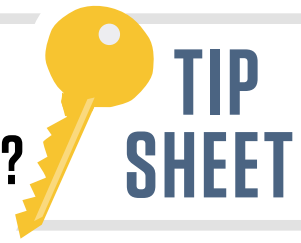


# Are young men with disabilities required to register for the selective service (military draft)?



## Is my son required to register for the draft at 18?

While some of these men may have a disability that would disqualify them from military service, they still must register for the Selective Service (also known as the “military draft”) unless a man is confined to an institution or homebound. Currently, there is not a draft, so registering for the selective service does not mean a man is inducted into military service that can only happen if a draft is called and the man is determined eligible to serve.

## What are the exceptions to having to register?

If a man is confined to an institution or homebound, he may not be eligible to serve. For full requirements, visit <https://www.sss.gov/Registration/Who-Must-Register/Men-With-Disabilities>.

## What if I don't think he can understand what it means to serve in the military? Could that be another exception?

If there is a physical or mental condition that means he would not comprehend the nature of his registration with the Selective Service System, one would need documentation from a doctor and the Selective Service will decide whether he qualifies.

## What needs to be done if my son may qualify for an exception?

Documentation must be provided. Send correspondence and documentation to: Selective Service System, Registration Information Office, PO Box 94739, Palatine, Illinois, 60094. You'll receive a Status Information Letter, which you should keep for your records.

## How does my son register?

He can register online at <https://www.sss.gov/>, at the post office, using the checkbox on the FAFSA, at participating high schools, or using the “reminder mail-back card” sent to him on or around his 18th birthday.

## Does my son have to register for the selective service on his own?

No, you may assist him in registering for the draft.

## If registration is required, will my son have to serve in the event of a draft?

Not necessarily. Since currently, no draft is in effect, the government is not allowed to “classify” men as able or unable to serve in the military. Even if a draft was declared, not all men are enrolled, and instead, are called by random lottery number and year of birth. A man with an induction notice may not even need to appear for mental, moral, and physical testing if you provide sufficient medical documentation beforehand.

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## Who would be called first?

A lottery starts with 19 year olds and moves through the age groups until age 26. When enough individuals have been drafted, they're called for evaluations to determine eligibility.

## Does registering or not registering for the draft affect my son's eligibility for programs and benefits?

By registering, your son remains eligible to take advantage of certain programs and benefits that Congress has linked to a man's Selective Service registration, such as student financial aid, federal employment, and job training under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (formerly known as the Workforce Investment Act).

## What disabilities qualify a man for an exemption?

For a full list of physical, mental, learning, and behavior disorders, and the conditions that must be met in order for them to be disqualifying, please see the [Department of Defense Instruction 6130.03 \(Medical Standards for Appointment, Enlistment, or Induction in the Military Services\)](#). For any of these conditions, verifying documentation would need to be provided. But remember, this would only be in the case of a draft AND if the man's number was called in the lottery.

## What if my son wants to serve?

A young adult with a diagnosis of a disability (for instance Autism) can certainly volunteer; however, a verified diagnosis will probably mean he or she would be turned down.

Still have questions? Visit <https://www.sss.gov/> or call 1-847-688-6888.