

National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors

**REGISTRATION MEMO****REGISTRATION & PROCESSING UNDER THE STANDBY DRAFT**

On July 1, 1973 the President's unlimited authority to induct men into the armed forces expired leaving the entire Selective Service System in operation as a "standby" feature of the Federal Government. Every man who is a citizen of the United States continues to have a legal obligation to register for the draft when he becomes 18 years old. It is also the legal obligation of every male alien who is a permanent resident of the U.S. to register for the draft on his 18th birthday or before his 26th birthday if he arrives in the U.S. later than age 18.

As a young man subject to the draft you must register at the local board for the area in which you live, the local board nearest to you at the time of your 18th birthday, or at any officially designated location such as a high school or a post office. You must register anytime within the 60-day period beginning 30 days before your 18th birthday. A male alien who enters the U.S. after his 18th birthday has six months from the day he enters the U.S. to register for the draft, unless he belongs to a category of aliens specifically exempted from registration.

Failure to register within the time period allowed is a violation of the Military Selective Service Act (draft law) and is a felony offense. Some men who are tardy in registering for the draft, mainly out of their own ignorance, will not be punished. However, *a willful failure to register or a lengthy failure to register for whatever reason may result in arrest, inductment, trial and punishment.*

**EXEMPTIONS FROM REGISTRATION**

Certain aliens and U.S. citizens are exempted from registering for the draft. Men not required to register at age 18 are: members of the reserve components of the Armed Services, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Bureau of Prisons of the Department of Justice, the Environmental Protection Agency, or the Public Health Services; cadets or midshipmen in a U.S. service academy; students enrolled in an officer procurement program at a military college whose curriculum is approved by the Secretary of Defense.

Furthermore, aliens who enter the U.S. and *who have not been admitted for permanent residence* in the U.S. shall not be required to register except for aliens who are conditional entrants or refugees who have been admitted to the U.S. and do not possess either an immigrant or nonimmigrant status.

**NON-REGISTRATION**

Some men consider any cooperation with the military or the draft to be a violation of conscience. These men refuse to register for the draft as a form of resistance or non-cooperation. They become subject to possible indictment, arrest, trial and punishment as felons. If a non-registrant has not been indicted within 5 years after his 26th birthday, the government may not bring him to trial for failing to register.

Every young man required to be registered may be registered against his will. If he fails to complete any part of the registration process, the registrar can do it for him, including signing the man's name to the registration forms. Men who are not registered and who are inmates or patients in an institution (such as a prison) will be automatically registered for the draft by the director of the institution when they are released.

## REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

At the time of your 18th birthday (or within the 60-day period in which young men are required to register for the draft) you are required by law to go to a local board office or other registration point and register. The registrar will ask you to present some form of identification, such as a birth certificate. Then, if the local board is using this form you will sign your name on a Tally Sheet (SSS Form 4), and answer a few questions which the registrar will enter on the Registration Card (SSS Form 1). Upon signing the Registration Card you become a registrant with the Selective Service System. In some areas of the country experimental forms of registration are being tried. You may be in one those areas where you can register for the draft by mail.

If you register at a local board office, you may have your Status Card (SSS Form 7) given to you there or the local board may mail it to you within 10 working days after you have registered. The Status Card is your draft card which you must have in your possession at all times, until you are no longer liable for the draft.

Men who are outside of the continental U.S., the states of Alaska and Hawaii, the colonies of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam and the Panama Canal Zone have the same obligation as men in the U.S. to register for the draft when they turn 18. These men can register before any diplomatic or consular officer who is a U.S. citizen. One important step in the registration process for men outside of the U.S. is determining their permanent U.S. residence. If a man can not or will not supply the registrar with a permanent U.S. address, he will be registered with the District of Columbia Local Board #100 (Foreign) until such time as he establishes a permanent residence in the U.S. If he does designate a permanent U.S. address, he will be registered with the local board having authority over that area. Each man registered with D.C. Local Board #100 (Foreign) will be assigned his lottery number, classified, placed in selection groups, and processed for armed forces examinations, induction or alternate service in the same order as men registered within the U.S.

