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A

Access

The ability and opportunity to obtain knowledge of classified information. An individual may have access to classified information by being in a place where such information is kept, if the security measures that are in force do not prevent the individual from gaining knowledge of such information.

Adjudication

The evaluation of pertinent data in a background investigation, as well as any other available information that is relevant and reliable, to determine whether a covered individual is: (1) suitable for Government employment; (2) eligible for logical and physical access; (3) eligible for access to classified information; (4) eligible to hold a sensitive position; or (5) fit to perform work for or on behalf of the Government as a federal employee, contractor employee, or non-appropriated fund employee (E.O. 13467, as amended). For the purpose of this glossary, the adjudicative process begins when the agency receives the investigative product from the investigative service provider and continues until the adjudicative determination is made, to include due process and appeal actions.

Automated Record Checks (ARC)

A method for requesting, collecting, and validating electronically accessible and adjudicative relevant data using the most efficient and cost-effective technology and means available.

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Center for Development of Security Excellence (CDSE)

The premier provider of security education and training for the Department of Defense, federal government, and cleared contractors under the National Industrial Security Program (NISP).

Continuous Evaluation (CE)

a vetting process to review the background of an individual who has been determined to be eligible for access to classified information or to hold a sensitive position at any time during the period of eligibility. CE leverages a set of automated record checks and business rules to assist in the on-going assessment of an individual's continued eligibility. CE is intended to complement continuous vetting efforts.

Continuous Vetting (CV)	Reviewing the background of a covered individual at any time to determine whether that individual continues to meet applicable requirements.
Credentialing	The process of evaluating a background investigation against a set of standards to determine whether to issue an individual a physical artifact (such as a PIV card) or a data object (such as a digital certificate) for a lawful Government purpose (physical and logical access to classified information or material; physical and logical access to controlled facilities, areas, or information; or for a role as an official Government representative in a law enforcement, investigative, security, or other designated function).

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D	
Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA)	Serves as an Investigative Service Provider (ISP). It conducts national security investigations for DOD and other federal agencies, works with other federal agencies to determine investigative standards, and maintains inter-agency agreements.
Department/Agency (D/A)	Any “executive agency” as defined in 5 U.S.C. §105, including the “military departments,” as defined in 5 U.S.C. §102, and any other entity within the executive branch that comes into possession of classified information or has positions designated as sensitive.
Director of National Intelligence (DNI)	The Security Executive Agent (SecEA) responsible for the development, implementation, and oversight of effective, efficient, and uniform policies and procedures governing the conduct of investigations and adjudications for eligibility for access to classified information or eligibility to hold a sensitive position

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E	
Executive Order (E.O.)	An order issued by the President to create a policy and regulate its administration within the Executive Branch.

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F	
Federal Investigative Standards (FIS)	Standards for background investigations to determine eligibility for logical and physical access, suitability for Government employment, eligibility for access to classified information, eligibility to hold a sensitive

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position, and fitness to perform work for or on behalf of the Government as a contractor employee

Federal Personnel Vetting Investigative Standards

Standards establish a three-tier investigative framework to replace the current five investigative tiers. This move to three tiers aligns investigative requirements for federal personnel vetting for suitability, fitness, national security, and credentialing decisions and will enable greater workforce mobility while simultaneously reducing duplication and complexity in the investigative process

Fitness

The reference to a person's level of character and conduct determined necessary for an individual to perform work for or on behalf of a federal agency as an employee in the excepted service (other than a position subject to suitability) or as a contractor employee.

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Homeland Security Presidential Directive 12 (HSPD-12)

Establishes policy for a common identification standard for federal employees and contractor employees, and directs the Government-wide use of personal identity identification (PIV) cards

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Investigation

Collection and analysis of pertinent facts and data to support a determination of whether a covered individual is, and continues to be:

- a. eligible for access to classified information
- b. eligible to hold a sensitive position
- c. suitable or fit for federal employment
- d. fit to perform work for or on behalf of the Federal Government as a contractor or non-appropriated fund employee or
- e. authorized to be issued a federal credential

Investigative Service Provider (ISP)

An agency authorized by law, regulation, or designated by the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) or the Director of the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), in their role as Security or Suitability Executive Agent, respectively, to conduct personnel security investigations of persons to ascertain whether such persons satisfy the criteria for obtaining or retaining: (1) eligibility for access to classified information; (2) eligibility to hold a sensitive position; (3) suitability or fitness for Government

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employment; (4) eligibility for logical and physical access; or (5) fitness to perform work for or on behalf of the Government as a contractor employee.

