

Timely Topics

Don't Miss These Government Deadlines

(NAPSA)—When it comes to the federal government, getting what you need and meeting your obligations, some dates and times can be particularly important. Here's a look at a few you should know.

1. Selective Service Enrollment. Every man is required by law to register with the Selective Service System within 30 days of his 18th birthday. By registering on time, he stays eligible for federal student loans and grants, many state and municipal jobs, federal job training Workforce Investment Act programs, and U.S. citizenship for immigrants. He can even submit his information early, at 17; then, at 18, he will automatically be registered.

Failure to register will delay men from becoming citizens until age 31 and can also result in fines and prison sentences of up to five years.

Many find the easiest and fastest way to register is to register online at www.sss.gov. In addition, Selective Service "mail-back" registration forms are available at any U.S. post office, and some high schools have a staff member or teacher appointed as a Selective Service Registrar.

2. Pell Grants and student aid: Federal Student Aid provides grants, loans and work-study funds to students attending college or career school. Virtually all men must register with Selective Service to be eligible. To get the money for which you qualify, you have to meet federal and state deadlines and your colleges may also have a deadline. Go to <https://fafsa.ed.gov/deadlines.htm>. Enter your legal residence and the school year for which you are applying for student aid.



Knowing when and where to contact government agencies can help your financial bottom line.

Then click View Deadlines.

Generally, the earlier you apply, the better.

3. Health Care. February 15 is the deadline for open enrollment. After that, you can only get coverage if you qualify for a special enrollment period; a 60-day period following a qualifying life event, such as a change in family status (for example, birth of a child or marriage) or loss of other health coverage. Job-based plans must provide a special enrollment period of 30 days.

You can learn more at www.healthcare.gov/marketplace-deadlines.

4. Medicare. The Initial Enrollment Period begins three months before your 65th birth month and ends three months after your 65th birth month, for a total of seven months (including your birth month). If you miss this deadline, you may have to pay penalties on your monthly premiums. More information is at www.medicare.gov.

Keep these facts and dates in mind to get your due from the government programs your taxes support.