

# Are you 18 years old & opposed to war?

## *What will you do about registering for the draft?*

**Men, age 18-25 must, by law, register** with the Selective Service System. Not registering has serious consequences, including fines and possible jail time, as well as not being able to apply for student financial aid, government employment (including the U.S. Post Office.), job training and U.S. citizenship for male immigrants. *NOTE: Some student financial aid applications automatically register applicants!*

### **There is no formal way to register for the draft as a conscientious objector.**

This is a classification that is not made until there is an active draft. There is, at this time, *no active draft*, but if you see yourself as being morally or ethically opposed to participation in war, you may want to start now to prepare for a time when you might be drafted.

**If you are a conscientious objector** when you register for the draft, **DO NOT REGISTER ON-LINE**. Use the Selective Service form available at the post office.

1. Fill it out accurately & completely
2. Write, someplace on the face of the card, between the lines or above your signature (not on the edges): *"I am a conscientious objector to war"* or *"I am morally and ethically opposed to participation in war"* or something to that effect.
3. Make a photocopy of the card *before* you mail it.
4. Fold the copy over and mail it *to yourself* by addressing the back of the folded copy **NOT IN AN ENVELOPE**. The post mark on the actual copy will show the date you registered and help document that you claimed to be a CO at that point in time.

5. Put this in a file. Keep it in a safe place.
6. The Selective Service will send you an acknowledgement of your registration. (Form 3-A) Keep this in your files as proof that you registered. It will not mention the fact that you attempted to register as a conscientious objector.
7. You should correct any errors in the record of your registration on Form 3-B (sent to you with 3-A). As a CO, write on the form something like: *"I registered as a conscientious objector to war. You have not included this in the record of my registration – Please correct your records."*

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Selective Service will not change this data or acknowledge registration as a CO, but if you send this statement to Selective Service *by certified mail with return receipt requested*, and keep a photocopy of the

form together with your receipts, you will have documented your attempt to get your beliefs on record long before they attempted to draft you.

**If you have already registered** you can send a letter at any time, stating that you are a conscientious objector. Include your Selective Service Number (SSN) on all correspondence with Selective Service. Keep a copy of your letter with the receipt.

**These actions will not take the place of formally filing your claim at the appropriate time** which would be after an official draft is called up. However, each bit of evidence showing that your objection to war is sincere and deeply held will make your CO claim stronger when you appear before the draft board.

Register on-line (<http://www.sss.gov>) or complete this form  
SELECTIVE SERVICE SYSTEM REGISTRATION FORM  
DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

PRINT ONLY IN BLACK INK AND IN CAPITAL LETTERS ONLY

1 DATE OF BIRTH: (MM-DD-YYYY) 11-23-1987 2 SEX: (Mark with "X")  Male  Female 3 SOCIAL SECURITY ACCOUNT NUMBER 123-45-6789

4 LAST NAME: MADISON FIRST NAME & MIDDLE NAME: JAMES

5 CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS: STREET ADDRESS & APARTMENT NUMBER 123 JEFFERSON AVENUE CITY: PHILADELPHIA STATE: PA ZIP CODE: 19102

6 TODAY'S DATE: (MM-DD-YYYY) 11-23-2005 7 SIGNATURE: James Madison Sr.

I AM A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR TO WAR

SS FORM 1M (SEPT 01) THIS IS A SAMPLE FORM

# Are you a Conscientious Objector?



*A conscientious objector is someone who, because of deeply held moral or ethical beliefs, is opposed to participating in war.*

You do not need to be a pacifist to be a Conscientious Objector.

You do not need to be a member of an organized church or religious organization to be a conscientious objector, (although taking part in a recognized religion that officially condemns the use of war can help give credibility to your claim).

Your objection must be based on a moral or ethical conviction, not only a political reason.

A conscientious objector cannot object only to participation in a specific war. He or she must object to participation in all wars in which they might be asked to fight..

Some conscientious objectors do serve in the military, but in non-combatant jobs, such as medics. Others cannot in good conscience, participate in any way

Conscientious objectors are not simply exempt from serving their country. If there is a draft, they will serve alternative service.

## Carefully examine your own moral and ethical beliefs about war.

What do you believe about war and killing. Would those beliefs allow you to serve in a non-combatant job in the military or do you believe that any participation in war is wrong?

How will you answer questions about your beliefs? Are you prepared to express your beliefs in a written claim for classification as a CO? answer questions in person before a draft board? and give convincing evidence of the sincerity of your beliefs?

Be prepared to answer 3 questions. The Selective Service System's current documentation form for Conscientious Objector claims (Form 22) will ask you to:

1. "Describe your beliefs which are the reasons for your claiming conscientious objection to combatant military training and service or to all military training and service"
2. "Describe how & when you acquired these beliefs."
3. "Explain what most clearly shows that your beliefs are deeply held. You may wish to include a description of how your beliefs affect the way you live."

**Write up the answers** to these questions. Make copies. Keep a copy for your records. Mail a copy to your religious body or draft counseling agency\*

**Collect letters of support** from people who know you well and can vouch for your sincerity in claiming CO status. These might include clergy, teachers, employers, or members of your community. A person writing a letter supporting your claim does not have to agree with your beliefs - they are just vouching for your sincerity. In fact a letter from someone who does not agree with you but recognizes the strength of your conviction can be very helpful. Keep these letters in a safe place

**Start a file of evidence** of your beliefs. (it can be a shoe box or big envelope) where you will keep documentation of activities in your life that support your CO claim. You might include church membership, records of peace activism, things that you have written throughout your life that show your objection to war, letters of support and all correspondence with the Selective Service System. Keep it in a safe place.

**At this time there is no active draft**, however, should Congress and the President decide to reinstate the draft, it is possible that there will be very little time to prepare a solid and convincing claim of Conscientious Objection. Start thinking about it now.

**Be prepared for the possibility...** ☺

\**Center for Conscience & War* has excellent basic draft registration information and Conscientious objection advice, including worksheets for exploring and explaining your beliefs. They are in PDF format that you can download. Their web site is: