



Conscientious Objector Service

of the
National Interreligious Service Board for Conscientious Objectors

NEW ALTERNATE SERVICE PROCEDURES

December, 1972

On November 30, 1972, the Selective Service System instituted new procedures for the processing and assignment of conscientious objectors to twenty-four months of alternate service in lieu of induction into the Armed Forces. Part 1660 of the Selective Service Regulations (*Alternate Service*) was amended to accomplish these changes in procedure. Selective Service officials intend these changes to make the SSS Form 153 (*Order to Report for Alternate Service*) legally equivalent to the SSS Form 252 (*Order to Report for Induction*).

Unless they volunteer for alternate service, conscientious objectors will now be issued an *Order to Report for Alternate Service* before they have an opportunity to submit suggestions of acceptable employment to their State Director of Selective Service. The SSS Form 155 (*Notice of Selection for Alternate Service*) has been discontinued, but the following alternate service processing forms will continue to be used: SSS Form 151 (*Application of Volunteer for Alternate Service*); SSS Form 152 (*Conscientious Objector Skills Questionnaire*); and SSS Form 156 (*Employer's Statement of Availability of Job as Alternate Service*). The procedures which will affect the conscientious objector as he is processed for alternate service are set forth below.

WHAT HAPPENS BEFORE ASSIGNMENT?

As soon as a registrant is classified 1-0, he will be sent SSS Form 152 (*Conscientious Objector Skills Questionnaire*). This form requires the C.O. to supply information on his education, work experience and skills. The State Director will use this information to determine in what kind of assignment he will place the C.O.

A registrant in Class 1-0 will be ordered for an Armed Forces physical Examination at the same time he would be examined if he were in Class 1-A or 1-A-0. The examination and the registrant's treatment at the examination should be the same as if he were in any other classification. A registrant in Class 1-0 does not have to take the examination when he is ordered to do so. If he does not report for the examination, he will be processed for alternate service as though he were physically, mentally and administratively acceptable.

Only 1-0 registrants may volunteer for alternate service before their lottery numbers are reached in the regular draft calls. Volunteering is done by completing SSS Form 151 (*Application of Volunteer for Alternate Service*). If a C.O. wishes to begin alternate service before the Selective Service System reaches him in the normal processing, he must also provide a job for his period of civilian work. He should submit a completed SSS Form 156 (*Employer's Statement of Availability of Job as Alternate Service*) at the same time he submits the completed SSS Form 151. If the registrant can't find a job, or if his job

suggestions are not approved, he will not be ordered for alternate service until his lottery number is reached in the normal order of call.

A registrant in Class 1-0 may begin work for an employer anticipating the job will be approved by the State Director for his period of alternate service. If it is approved, and he is issued SSS Form 153 (*Order to Report for Alternate Service*) and SSS Form 153A (*Amendment to Order to Report for Alternate Service*) assigning him to that job, he will receive credit for the time he has spent on the job beginning from the date he was classified 1-0, or the date he began working, whichever is later.

A C.O. being processed for alternate service may begin his approved job before the minimum waiting period has expired. To begin working before the 70 day period provided by SSS Form 153 or the 10 day period provided by SSS Form 153A has expired, the conscientious objector must file a written waiver with his State Director. The local board should provide a letter for this written waiver, or the C.O. may write his own waiver indicating that he wishes to waive the remaining time provided by SSS Form 153 or SSS Form 153A. He should also indicate the day on which he wishes to begin working at the alternate service job.

Conscientious objectors looking for acceptable jobs may ask any local board or State Director for information about procedures and job placements. Each State Director should maintain a list of approved employers and a listing of actual job openings. C.O.s should not limit themselves to agencies already on these lists, but should feel free to find employment with other employers that meet the broad criteria defining appropriate alternate service employers. These criteria are defined in the next section of this memo.

ASSIGNMENT PROCEDURES

A registrant in Class 1-0 whose lottery number has been reached and who has been found to be acceptable for service, or who didn't report for his Armed Forces Examination, will be issued SSS Form 153 (*Order to Report for Alternate Service*) at the same time registrants in Class 1-A and 1-A-0 are receiving induction orders. On SSS Form 153, the local board will order the C.O. to report to his State Director on a date at least 70 days after the day the form was issued. Along with SSS Form 153, the conscientious objector will receive SSS Form 152 and three copies of SSS Form 156. The SSS Form 152 must be completed and returned to the State Director within 15 days of its issuance.

The C.O. will then have 60 days (counting from the day after the SSS Form 153 was issued) to submit to the State Director suggestions of jobs that he would like to perform as alternate service. These suggestions can be submitted to the State Director by having the prospective employers send in a completed SSS Form 156, or a letter describing the employer, the prospective job, and requesting the C.O. be assigned to the agency. If the State Director does not approve any of the job suggestions, he must inform the C.O. of his decision within 15 days after receiving the job suggestions.

When the State Director approves a job, he will instruct the local board to issue SSS Form 153A (*Amendment to Order to Report for Alternate Service*) assigning the C.O. to that job. The conscientious objector can not be required to comply with the instructions on SSS Form 153A within 10 days after it is issued, unless he agrees to waive the remaining time.

