tyef Trans Youth Equality Foundation

Navigating FAFSA and The Military Draft

For youth applying to college and filling out the FAFSA. FTM? You have to fill out forms to state you are transgender or you will be asked to sign up for the draft before the college will process your paperwork. Once the paperwork is filled out they will proceed with application. This process will take about 2-3 weeks. See below.

FOR FEMALE TO MALE (FTM) INDIVIDUALS

People who were assigned female at birth are not required to register with the Selective Service regardless of their current gender or transition status. When applying for federal financial aid, grants, and loans as a man, however, you may be asked to prove that you are exempt. To request a Status Information Letter (SIL) that shows you are exempt, you can either download an SIL request form from the Selective Service website (http://www.sss.gov/PDFs/SilForm_Instructions.pdf) or call them at 1-888-655-1825. This service is free and the exemption letter you will receive does not specify why you are exempt so it will not force you to out yourself in any other application process. The Selective Service does, however, require a copy of your birth certificate showing your birth-assigned sex. If the sex on your birth certificate has been changed, attach any documentation you have to that affect. Once you receive your Status Information Letter, keep it in your files. For those FTM people who transition before their eighteenth birthdays and change their birth certificates, it is also possible to register with the service. However, no one may register after their twenty-sixth birthday. Also, please note that although Selective Service materials refer to transgender people as "people who have had a sex change," their policies apply to those who have transitioned regardless of surgical history.

FOR MALE TO FEMALE (MTF) INDIVIDUALS

People who were assigned male at birth are required to register with the Selective Service within thirty days of their eighteenth birthday. This includes those who may have transitioned before or since then. The Selective Service uses Social Security and other databases to determine who they believe was assigned male at birth. As of now,

it is unclear whether transgender people are eligible for military service, but you are required to register nonetheless, and this is necessary to gain access to certain government benefits.

MILITARY POLICIES FOR TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS

To join the military, potential service members are required to undergo a physical examination as part of the induction process. During this examination, the military may disqualify a candidate if the potential service member has had any type of genital surgery. A history of genital surgery may result in a disqualification for "major abnormalities and defects of the genitalia.

Furthermore, even if the candidate has not had surgery but openly identifies as transgender, the military considers this to be a disqualifying psychiatric condition, labeling "transsexualism" and "transvestism" as "psychosexual conditions." An individual may request a medical waiver of any disqualifying condition from the Department of Defense, so in theory, a waiver could be granted for disqualifications related to gender identity. The availability of medical waivers varies among the service branches, but OS-SLDN is not aware of a waiver ever being granted to a transgender service member

Courtesy of Trans Youth Equality Foundation