

Student Guide

Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States

Objective	To help the learner identify Allegiance to the United States security concerns as outlined in the Security Executive Agent Directive 4 National Security Adjudicative Guidelines, effective June 08, 2017.
Estimated Completion Time	20 Minutes

Screen 1

Meet Adam Anderson. He is a 36-year old machinist employed by the government. Adam's manager recently alerted him to a vacant machinist position at the Pentagon. Adam applied for this position and was selected. The position requires Top Secret eligibility and access. Adam submitted the required paperwork to initiate his security background investigation through his security office.

Now, your task is to review Adam's completed background investigation files and make an eligibility determination. Please note that other Adjudicative Guidelines may apply. In this case you will focus only on Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States.

Screen 2

The most important part of an adjudicator's job is to examine a sufficient period of a person's life to determine whether or not the person is an acceptable security risk.

This task should never be taken lightly as cleared personnel may eventually have access to classified information.

Adjudicators take into consideration all relevant information, both favorable and unfavorable from a person's past and present to form the "whole-person" concept, when making an eligibility determination.

Screen 3

In evaluating the relevance of an individual's conduct, the adjudicator should consider the following factors:

- The nature, extent, and seriousness of the conduct;
- The circumstances surrounding the conduct to include knowledgeable participation;
- The frequency and recency of the conduct;
- The individual's age and maturity at the time of the conduct;

- The extent to which participation is voluntary;
- The presence or absence of rehabilitation and other permanent behavior changes;
- The motivation for the conduct;
- The potential for pressure, coercion, exploitation, or duress; and
- The likelihood of continuation or recurrence.

Screen 4

Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States, states that the willingness to safeguard classified or sensitive information is in doubt if there is any reason to suspect an individual's allegiance to the United States. There is no positive test for allegiance, but there are negative indicators. These include participation in or support for acts against the United States or placing the welfare or interests of another country above those of the United States. Finally, the failure to adhere to the laws of the United States may be relevant if the violation of law is harmful to stated U.S. interests. An individual who engages in acts against the United States or provides support or encouragement to those who do has already demonstrated willingness to compromise national security.

While reviewing Adam's investigative file, you read that approximately sixteen years ago, before he became employed full-time as a machinist, he attended community college for two years. During that period he joined a group called Citizens Wanting Change for three months.

Click on the folder to review the details in Adam's file.

(File folder information.)

- The goal of Citizens Wanting Change was to create a worker state.
- Adam initially supported this goal and thought it would be achieved by citizens using the election process to express their dissatisfaction.
- Adam immediately left the group when he discovered the group used armed force and other unlawful means to achieve its goal. He could not support this.
- This information was confirmed through investigative interviews with friends and co-workers who were aware of the group and his participation.
- Adam reported this activity on his SF-86. He was very forthcoming with all of the details when questioned by the investigator regarding his membership in the group.

Screen 5

Does the information in Adam's file raise a valid security concern under Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States?

Click on the file folder to review the file and select the disqualifier(s) that apply to Adam's case.

Then click on the Submit button.

Screen 6

Adam's membership in Citizens Wanting Change is a security concern, but each Adjudicative Guideline has specific mitigating conditions that sometimes allow an applicant to be cleared in spite of the concern.

Do any mitigating conditions apply to Adam's case?

Click on the file folder to review the file and select the mitigator(s) that apply to Adam's case.

Then click on the Submit button.

Screen 7

The information from Adam's background investigation raised a concern under Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States. However, this security concern is mitigated as Adam's involvement occurred over ten years ago and he immediately left after learning of the group's unlawful tactics. He could not support the group's actions and severed all association.

But this does not mean he will automatically receive top secret eligibility. His case needs to be adjudicated against all the Adjudicative Guidelines before a final eligibility decision can be made.

This training Short focused on Adjudicative Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States. For more information on the other Adjudicative Guidelines, please see the other Shorts developed by CDSE. To review Guideline A: Allegiance to the United States, click the Job Aid button.