



*The Kemp Mill Employment Assistance
Initiative*

Job Seeker's Club

Presents:

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**Navigating Your Way Through
Jobs That Require Security Clearances**

Special Thanks

To ClearanceJobs.com, a Dice Company.
I based much of this presentation on their
publication:

*“Security Clearance Frequently Asked
Questions”* which can be found at:

http://www.clearancejobs.com/security_clearance_faq.pdf

Definitions

- **Security Clearance:**
 - *A determination by the United States Government that a person or company is eligible for access to classified information.*
- **DISCO:**
 - *The Defense Industrial Security Clearance Office, part of the Defense Security Service (DSS), an agency of the DoD. DISCO processes and adjudicates clearances for DoD contractor personnel and facilities.*
- **OPM:**
 - *Office of Personnel Management. Federal agency that conducts most background investigations for the granting of security clearances.*

Who?

- **Who Requires Cleared Employees?**

- Federal (and other) Government Departments and Agencies that handle classified information.
- Contractors, FFRDCs, and other entities performing classified work for the government.

- **Who Requires a Clearance?**

- Any corporation or organization wishing to perform classified work for the Government.
- Any Person wishing to perform classified work for the government or one of its contractors.

- **Who is Eligible for a Clearance?**

- Only Companies without Foreign Ownership Control and Influence are eligible to receive a Facility Security Clearance (FCL)
- Only US Citizens are eligible to receive a Personnel Security Clearance (PCL)

How?

• How do I Get a Clearance?

- You must be sponsored by a cleared contractor or government entity.
- To be sponsored you must be employed by, or be a consultant to contractor or government in a position that requires a clearance.
 - Exception to rule: Perspective employees may be submitted for a clearance if the cleared contractor has made, and the candidate has accepted an offer of employment. This must be in writing with a stipulation that employment will begin within 30 days of clearance adjudication.
- You cannot obtain a clearance on your own.

• How Much does a Clearance Cost?

- Nothing!

• How Long Does it Take to Get Cleared?

- Average time for all clearance levels: 124 days, down from 205 in 2007
- Average time for Top Secret and above: ≈ 330 down from 439 in 2007
 - ≈ 100 days for Application Processing, ≈ 200 days for Investigation, ≈ 30 days for Adjudication.

What?

- What are the Steps in the Clearance Process?
 - A cleared contractor or government agency identifies an employee or candidate with a need to have access to classified information.
 - Contractor's Facility Security Officer (FSO) submits an investigation request through the Joint Personnel Adjudication System (JPAS).
 - Employee completes e-QIP clearance application.
 - FSO forwards e-QIP to DISCO
 - DISCO forwards approval to OPM
 - OPM Conducts background investigation and sends results to DISCO for adjudication.
 - DISCO either grants the clearance or forwards the investigation to the Defense Office of Hearing and Appeals (DOHA) for further adjudication.
- What Happens In-Between Application and Adjudication?
 - OPM investigators conduct a National Agency Check, Credit Check, and Local Police Agency Check. Reference and subject interviews may also be conducted at this time. Depending on where information needs to be gathered, multiple field offices are involved. Once all reports are closed, adjudication can begin. 6

Do's

- Most delays in clearance processing are due to errors on the application. Here are a few things you can do to speed up the process of getting a clearance:
 - Do fill out the application on paper first – the electronic application can be very frustrating
 - Do provide complete accurate information. No piece of information is too insignificant. Short term jobs, residences, education, etc. are just as important to list as long term ones. Addresses and zip codes must be correct or your investigation may end up in the wrong office. Missing information and discrepancies add extra time.
 - Do check your credit report. In the age of identity theft, inaccurate information can cause your clearance to be delayed or denied. Fix any credit discrepancies before you submit your clearance application.
 - Do check with any mental health or substance abuse counseling facilities you may have attended regarding their medical information release policies.

Don'ts

- Don't indicate that you are a dual-citizen unless you are sure you are one. Check the citizenship laws in the other country through OPM at www.opm.gov/extra/investigate/IS-01.pdf. Never talk to a foreign officer about surrendering your passport or dual-citizenship unless instructed to do so by a US Government representative.
- Don't ever lie on your application. The majority of clearance denials for drugs, alcohol, and criminal conduct involve providing false information on the application, during interviews and polygraphs. In many cases what you are trying to hide will not result in denial of clearance. If you lie, you will more than likely be found out and your clearance WILL be either denied or revoked which makes it almost impossible to be cleared in the future.

FAQ

- Why are Clearances necessary?
 - The government can only place secrets in the hands of people it can trust. The clearance process ensures that only trustworthy individuals receive access to such information.
- What do they ask on the application?
 - Personal Identifying Data
 - Residence, Education and Employment History
 - Family, Associates, Foreign connections and Travel
 - Criminal Past, Alcohol and Drug Use, Mental Health and Counseling
 - Credit Record and Financial Delinquencies
 - Military Service and Prior Clearances
 - Civil Court Actions and Subversive Activities
- What Clearance Levels are there?
 - DoD: Confidential, Secret, Top Secret, and Special Accesses
 - DOE: L, Q
 - Intelligence Community: Counterintelligence and Lifestyle Polygraphs
- Will I have to meet with an investigator for an interview?
 - Yes – for Top Secret clearances whether or not they require special access.
- Will my clearance from one agency transfer to and be accepted by another agency?
 - Yes and No – Clearance interoperability is a big problem. It depends on who granted your clearance and where you want to go.

FAQ

- How long can I keep my clearance?
 - Clearances remain active for as long as a cleared individual remains employed by a cleared contractor or the government, and that individual has a reasonable expectation to require access to classified information. Periodic reinvestigations will be required.
 - Top Secret reinvestigated ever 5 Years
 - Secret reinvestigated every 10 Years
 - Confidential reinvestigated ever 15 years.
- Can a naturalized citizen obtain a clearance?
 - Yes! Naturalized citizens are treated as if they were native-born
- Can a dual-citizen obtain a clearance?
 - It depends.
 - Do you hold a foreign passport?
 - Have you served willingly in a foreign military?
 - Do you reside part/full time in that country?
 - Have you worked as an agent of that country?
 - Are you willing to surrender your passport and revoke your other citizenship?
- Can I be cleared if I have foreign national relatives?
 - Yes and No!
 - Depending on the clearance level, program, skills, need, country of citizenship etc; clearances can be denied or revoked.

Resources

Partial list of places to get answers on clearance process questions and find jobs requiring security clearances:

- Office of Personnel Management
- DSS
- DISCO
- General Accountability Office
- McCormack & Associates
- Clearance Jobs Blog
- Monster
- Clearance Jobs
- Cleared Connections
- Intelligence & Defense Careers
- Cleared Jobs
- Security Clearance Expo
- Tech Expo Top Secret
- www.opm.gov
- www.dss.mil
- www.dss.mil/psco/disco.html
- www.gao.gov
- www.securityclearances.org
- www.clearancejobsblog.com
- www.monster.com
- www.clearancejobs.com
- www.clearedconnections.com
- www.intelligencecareers.com
- www.clearedjobs.net
- www.securityclearanceexpo.com
- www.techexpousa.com