What To Do If You Don't Want To Be Drafted

These are your options if you don't want to be drafted:

● Don't register with the Selective Service System.
● Don't tell Selective Service your new address when you move.
● Get lucky in the draft lottery.
● Don't show up for induction.
● Show up and flunk the physical.
● Show up and refuse induction.
● Convince the draft board that you're a conscientious objector (most people aren't), and do alternative service.
● Convince the draft board that you qualify for some other deferment (most people don't).
● Leave the country, or hide, for the rest of your life.
● Tell Congress to end draft registration.
● Organize now against the draft.

The surest way not to be drafted is to prevent the draft entirely. This leaflet explains how you can help protect yourself from the draft by joining in the resistance to the draft and wars.

What About Deferments?

To get a deferment you must register, notify Selective Service whenever you move, and then apply for a deferment within a few days of receiving your induction notice. By applying for a deferment, you admit you received the induction notice, which will make it harder to win in court if you later decide to refuse induction.

If you're opposed to all war you might qualify as a conscientious objector, although you'd still have to do alternative service. There are several other deferments, but very few people will qualify for them. Students will not be exempt or deferred.

Why Break The Law?

People resist the draft for many reasons. If you're healthy and can't qualify as a conscientious objector, breaking the law is probably the only way you can avoid being drafted.

The most useful thing you can do today to to keep from being drafted is to organize against the draft! Members of Congress are worried about the domestic unrest a draft will provoke – and if the price looks too high, they won't dare try to draft you or anybody else.

Can I Go To Canada?

Maybe, but you can't count on it. So far, Canada has refused to grant sanctuary to U.S. military resisters. If your asylum claim is denied, and you don't meet the qualifications for Canadian immigration, you'd be deported back to the U.S. Health care workers might be more welcome, though licensing might present a problem.

Emigration makes sense only if you have or can get citizenship in another country, if you're familiar with the language and culture, if you think you'd like to live there for the rest of your life, and if you have resources to establish yourself there.

If enough of us resist now, no one will be drafted.

www.Resisters.info

Visit our Web site for more information on:

• What's happening with the draft in Congress and the Supreme Court
• Women and draft registration
• Health Care Workers and the draft

(Updated March 2021. See Web site for latest info.)
Will There Be A Draft?

With the U.S. at war in Iraq, Afghanistan, and more and more other countries, recruiters won’t be able to meet their quotas forever. When Army recruiters can expect to spend years sitting in the desert in a hostile country, how long will people continue to volunteer? Politicians and pundits have been talking for years about bringing back the draft or some other form of compulsory national service – but they’re afraid of draft resistance, which has already made draft registration unenforceable.

Who Will Be Drafted?

The first people to get drafted will probably be doctors, nurses, and other health care workers. Selective Service has contingency plans for a Health Care Personnel Delivery System to draft men and women ages 20 through 44 who are doctors, nurses, technicians, therapists, or other medical professionals.

For more on the health workers draft, see www.MedicalDraft.info.

If there is a general draft for cannon fodder, men who registered for the draft (if you didn’t register, you won’t be drafted) and who turn 26 this year would be called up first.

Will Women Be Drafted?

A draft of health care workers would include women as well as men. Only men are currently required to register or would be included in a general draft. But Congress is currently considering proposals either to expand draft registration to women or to end draft registration entirely. It’s likely that beginning in 2023, women born in 2005 and after will have to register for the draft. Young women need to think about what they will do if they are ordered to register for the draft, and organize now against the draft.

What Will Happen To Me?

If you get drafted, you’ll get a letter giving you ten days to report for a medical exam. If you show up, pass the physical, and submit to induction, they’ll put you on a bus to basic training the same day.

There is a lot you can do to keep from being drafted, but luck plays a big role. You have to weigh the uncertain legal risks of resisting the draft, against the very clear hazards of submitting to the draft – the choices aren’t easy.

What If I Didn't Register?

You're not alone. Millions of men have refused to register since 1980, and millions more have violated the draft laws in other ways. Only 20 nonregistrants were prosecuted, none since 1986!

Most nonregistrants will never be caught, even if there’s a draft.

Men who haven’t registered for the draft are ineligible for Federal jobs and some state programs. But you can register without penalty at any time until you turn 26. If you don’t want to risk being drafted, but also don’t want to risk being penalized later in life for not having registered for the draft, wait to register until just before your 26th birthday.

If you don’t register, you’ll probably get warning letters from Selective Service. Most of these letters are junk mail. In 2017, Selective Service sent 180,000 names and addresses of suspected nonregistrants to the Justice Department. None of them were investigated or prosecuted. It’s been like that every year since 1988, when the Justice Department refused to investigate or prosecute any more draft registration resisters.

The dangerous letters are letters you have to sign for. Don’t sign for any letters or open any e-mail messages from Selective Service or the Justice Department. Refuse to accept any certified letter, and see a draft counselor or lawyer immediately.

But What If I Already Registered?

If Selective Service doesn't know where you live, they might never find you. Almost nobody tells the Selective Service when they move.

In order to prosecute you for failing to report an address change or refusing induction, the government would have to prove that you knew you were breaking the law. That will be very difficult without proof that you got their notices. So if they finally found you, you could probably avoid prosecution by submitting to the draft at that point.

You should think about what you want your parents (or whoever lives at the address you gave when you registered) to do if the government comes looking for you. If your your parents don’t want you to be drafted, they can help by sending back, unopened, any mail for you from Selective Service.