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National Background Investigation Services (NBIS)

The Federal Government's one-stop-shop IT system for end-to-end personnel vetting — from initiation and application to background investigation, adjudication, and continuous vetting. NBIS is one consolidated system designed to deliver robust data protection, enhance customer experience, and better integrate data across the enterprise.

National Security Eligibility

Eligibility for access to classified information or eligibility to hold a sensitive position, to include access to sensitive compartmented information, restricted data, and controlled or special access program information.

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Office of Personnel Management (OPM)

Office of Personnel Management, Suitability Executive Agent (SuitEA) provides guidance and instruction in accordance with Executive Order 13467, as amended, "Reforming Processes Related to Suitability for Government Employment, Fitness for Contractor Employees, and Eligibility for Access to Classified National Security Information."

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Performance Accountability Council (PAC)

Established by Executive Order 13467, the Suitability and Security Clearance Performance Accountability Council (PAC) is the principal inter-agency forum for ensuring the alignment of

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Security, Suitability/Fitness, and Credentialing (SSC) activities across the executive branch. The PAC is accountable to the President to achieve the goals of reform and is responsible for driving implementation of the reform effort, ensuring accountability by agencies, ensuring the Suitability Executive Agent and the Security Executive Agent align their respective processes

Periodic Reinvestigation (PR)

A time driven national security investigation conducted to update a previously completed background investigation on a person occupying a public trust position, a position requiring access to classified information, or occupying a sensitive position, to determine whether that individual continues to meet the requirements for the position.

Personnel Vetting (PV)

Personnel Vetting (PV) is the process by which trusted Government personnel evaluate reliable and relevant information from background investigations and other reliable sources to make security related determinations, suitability/fitness determinations, or determinations related to a person's ability to access Government facilities or information systems.

Point of Contact (POC)**Position Designation**

The process of assessing the duties and responsibilities of a position to determine the degree of potential damage to the efficiency or integrity of the service from misconduct of an incumbent of a position. This assessment also determines if a position's duties and responsibilities present the potential for position incumbents to bring about a material adverse effect on national security, and the degree of that potential effect, which establishes the sensitivity level of a position. The results of this assessment determine what level of investigation should be conducted for a position.

Public Trust

Positions at the high or moderate risk levels would normally be designated as "Public Trust" positions. Such positions may involve policy making, major program responsibility, public safety and health, law enforcement duties, fiduciary responsibilities or other duties demanding a significant degree of public trust, and positions involving access to, or operation or control of financial records, with a significant risk for causing damage or realizing personal gain.

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Reciprocity

The process of acknowledging and accepting background investigations and adjudications conducted by other authorized agencies unless an agency determines that a particular background investigation or adjudication does not sufficiently address the standards used by that agency in accordance with E.O. 13764.

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Security Executive Agent (SecEA)

The DNI is the U.S. Government national authority responsible for developing uniform and consistent policies and procedures to ensure the effective, efficient, and timely completion of national security investigations and adjudications relating to determinations of eligibility for access to classified information or eligibility to hold a sensitive position, as well as other security duties as delineated in E.O. 13467.

Sensitive Position

Any position within or in support of an agency in which the occupant could bring about, by virtue of the nature of the position, a material adverse effect on national security regardless of whether the occupant has access to classified information and regardless of whether the occupant is an employee, military service member, or contractor.

Special Access Programs (SAPs)

A Special Access Program is established for a specific class of classified information that imposes safeguarding and access requirements that exceed those normally required for information at the same classification level

Suitability

A determination regarding a person's identifiable character traits or conduct sufficient to decide whether an individual's employment or continued employment would or would not protect the integrity or promote the efficiency of the service.

Suitability Executive Agent (SuitEA)

OPM established the Suitability and Fitness adjudications vetting concept and criteria

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T

Trusted Workforce 2.0 (TW 2.0)

Whole-of-Government approach to reform the personnel security process and establish a single personnel vetting system for the U.S. Government

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Vetting

Process by which covered individuals undergo investigation, evaluation, and adjudication of whether they are, and remain over time, suitable or fit for federal employment, eligible to occupy a sensitive position, eligible for access to classified information, eligible to serve as a non-appropriated fund employee or a contractor, eligible to serve in the military, or authorized to be issued a federal credential. Vetting includes all steps in the end-to-end process, including determining need (appropriate position designation), validating need (existence of a current investigation or adjudication), collecting background information via standard forms, investigative activity, adjudication, providing administrative due process or other procedural rights, and ongoing assessments to ensure that individuals continue to meet the applicable standards for the position for which they were favorably adjudicated.

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