

## *Tips for the Security Clearance Process: Agency Specific Information*

### Central Intelligence Agency

Source: [WWW.CIA.GOV](http://WWW.CIA.GOV)

#### ***The Clearance Process***

The clearance process, which is strictly governed by rules and regulations derived from Federal statute and executive orders, begins when you accept a conditional offer of employment from the Agency. It involves a thorough examination of your life history and fitness to safeguard the nation's secrets. Think of this process as the first step in building a bridge of trust between you and the Agency. Candor is an essential ingredient in the establishment of that trust.

The investigation addresses comprehensively one's loyalty to the United States, strength of character, trustworthiness, honesty, reliability, discretion, and soundness of judgment. In addition, it examines one's freedom from conflicting allegiances, potential for coercion, and willingness and ability to abide by regulations governing the use, handling and protection of sensitive information.

The Agency uses a polygraph to check the veracity of information that bears upon the areas listed above. CIA's polygraph examiners are highly trained security professionals, among the world's best in their field. They work closely and carefully with applicants to ensure that the information upon which clearance decisions are based is as accurate as it can be and is guarded with the strictest confidence.

The clearance process can be lengthy. Since the Agency actively recruits people who have expert knowledge of foreign languages and cultures, it is not unusual for our applicants to have numerous foreign contacts. In these cases the investigation must cover more ground, which usually takes more time. Candor is critical to the timely completion of this process.

The hiring process also entails a thorough medical examination of one's mental and physical fitness to perform essential job functions.

#### ***Drug Use***

To be considered suitable for Agency employment, applicants must generally not have used illegal drugs within the last 12 months. The issue of illegal drug use prior to 12 months ago is carefully evaluated during the medical and security processing.

#### ***Personal Integrity***

A career in intelligence can be enormously rewarding. It also demands the very best of the men and women who comprise the Agency's workforce. To meet the requirements of the work itself, intelligence professionals must be highly competent in their fields. To safeguard some of the nation's most sensitive information, CIA officers must be highly reliable and trustworthy. Woven through all aspects of their performance is the imperative to adhere to the highest standards of

integrity. To be selected for a position of such trust and responsibility, one must be granted a security clearance.

Many applicants wonder if they can pass such scrutiny. The Agency recognizes no one is perfect. Agency security officials consider the nature, extent, seriousness, and recency of past behavior. They weigh the potential risk and benefit of each individual - the whole person - with utmost care. Although national security is always the paramount consideration, our security experts work hard to ensure the Agency does not turn away unnecessarily someone who could make important contributions to the nation's intelligence effort.

**Defense Intelligence Agency**

Source: [WWW.DIA.MIL](http://WWW.DIA.MIL)

***The Clearance Process***

Initial Employment: Initial employment with DIA is subject to:

1. Completion of a satisfactory personnel special security background investigation or reinvestigation to ensure compliance with the agency's special employment criteria. This investigation will include verification of experience, education, and personal history to insure an applicant is eligible for access to SCI by meeting the following criteria:

- The applicant's character, conduct, and discretion must be above reproach and he/she must have unquestioned loyalty to the U.S.
- The applicant must be a U.S. citizen.

2. Any required medical examination.

3. Personal interviews.

4. Any required counterintelligence-scope polygraph examination.

5. Satisfactory completion of a urinalysis test to screen for illegal drug use. Applicants who refuse to be tested shall not be extended an offer of employment. In the event a positive test result is obtained, applicants will have the opportunity to submit medical documentation that may support a legitimate use for a specific drug or substance. Such information will be reviewed only by the Medical Review Officer to determine whether the applicant is legitimately using an otherwise illegal drug. Applicants who fail to substantiate the legitimate use of a specific drug or substance shall not be extended an offer of employment.

6. Such other procedures deemed necessary to assure that the agency's security, suitability, and overall qualifications standards are met.

All statements and claims made in employment applications and security forms are subject to

investigative verification. Adverse information developed or intentional/unintentional misstatement/withholding of significant adverse information during personnel and clearance processing may preclude employment.