You may make a *prima facie* claim for any classification you believe you are eligible for (including conscientious objector status) at any time after you have registered for the draft and before you are issued an induction order. It is your right to submit any information pertaining to your draft status to the local board regardless of your current classification or eligibility for the draft. However, if you submit a claim for a change in your classification while you are in Class 1-H, or a deferred classification your claim will not be considered by the local board until you are ready to be reclassified into an "available" classification.

## THE LOTTERY DRAWING & PRIME EXPOSURE

After registration has been accomplished and you have received your Status Card bearing a 1-H classification you will not hear from the local board again until the year of your 19th birthday. During that calendar year, a national lottery drawing will be held to assign lottery numbers (Random Sequence Numbers) to all of the men born in the same year as you were.

You will remain in Class 1-H until a national "1-H Cut-Off Number" has been established for your age group. The "1-H Cut-Off Number" is the administrative processing number used uniformly throughout the nation to determine which registrants make up the available pool of men to be drafted during a given year. Your year of "prime exposure" to the draft (military induction or alternate service) is the calendar year in which you turn 20. At a time of zero draft calls, these men will not be drafted but will be standing by in case a need arises for the resumption of the use of the draft.

## CURRENT INFORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

All registrants with lottery numbers equal to and lower than the "1-H Cut-Off Number" will be sent a Current Information Questionnaire (SSS Form 127) shortly after the national lottery drawing which selects their lottery numbers. The Current Information Questionnaire asks for general information about your eligibility for the various draft classifications. It is important to read the Questionnaire before filling it out. You may want to talk with a draft counselor or with an Advisor to Registrants (assigned to many local boards) before you decide you are not eligible for any particular classification. Falsifying any information in answering the Questionnaire makes you subject to 5 years in prison and/or a fine of up to \$10,000.

I - General Information. The first question asks for general information about your identity and address. The address you give for your "mailing address" need not be your legal residence, but the address at which you will receive all official Selective Service correspondence. All changes of address must be reported to your local board within 10 days regardless of your classification. If S.S.S. correspondence has to be delayed by forwarding, you may miss the deadline to appeal an unsatisfactory classification. This question also asks for the names of two persons, other than members of your immediate household, who will always know your address. These persons may be parents or guardians so long as you do not actually live with them.

II - Physical Condition. If you have a physical or mental condition which would disqualify you for military service, you are eligible for the 4-F deferment. A description of the physical conditions which will disqualify you for service can be found in the Army's "Medical Fitness Standards for Induction". If you believe you are not qualified for service you will need to submit documentary evidence to your local board and to the Army examiners at the time of your pre-induction or induction physical. This evidence should describe your conditions fully and include a statement from your doctor(s) giving a medical history, a diagnosis of your conditions, the likelihood of future recovery, and an indication of whether the conditions might get worse or prevent your functioning if you were drafted.

III - Education. This question asks about your educational background as well as for information about your current status as a student. At the present time there are no deferments for students other than the 2-M medical student deferment and the 2-D divinity student deferment.

IV - Medical Specialist. If you have completed a degree in the field of medicine, dentistry, veterinary medicine, osteopathy, or podiatry your draft liability is extended to age 35 for the special "Doctors' Draft". Some occupations might qualify medical specialists for the 2-AM occupational deferment. Medical students might be eligible for the 2-M medical student deferment upon notifying their local boards of such status and upon completing SSS Form 103.

V - Military Status. If you have served on active duty in the armed forces of the U.S. for at least 6 months prior to registration you are eligible for the 4-A classification by submitting a copy of your separation papers. Service of at least 12 months in the armed forces of a country which the U.S. considers to be an associate in mutual defense activities and which grants exemption from military training and service to U.S. citizens will make an alien eligible for the 4-A classification if he submits the appropriate information, written in English, to his local board. Members of a reserve component including the National Guard, or a Reserve Officers' Training Corps are eligible for the 4-A classification and must submit DD Form 44 to their local boards.

VI - Court Record. If you have been convicted of a felony or a crime punishable by death or imprisonment for more than a year, you may be eligible for a 4-F deferment on administrative or "moral" grounds. Frequent misdemeanors or the conditions of awaiting trial or being on parole may also result in a 4-F deferment. However, many of these conditions are subject to waiver by the armed forces. If you check the "yes" box in this question, you will be sent SSS Form 173 before reclassification.

