

***Adjudicative Guideline G –
Alcohol Consumption
Short
Student Guide***

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Contents

Adjudicative Guideline G – Alcohol Consumption Short	1
Introduction	2
Case Study	2
Adjudicator’s Role	2
Factors to Consider When Adjudicating	3
Factors to Consider When Adjudicating – Currently Eligible	3
Guideline G – The Concern	3
Clarifying Guidance – Relevance to Security	4
Impaired Judgment/Decision Making	4
Susceptibility to Exploitation	4
Behavior Concerns	4
Legal/Disciplinary Concerns	5
Investigative File Review – Roy Hale	5
Roy Hale: Investigative File	5
Disqualifying Conditions – Roy Hale	6
Mitigating Conditions – Roy Hale	7
Summary – Roy Hale	7
Investigative File Review – Serena York	8
Serena York: Investigative File	8
Knowledge Check – Disqualifying Conditions	8
Knowledge Check – Mitigating Conditions	9
Summary – Serena York	10
Conclusion	10
Appendix A: Answer Key	11
Knowledge Check – Disqualifying Conditions – Roy	11
Knowledge Check – Mitigating Conditions – Roy	12
Knowledge Check – Disqualifying Conditions – Serena	13
Knowledge Check – Mitigating Conditions – Serena	13

Introduction

Welcome to the Adjudicative Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption Short. In this short, you will learn about the key concepts relating to adjudication, specifically as it pertains to Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption.

This short will address key concepts such as the adjudicator's role in examining cases, the whole person concept, and factors to consider when adjudicating, including disqualifying and mitigating conditions.

Take a moment to review the course objective.

- Given excerpts from an investigation, identify disqualifying and mitigating conditions related to Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption, if any exist.

Case Study

Let's take a look at a case study that relates to Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption. Meet Harold Martin III. Harold was an IT contractor in various national security roles with access up to Top Secret Sensitive Compartmented Information.

On August 27, 2016, the FBI searched Harold's personal property, recovering materials marked as U.S. government property. These materials contained highly classified information, including Top Secret and Sensitive Compartmented Information. For nearly 20 years, Harold stole and kept large amounts of highly classified national defense information.

A court detention order cited Harold engaged in alcohol misuse, including binge drinking. As a result of his crimes, he was sentenced to nine years in federal prison.

Throughout history, many individuals guilty of espionage have also struggled with alcohol use, which often contributed to their compromised judgement and susceptibility to recruitment by foreign agents.

Was alcohol misuse a contributing factor to Harold's actions?

Let's examine Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption, and the relevance of this guideline to the adjudicative process.

Adjudicator's Role

When making a national security trust determination, adjudicators examine a sufficient period and weigh a number of variables of an individual's life to determine whether they represent an acceptable security risk. This task should never be taken lightly, as cleared personnel may eventually have access to classified information.

All available, reliable information about the individual, past and present, favorable and unfavorable, is considered. This is known as the "whole-person" concept.

Factors to Consider When Adjudicating

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

- (1) The nature, extent, and seriousness of the conduct;
- (2) The circumstances surrounding the conduct, to include knowledgeable participation;
- (3) The frequency and recency of the conduct;
- (4) The individual's age and maturity at the time of the conduct;
- (5) The extent to which participation is voluntary;
- (6) The presence or absence of rehabilitation and other permanent behavioral changes;
- (7) The motivation for the conduct;
- (8) The potential for pressure, coercion, exploitation, or duress; and
- (9) The likelihood of continuation or recurrence.

Factors to Consider When Adjudicating – Currently Eligible

When information of a security concern becomes known about a trusted insider, an individual who is currently eligible for access to classified information or eligible to hold a sensitive position, the adjudicator should consider whether the individual:

- (1) Voluntarily reported the information;
- (2) Was truthful and complete in responding to questions;
- (3) Sought assistance and followed professional guidance, where appropriate;
- (4) Resolved or appears likely to favorably resolve the security concern;
- (5) Has demonstrated positive changes in behavior; or
- (6) Should have their national security eligibility suspended pending final adjudication of the information.

Guideline G – The Concern

Let's review the National Security Adjudicative Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption concern from the Security Executive Agent Directive 4 (SEAD 4).

The concern related to alcohol consumption is that excessive alcohol consumption often leads to the exercise of questionable judgment or the failure to control impulses and can raise questions about an individual's reliability and trustworthiness.

Clarifying Guidance – Relevance to Security

Some alcohol use is normal, but excessive use can be a serious security concern. Excessive use impairs judgment, reduces inhibitions, and increases any tendency toward aggression. Those who misuse alcohol are more likely than others to engage in high-risk, thoughtless, or violent behaviors.