Department of State – Foreign Service Officer

Source: [WWW.STATE.GOV](http://WWW.STATE.GOV)

***The Clearance Process***

A comprehensive background investigation, conducted by the U.S. Department of State in cooperation with other federal, state, and local agencies, will provide the information necessary to determine a candidate's suitability for appointment to the Foreign Service and for a Top Secret security clearance. The process considers such factors as: failure to repay a U.S. Government-guaranteed loan or meet tax obligations; failure to register for the Selective Service; past problems with credit or bankruptcy; unsatisfactory employment records; a criminal record or other violations of the law; drug or alcohol abuse; and less than honorable discharge from the armed forces.

Candidates who hold [dual citizenship](#) (39kb, PDF), have had extensive travel, education, residence and /or employment overseas, or who have foreign contacts, a foreign-born spouse, immediate family members or relatives who are not citizens of the United States, should be aware that the clearance process will take longer to complete. The background investigation includes interviews with current and previous contacts, supervisors and coworkers. Candidates who do not receive a security clearance are ineligible for appointment. Potential candidates who have any serious issues that may prevent them from receiving a clearance should give some thought to the likelihood of their being found ineligible before starting this process.

FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

Source: [WWW.FBI.GOV](http://WWW.FBI.GOV)

***The Clearance Process***

The mission of the FBI is vital to the safety and security of our nation and its citizens. Often, our work is very sensitive in nature. Therefore, all FBI positions require at least a Top Secret Security Clearance. How do you obtain such a clearance? Once you have received and accepted a conditional offer of employment, the FBI will initiate an intensive background investigation that you must pass before you can join the FBI. The investigation includes a polygraph examination; a test for illegal drugs; credit and records checks; and extensive interviews with former and current colleagues, neighbors, friends, professors, etc. There are also certain employment requirements that all candidates must meet in order to be eligible for consideration for employment with the FBI. Before applying for any FBI position, please make sure that the FBI Employment Disqualifiers do not apply to you. For details, please use the links listed here.

## ***Employment Disqualifiers***

There are specific elements that will automatically disqualify job candidates for employment with the FBI. The FBI Employment Disqualifiers are:

- Conviction of a felony
- Use of illegal drugs in violation of the FBI Employment Drug Policy (see the [FBI Employment Drug Policy](#) for more details)
- Default of a student loan (insured by the U.S. Government)
- Failure of an FBI-administered urinalysis drug test
- Failure to register with the Selective Service System (for males only)

Please note that if you are disqualified by any of the above tests, you are not eligible for employment with the FBI. All of these disqualifiers are extensively researched during the [FBI Background Investigation Process](#). Please make sure you can meet FBI employment requirements and pass all disqualifiers before you apply for an FBI position.

## ***Drug Use***

Under the FBI's current Employment Drug Policy, an applicant will be found unsuitable for employment if they:

- Have used any illegal drug (including anabolic steroids after February 27, 1991), other than marijuana, within the past ten years, or engaged in more than minimal experimentation in their lifetime. In making the determination about an applicant's suitability for FBI employment, all relevant facts, including the frequency of use, will be evaluated.
- Have used marijuana/cannabis within the past three years, or have extensively used marijuana/cannabis or over a substantial period of time. In making the determination about an applicant's suitability for FBI employment, all relevant facts, including the recency and frequency of use, will be evaluated.

You can easily determine whether you meet the FBI's illegal drug policy by answering the following questions:

- Have you used marijuana at all within the last three years?
- Have you used any other illegal drug (including anabolic steroids after February 27, 1991) at all in the past 10 years?
- Have you ever sold any illegal drug for profit?
- Have you ever used an illegal drug (no matter how many times or how long ago) while in a law enforcement or prosecutorial position, or in a position which carries with it a high level of responsibility or public trust?

If you answered Yes to any of these questions, you are not eligible for employment with the FBI.