

MEN CANNOT REGISTER AFTER REACHING AGE 26

According to law, a man must register with Selective Service within 30 days of his 18th birthday. Selective Service will accept late registrations but not after a man has reached age 26.

Some men may have failed to register during the time they were eligible to do so and may now find they are ineligible for certain benefits.

See [What happens if I don't register?](#)

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU DID NOT REGISTER AND ARE NOW 26 OR OLDER?

If you have passed your 26th birthday and are now being denied eligibility for Federal student financial aid, Federal job training, or Federal employment, or are having difficulty obtaining U.S. citizenship because you failed to register, you have the following recourse available to you: Explain to the official handling your case (for example, a student financial aid officer) the reasons for your failure to register with Selective Service. **A non-registrant may not be denied any benefit if he can “show by a preponderance of evidence” that his failure to register was not knowing and willful. Offer as much evidence supporting your case, and as much detail, as possible.**

HOW TO GET AN OFFICIAL SELECTIVE SERVICE RESPONSE SAYING YOU WERE OR WERE NOT REQUIRED TO REGISTER

If you did not register with Selective Service, and are now age 26 or older, you may be ineligible for certain Federal or state programs and benefits, including U.S. citizenship, if you are an immigrant male. Some agencies may ask you to provide an official response from the Selective Service indicating if you were or were not required to register. To receive such a letter from the Selective Service System, please call 1-847-688-6888. Your call will be answered by an automated voice processing system. Please refrain from pressing any numbers, and an operator will soon come on the line to assist you.

(continued)



**The Selective Service System
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You may also send a written request to the Selective Service System at P.O. Box 94638, Palatine, IL 60094-4638. Ask for a “**status information**” letter. You will have to describe, in detail, the circumstances you believe prevented you from registering and provide copies of documents showing any periods when you were hospitalized, institutionalized, or incarcerated occurring between your 18th and 26th birthdays. If you are a non-citizen, you may be required to provide documents that show when you entered the United States. Please include your name, Social Security Number, date of birth, and return address.

For your convenience, you can download the [Request for Status Information Letter](#) form along with the [directions for completing this form](#). Both documents are in PDF format.

FINAL DECISION

The benefit agency official handling your case, not the Selective Service, will determine whether you have shown that your failure to register was not a knowing and willful failure to register. The final decision regarding your eligibility for the benefit that you seek will be made by the agency granting the benefit (for example, for student financial aid, this would be the Department of Education). In some agencies, an appeals process is available.

* Men born from March 29, 1957 to December 31, 1959 were never required to register because the registration program was not in operation at the time they turned 18. The requirement to register was reinstated in 1980 and applies to all men born on or after January 1, 1960.