act of 1863 involuntarily called men to service. Quotas were established by districts, but rarely were filled. At this time there was no organized selection process put into place. Willingness to serve was given priority over liability.

## 1939-1945



## World War II

On September 16, 1940, the Selective Service Training and Service Act (the nation's first peacetime draft law) was signed. By the end of the war, over 45 million men between the ages of 18 and 64 had been registered. 15 million of the men who served in the U.S. Armed Forces during WWII, approximately 66% were inducted. Total # inducted: 10,110,104.

## 1950-1953



## Korean War

President Truman authorizes the Armed Forces to use the draft if necessary during the Korean crisis. The Selective Service provided 27% of the men in uniform during the Korean War. As a result of the Physicians and Dentists Draft Act, 7,054 physicians and 3,799 dentists are delivered by Selective Service to the Armed Forces. Less than 50 of them were actually inducted. Total # inducted: 1,529,539.

## 1976-1980



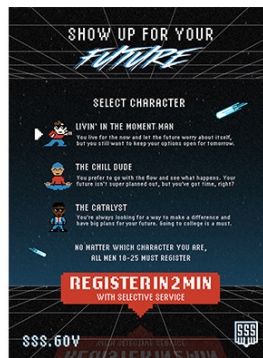
## Deep Standby

Registration was suspended in early 1975 and the Selective Service System entered into a "deep standby" position.

# ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

## PRINTABLE MATERIALS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION

Find printable brochures and posters to help you share the Selective Service mission with young men in your organization. You can easily download and print the materials from our website at [www.sss.gov/news-and-media/outreach-materials/](http://www.sss.gov/news-and-media/outreach-materials/), or contact [publicaffairs@sss.gov](mailto:publicaffairs@sss.gov) to request printed materials or with specific outreach material requests.



## INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING?

Local Board Members play an important community role closely connected with our nation's defense. In the event of a draft, approximately 2,000 Selective Service local boards would decide which registrants in their respective communities receive deferments, postponements, and/or exemptions based upon established criteria.

To get involved, visit [www.sss.gov/volunteers/](http://www.sss.gov/volunteers/).

## FIND US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



@SSSregistration



@SSS\_gov



@SSS\_gov



[www.youtube.com/c/USSelectiveServiceSystem](http://www.youtube.com/c/USSelectiveServiceSystem)



[www.linkedin.com/company/selective-service-system](http://www.linkedin.com/company/selective-service-system)

# THANK YOU

FROM SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM



**NATIONAL  
HEADQUARTERS**

 (703) 605-4100

 [sss.gov](https://sss.gov)

 [information@sss.gov](mailto:information@sss.gov)

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Arlington, VA