

THE ARMY SECURITY CLEARANCE: MYTH BUSTER



SECURITY CLEARANCE TERMINOLOGY

- **Security Manager:** Responsible for operating and managing all aspects of a security program.
- **Security Clearance:** Certification that an individual can have access to classified information or be assigned to a highly sensitive job.
- **Clearance Levels:** Confidential, Secret and Top Secret.
- **Background Investigation:** Evaluation of a person's background to determine if they are eligible to hold a clearance. Investigations are valid for a certain period of time depending on the level of clearance.
- **Eligibility:** The Department of Defense Central Adjudication Facility (DoD CAF) determination that an individual is qualified to handle classified information or perform sensitive duties.
- **Need-To-Know:** Individual has a need to access classified information in order to perform their job.
- **Access:** The level of classified information that your job requires. Access is granted by your organization.

➔ **QUESTIONS? CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SECURITY MANAGER**



OBTAINING A CLEARANCE

The security clearance process is a tool that helps ensure that only qualified people have access to classified and sensitive information.

MYTH

- I can obtain a security clearance on my own.
- Every agency uses different standards to grant security clearances
- Getting a security clearance takes a long time.
- If I am denied a clearance, I cannot apply again
- A security clearance allows access to any level of classified information.

TRUTH

- Only a Government agency or cleared contractor can submit clearance.
- Government standards known as the National Adjudicative Guidelines are used to grant, deny or revoke a security clearance
- Processing times depend on the type of investigation and whether serious issues were developed (initial security clearance take approx 60 days).
- A denial may be appealed. If the appeal is also denied, then the employee must wait one year before their employer can request reconsideration.
- Access to classified information depends on the level of clearance you have and the information you need to know to do your job.

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MAINTAINING A CLEARANCE

Clearance eligibility never expires but is only active for a certain period of time depending on the level of access.

LEVEL	CLEARANCE VALID FOR
▪ CONFIDENTIAL	▪ 15 Years
▪ SECRET	▪ 10 Years
▪ TOP SECRET	▪ 5 Years

A periodic reinvestigation (PR) must be submitted 30 days before the clearance is overdue in order to ensure that the employee remains eligible to hold a clearance.

MYTH

TRUTH

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|--|---|
| ▪ I will LOSE my security clearance if: My investigation is overdue | ▪ An outdated background investigation is not a basis to remove an individual's security clearance; however a periodic investigation must be submitted. |
| ▪ I will LOSE my security clearance if: I have bad finances or file for bankruptcy | ▪ In making a clearance decision, the cause, response, and amount of debt is considered. Responsible actions are favorably considered. |
| ▪ I will LOSE my security clearance if: I seek mental health treatment | ▪ Mental health counseling and treatment in and of itself is NOT a reason to deny or revoke your security clearance. Your decision to seek counseling or treatment is viewed as a positive sign that you recognize a problem exists and are willing to take steps towards resolving it. |



POST CLEARANCE

Individuals must continue to protect sensitive or classified information even if they no longer require access.

MYTH

TRUTH

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| ▪ My clearance does not transfer to another employer. | ▪ Security clearances may be transferred to another Federal agency as long as the investigation meets their requirement. |
| ▪ I will LOSE my security clearance if: I am debriefed from access | ▪ A debrief informs the employee that they no longer have to access classified information. However, the employee will continue to have a clearance eligibility. |
| ▪ I will LOSE my security clearance if: I retire | ▪ Security Clearance eligibility remains even after retirement or separation. |
| ▪ I will LOSE my security clearance if: I leave Federal or military service | ▪ Only a break in Federal service (Military, Civilian, or Contractor employment) greater than 24 months requires a new security clearance investigation. |