VII - Minister or Student Preparing for the Ministry. If your primary occupation is as a minister of religion, you are eligible for the 4-D exemption. If you are a student enrolled or pre-enrolled in a recognized divinity school for the purpose of becoming a minister of religion you are eligible for the 2-D divinity student deferment. Registrants seeking either of these classifications will be asked to submit SSS Form 172.

VIII - Conscientious Objector. If you are a conscientious objector to participation in war in any form based upon your religious, moral or ethical beliefs you are eligible for the 1-0 or 1-OM (medical) or for the 1-0-A or 1-0-AM (medical) classifications. The 1-A-0 and 1-A-0M classifications are for the C.O. who is opposed to *combatant* training and service, but will serve as a *noncombatant* if drafted. The 1-0 and 1-OM classifications are for a C.O. who is opposed to both *combatant and noncombatant* service, but will serve 2 years of civilian alternate service if his lottery number is called. If you make a claim to be a conscientious

objector you will need to submit the Special Form for Conscience Objector (SSS Form 150) along with supportive evidence to your local board before you are reclassified.

IX - Marital Status and Dependents. If you think that your induction into the armed forces will cause an *extreme* hardship to your dependents you may be eligible for the 3-A deferment. A dependent can be a registrant's wife, divorced wife, child, parent, grandparent, brother or sister. The dependency may be a financial condition or some other condition such as a physical or psychological dependency. A registrant making a hardship claim will be asked to submit SSS Form 118 and other supportive documentation.

X - Surviving Son. If you are the only surviving son in a family where a father, brother or sister died as the result of being in the armed forces you are eligible for the 4-G exemption as a "Sole Surviving Son". If you are a son in family who has had a father, brother or sister die since December 31, 1959, as a result of being in the armed forces, or who is currently missing-in-action or a prisoner of war, you are eligible for the 4-G exemption as a "Surviving Son" regardless of the number of living brothers in your family. If you claim the 4-G exemption, the local board will send you SSS Form 174 which you must return to them.

XI - Citizenship. If you are an alien with permanent residence status, but have not been in the U.S. for periods of time totaling one year, you are eligible for the 4-C exemption. An alien who establishes that he is exempted from military service because of a treaty or agreement between the U.S. and his country, is eligible for the 4-C exemption. Any alien who departs from the U.S., even if he is under an induction or work order, will be eligible for the 4-C exemption. Leaving the U.S. for the purpose of avoiding service, however, will leave the man open to prosecution or deportation if he returns to the U.S. Certain aliens admitted to the U.S. will be eligible for the 4-C exemption because of their occupation status as defined by the Immigration and Nationality Act. Registrants seeking the 4-C exemption will be asked to submit SSS Form 131. A very small number of men may hold dual citizenship. These men will be considered for the 4-C exemption depending upon the existing treaties between the U.S. and their second country of citizenship.

#### PROCESSING FOR CLASSIFICATION

If you mark any of the questions on the Current Information Questionnaire in such a way as to indicate that you may be eligible for classifications other than 1-A or 1-H, the local board will request additional information from you before changing your classification. You may present information to the local board requesting a change in your classification at any time prior to the issuance of an induction or work order. After the issuance of an induction or work order, you may present information for consideration by the local board only if you were unable to present such information earlier due to circumstances beyond your control. Or, if on the other hand, the induction order has been postponed for more than 40 days, and no new reporting date has been set, the classification must be reopened if new facts are presented to the local board, which, if true, would justify a change in your classification.

You may request that your first classification (other than routine administrative classification in 1-H after registration) be transferred to a local board nearer to your place of residence, if you are far enough from your local board to make complying with notices an extreme hardship.

Transferring classification is not the same thing as transferring local boards. The local board to which you are assigned will always have authority over you with one exception — a man registered with D.C. Local Board #100 (Foreign) will be transferred to a local board having authority over his new place of residence when he establishes a permanent residence in the U.S., except when he has a personal appearance or appeal pending, or is under an order to report for induction or alternate service.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information and literature on the draft and conscientious objection, contact the Conscientious Objection Service of NISBCO, 550 Washington Building, 15th Street and New York Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, phone (202) 393-4868.