

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

▪ 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

▪ 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.