Should the State Director not approve the job suggestion(s), the C.O. can request the decision of the State Director be reviewed by the National Director of Selective Service. The C.O. must make a written request for this review within 10 days after the day the State Director mailed him notice of his negative decision. The National Director will make only one review for each registrant. In that review, he may consider up to three negative decisions of the State Director. If the National Director approves a job suggestion, he will direct the local board to issue the C.O. the SSS Form 153A.

If the conscientious objector does not submit any job suggestions within the 60 days following the issuance of the SSS Form 153, or if the State and National Director will not approve any of his job suggestions, then the State Director will instruct the local board to issue the C.O. an SSS Form 153A assigning him to an employer of the State Director's choosing.

Appropriate alternate service employment will be limited to the following:

1) *Employment by the United States Government, or by a State, territory, possession, or by a political subdivision of the United States, or by the District of Columbia;* 2) *Employment by a nonprofit organization, association, or corporation which is primarily engaged in a charitable activity conducted for the general public or is responsible for a program for the improvement of the public health or welfare, including scientific and education activities in support of the program, when such activity is not principally for the benefit of the members of such organization, association or corporation, or for increasing its membership;* 3) *Employment in an activity of an organization, association, or corporation which is charitable in nature, performed for the benefit of the public health or welfare, including educational and scientific activities in its support, when such activity or program is not for profit.*

Five criteria for determining whether a specific job is appropriate for alternate service are: 1) *National health, safety, or interest.* The job must contribute to the maintenance of the national health, safety, or interest. 2) *Noninterference with the competitive labor market.* This means the C.O. cannot be assigned to a job for which there are more qualified applicants not in Class 1-0 than job spaces available. This restriction does not prohibit approval of such programs as the Peace Corps and VISTA. 3) *Compensation.* The compensation will be adequate to provide a standard of living reasonably comparable to the standard of living the same man would have enjoyed had he entered the Armed Forces. 4) *Skill and talent utilization.* The special skills of the registrant may be utilized whenever possible. 5) *Job location.* A C.O. will work outside of his community of residence.

Requirements 3, 4, and 5 above may be disregarded if the State or National Director determines it would be in the national interest and when it will speed the placement of the conscientious objector in alternate service.

Some agencies with a broad variety of programs have been approved by the National Director for "Blanket Placement Authority". These agencies submit information to the National Director on types of employment which they will offer to conscientious objectors wishing to perform their alternate service, and the National Director approves the agency for alternate service in advance of the application of a C.O. for employment with the agency. Transfers within these agencies do not have to receive the approval of Selective Service. The following agencies have been approved as employers with blanket placement authority:

American Baptist Home Societies, Valley Forge PA 19481
Church of the Brethren, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin IL 60120
Evangelical Covenant Church of America, 5101 N. Francisco Avenue, Chicago IL 60120
Mennonite Central Committee, 21 South 12th Street, Akron PA 17501
Synagogue Council of America, 420 Riverside Drive, New York NY 10025
The Church Army in the USA, 815 Second Avenue, New York NY 10017
Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, 815 2nd Avenue, New York NY 10017
Friends United Meeting, 101 Quaker Hill Drive, Richmond IN 47374
More agencies may be added to this list in the future.

ON THE JOB

The home State Director will issue travel orders, tickets or transportation requests, meals and lodging requests for the travel of the C.O. to his alternate service assignment, as long as it is within the territory of the United States. The travel expenses paid by the State Director will be limited to travel from the registrant's local board or the local board nearest to his home. The C.O.'s supervising State Director will pay travel expenses when the C.O. is being transferred at the State Director's request. The C.O. will also receive travel expenses for his travel home after he has been released from alternate service.

Once a C.O. has begun his alternate service he will be classified 1-W by his local board. If during his alternate service, he decides that he wants to work for another employer, he should inform his supervising State Director (or the National Director if he is working outside the U.S.) and submit another job for the Director's approval. He must remain on the original job until the transfer is approved.

If a C.O. refuses to report to an employer he has been ordered to, or if he fails to comply with the reasonable requirements of his employer by not meeting the standards of performance demanded by the employer of non-C.O. employees in similar jobs, the Selective Service System may consider him to be in violation of the law and report him to the Justice Department for prosecution. If a conscientious objector is refused employment with the agency to which he is assigned, leaves, refuses employment, or is fired, the State Director will conduct an investigation to consider the circumstances to determine whether the registrant has failed to perform his job or to conduct himself satisfactorily. The C.O. will be given an opportunity to refute any statements or evidence against him. The State Director will then decide if the C.O. should be reported for prosecution. Should the State Director determine there has been no failure on the part of the C.O. he will order the local board to issue the registrant SSS Form 153A ordering him to another job. If the C.O. accepts the job, he will not lose credit towards his twenty-four months of work for the time which has elapsed between the two jobs.

If at any time, the State Director determines the job to which the C.O. has been assigned is no longer acceptable as alternate service, he may reassign the C.O. to another job. The C.O. must remain on the first job, until his local board issues him a SSS Form 153A ordering him to the other job.

An early release from alternate service is possible if the supervising Director determines the C.O. has an extreme hardship, medical problem or other bona fide basis for such claim. If the registrant has served more than 90 days, he will be classified 4-W and informed that he has satisfactorily completed his alternate service.

For further information, consult NISBCO's *GUIDE TO ALTERNATIVE SERVICE*, \$1.75.