

STREAMLINING DoD CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL SECURITY CLEARANCE PROCESSES

*Air Force Life Cycle Management Center
Information Protection*

The challenge of obtaining Personnel Security Clearances (PCL) in a timely manner is affecting both government and corporate organizations. Currently there is a backlog of over 500,000 background investigations for PCLs. The growing investigation timelines are nearly two and a half times longer than the requirements outlined in the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

Accordingly, once a PCL investigation is submitted, all organizations are impacted equitably; there is no method or streamlined process within their control that can speed background investigation actions once submitted. However, within Air Force Life Cycle Management Center (AFLCMC), we have found that streamlining the “up front prep” effort for PCL actions can help reduce overall timelines.

The time it takes for a company to get an individual a PCL is largely dependent upon the time it takes the company to gather information and for the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) to review and accept this information.

The company Facility Security Officer (FSO) or designee has a key role in the process of obtaining a new or periodic reinvestigation of a security clearance:

- DoD Facility Security Officer (FSO) or designee may consider initiating a form similar to the Optional Form 306, *Declaration for Federal Employment* (https://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/OF0306.pdf), used by the Government to begin preliminary suitability determinations for all new applicants. It is important to educate prospective new applicants and current employees on the process to get a security clearance or to renew their security clearance. Information to the prospective new employee and/or current employee on the initiation/investigation and adjudication phases of the process can help to alleviate and prevent delays in the security clearance process.
- Expedite the process early in the hiring stage/pre-employment phase or 90 to 120 days out for cleared employees. The FSO or other designated security personnel should instruct the prospective new/current employee to gather all pertinent information that they are going to need in order to fill out the Standard Form 86, *Questionnaire for National Security Positions* (http://www.opm.gov/forms/pdf_fill/SF86.pdf). Gathering the information early helps to streamline the process to make it go quicker so the prospective new/current employee will have all the information needed and will not have to spend time searching for information later. Another option is to have the prospective new/current employee fill out a copy of the SF-86; once filled out the prospective new/current employee can then have a record of information that can be transferred over once the process is officially started.

Instruct the prospective new/current employee of the information below that is required:

Section		Information Required
1-8	Identifying Information	Name, any aliases or former names, place and date of birth, social security number, mother's maiden name, and your email address (es) and phone number(s).
9-10	Citizenship	Passport, any applicable paperwork if you are not a native born citizen.
11	Where You Have Lived	Addresses back 7 years, neighbor's names, addresses and phone numbers back 3 years
12	Where You Went to School	Name, addresses, dates of attendance, degree received
13	Employment	Names, addresses, phone numbers, supervisor's name, title, and phone number both civilian and federal service (other than military service). Employment record (laid off, fired, and unfavorable conduct) dates.
14-15	Selective Service and Military History	Selective service number if applicable, dates and branch of service, and military charges.
16	People Who Know You Well	Names, addresses and phone numbers, dates known, relationship – must be people not listed elsewhere on the form.
17	Marital Status/Living Arrangements	Names, social security numbers, addresses and phone numbers of current spouse or cohabitant(s), and former spouse(s).
18	Relatives	Names, addresses, and phone numbers. Names for both the living and deceased
19-20	Foreign Contacts and Activities	Any foreign travel, foreign financial interests, foreign

		passports. Dates and reason for each.
21	Mental and Emotional Health	Summary of treatment if applicable
22	Police Record	Summary of offenses – dates and offenses
23-24	Illegal Use of Drugs/Drug Activity & Alcohol	Summary of drug and/or use – dates and types, treatments
25	Investigations and Clearances	Current and previous clearances or investigations and their resolution
26	Financial Record	All financial obligations including bankruptcy for which you are cosigner or guarantor including dates, amounts, and creditors
27	Use of Information Technology Systems	Illegal use treatment of information technology systems.
28	Involvement in Non-Criminal Court Actions	Summary of non-criminal court actions (not listed elsewhere)
29	Associations	Terrorist or other associated groups you have been involved with or made a contribution to.

- FSO or designated personnel with access to the Joint Personnel Adjudication System (JPAS) will initiate the process in e-QIP based on Federal Investigative Standards located at: http://www.dss.mil/documents/psmo-i/Tier_Investigations.pdf
- The FSO will receive indications during the e-QIP process whether a new investigation is needed or not. The individual may just have a break in service. The FSO or designee can check: http://www.dss.mil/psmo-i/indus_psmo-i_process.html
- Very important for the process to go smoothly: The FSO or security personnel should emphasize to the prospective new/current employee to fill out the SF-86 correctly and accurately as the biggest delay in the process occurs when the SF-86 is rejected for any reason. This delays the process, often by weeks, and pushes back the time line thus taking longer to start the process for new or reinvestigation clearance.
- As the applicant completes the e-QIP process they will digitally sign the certification and release forms.

- FSO or designee will review the security clearance package for completeness in accordance with the National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual <http://www.dss.mil/isp/nao/nispom06.html>.
- For initial investigation request (individual that does not have a clearance or has not used their clearance for the past 24 months), the FSO or designee must submit fingerprints electronically to OPM within 14 days of the “Received” status date. To help speed up the process it is recommended that the FSO or designee submit electronic fingerprints the same day as submitting the SF-86 in e-QIP. All fingerprints have to be submitted electronically to OPM, or the fingerprint will be rejected. This will also result in the rejection of any investigation requests if an electronic fingerprint is not received within 14 days of investigation being received by OPM. Fingerprints should be submitted through SWFT immediately. <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/psawebdocs/docPage.jsp?p=SWFT>
- Additional information on Personnel Security Clearances (PCLs) and information to obtain a Personnel Security Clearance can be found at: http://www.dss.mil/psmo-i/indus_psmo-i_process_applicant.html