Impaired judgement, along with the accompanying susceptibility to exploitation, behavioral concerns, and legal and/or disciplinary concerns, are all factors that make alcohol consumption relevant to overall national security.

Impaired Judgment/Decision Making

Alcohol misuse can lead to poor decision-making, reckless behavior, and an inability to follow security protocols. Alcohol misuse can also increase the risk of unauthorized disclosure of classified information due to impulsive or careless behavior.

Susceptibility to Exploitation

Individuals with alcohol-related problems may be more vulnerable to extortion, coercion, or manipulation by foreign intelligence services or adversaries. Many spies and government officials have been compromised due to excessive drinking, leading to poor judgement, leaks of classified information, and blackmail opportunities.

Behavior Concerns

Individuals with alcohol-related problems may experience:

- Absences
- Reduced productivity
- Unreliability
- Carelessness
- Unsafe habits

The most serious incidents are those that involve or could potentially involve the protection of classified information. Such incidents may be characterized by excessive talkativeness. For example, an individual who becomes excessively talkative while intoxicated may say things that they regret or that they don't

remember later. Such an individual may be unable to exercise the care and discretion needed to protect classified information.

Excessive alcohol use may also be characterized by loss of physical control. For example, an individual who occasionally becomes intoxicated to the point of passing out may lose physical control over sensitive materials.

Legal/Disciplinary Concerns

Individuals with alcohol-related problems may also experience legal problems such as driving while intoxicated, public drunkenness, or disorderly conduct.

Investigative File Review – Roy Hale

Now that we have reviewed the guideline and clarifying guidance on Guideline G, let's apply this information to a case.

Meet Roy Hale. Roy is a 38-year-old Cybersecurity Specialist. He recently accepted a conditional offer of employment with a U.S. Government contractor. The position is designated as critical-sensitive and requires eligibility for access to top secret information. Roy submitted required paperwork to initiate his security background investigation through his security office.

Now let's review some information in Roy's investigative file. Keep in mind, we are only focusing on Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption.

Roy Hale: Investigative File

- Roy revealed that he was arrested for Driving Under the Influence (DUI) 10 months ago. This incident resulted in a car accident, but he stated he learned his lesson and no longer drives his car while under the influence.
- Roy also indicated that, due to a court order from this arrest, he attended two alcohol counseling sessions after his DUI. However, he stated he did not complete the program because he did not feel he needed it, and he felt he could stop drinking on his own.
- After further investigation, it was discovered Roy had a prior DUI arrest 3 years ago. Roy stated he did not list this on his form because it happened so long ago, and no one was hurt.

- Roy’s previous employer indicated that he was absent regularly due to hangovers and his job performance seemed to suffer because of his excessive drinking.
- The investigation also revealed he had a dispute with his neighbor one year ago. The police were called and the police report indicated that Roy was heavily intoxicated and behaving erratically. Roy disputes these allegations.
- Roy expressed that he no longer gets behind the wheel of a car when he is drinking. However, he considers a few beers harmless on the weekend, at home or at a sports bar since he is not “clocked in” at work.

Disqualifying Conditions – Roy Hale

Now let’s review the disqualifying conditions for Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption and see if anything in Roy’s file raises a valid security concern.

Review the [investigative file](#), as needed, and then select the disqualifier(s) that apply to Roy’s case. Check your answer in the [Answer Key](#) at the end of this Student Guide.

- (a) Alcohol-related incidents away from work, such as driving while under the influence, fighting, child or spouse abuse, disturbing the peace, or other incidents of concern, regardless of the frequency of the individual's alcohol use or whether the individual has been diagnosed with alcohol use disorder
- (b) Alcohol-related incidents at work, such as reporting for work or duty in an intoxicated or impaired condition, drinking on the job, or jeopardizing the welfare and safety of others, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder
- (c) Habitual or binge consumption of alcohol to the point of impaired judgment, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder
- (d) Diagnosis by a duly qualified medical or mental health professional (e.g., physician, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical social worker) of alcohol use disorder
- (e) The failure to follow treatment advice once diagnosed
- (f) Alcohol consumption, which is not in accordance with treatment recommendations, after a diagnosis of alcohol use disorder
- (g) Failure to follow any court order regarding alcohol education, evaluation, treatment, or abstinence
- No disqualifying conditions apply

Mitigating Conditions – Roy Hale

Given that four disqualifying conditions were identified, Roy's previous alcohol misuse is a security concern. However, each Adjudicative Guideline has specific mitigating conditions that may reduce the severity of the disqualifying behavior and overall security concern and permit a favorable national security trust determination.

Now let's review the mitigating conditions for Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption, and see if any of these mitigating conditions apply to Roy's case.

Review the [investigative file](#), as needed, and then select the mitigator(s) that apply to Roy's case. Check your answer in the [Answer Key](#) at the end of this Student Guide.

- (a) So much time has passed, or the behavior was so infrequent, or it happened under such unusual circumstances that it is unlikely to recur or does not cast doubt on the individual's current reliability, trustworthiness, or judgment
- (b) The individual acknowledges his or her pattern of maladaptive alcohol use, provides evidence of actions taken to overcome this problem, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations
- (c) The individual is participating in counseling or a treatment program, has no previous history of treatment and relapse, and is making satisfactory progress in a treatment program
- (d) The individual has successfully completed a treatment program along with any required aftercare, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations
- No mitigating conditions apply

Summary – Roy Hale

The information from Roy's background investigation raised a concern under Guideline G. Roy's pattern of alcohol misuse appears to be ongoing, and there is no indication that he has taken any action to stop or modify his behavior. This concern cannot be mitigated.

When making a national security trust determination, remember that an investigative file may have multiple adjudicative concerns. This training Short focuses only on National Security Adjudicative Guideline G.

Investigative File Review – Serena York

Now let's review another case. Your task is to review excerpts from Serena York's investigation file and assess disqualifying and mitigating conditions related to Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption.

Meet Serena York. Serena is a 42-year-old Communications Security Manager who is employed by a U.S. Government agency. She recently transferred to a new position designated as special-sensitive and requires access to sensitive compartmented information (SCI). Serena submitted the required paperwork to initiate her security background investigation through her security office.

This case has been assigned to you. Please note that other adjudicative guidelines may apply, but in this case you will focus only on Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption.

Serena York: Investigative File

- Serena indicated on her paperwork that she had two DUIs. One DUI occurred nine years ago and the other occurred twelve years ago.
- Serena also admitted that even before her DUIs she was regularly reprimanded by her previous boss for coming to work hungover. She never drank at work; however, she excessively drank over the weekends and on some evenings, which negatively impacted her work performance.
- After her second DUI, Serena realized she had a problem with drinking and was diagnosed by her doctor with alcohol use disorder. The doctor recommended a treatment program that she successfully completed.
- Serena continues to attend weekly support group meetings to maintain her sobriety and has not had a drink for nine years.

Knowledge Check – Disqualifying Conditions

Does the information in Serena's file raise a valid security concern under Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption?

Review the [investigative file](#), as needed, and then select the disqualifier(s) that apply to Serena's case. Check your answer in the [Answer Key](#) at the end of this Student Guide.

- (a) Alcohol-related incidents away from work, such as driving while under the influence, fighting, child or spouse abuse, disturbing the peace, or other incidents of concern, regardless of the frequency of the individual's alcohol use or whether the individual has been diagnosed with alcohol use disorder

- (b) Alcohol-related incidents at work, such as reporting for work or duty in an intoxicated or impaired condition, drinking on the job, or jeopardizing the welfare and safety of others, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder
- (c) Habitual or binge consumption of alcohol to the point of impaired judgment, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder
- (d) Diagnosis by a duly qualified medical or mental health professional (e.g., physician, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical social worker) of alcohol use disorder
- (e) The failure to follow treatment advice once diagnosed
- (f) Alcohol consumption, which is not in accordance with treatment recommendations, after a diagnosis of alcohol use disorder
- (g) Failure to follow any court order regarding alcohol education, evaluation, treatment, or abstinence
- No disqualifying conditions apply

Knowledge Check – Mitigating Conditions

Serena's previous alcohol misuse is a security concern, and she has several disqualifying conditions. However, each Adjudicative Guideline has specific mitigating conditions that may reduce the severity of the disqualifying behavior and overall security concern and permit a favorable national security trust determination. Do any mitigating conditions apply to Serena?

Review the [investigative file](#), as needed, and then select the mitigator(s) that apply to Serena's case. Check your answer in the [Answer Key](#) at the end of this Student Guide.

- (a) So much time has passed, or the behavior was so infrequent, or it happened under such unusual circumstances that it is unlikely to recur or does not cast doubt on the individual's current reliability, trustworthiness, or judgment
- (b) The individual acknowledges his or her pattern of maladaptive alcohol use, provides evidence of actions taken to overcome this problem, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations
- (c) The individual is participating in counseling or a treatment program, has no previous history of treatment and relapse, and is making satisfactory progress in a treatment program
- (d) The individual has successfully completed a treatment program along with any required aftercare, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations

- No mitigating conditions apply

Summary – Serena York

The information from Serena’s background investigation raised a concern under Guideline G. However, Serena no longer struggles with alcohol misuse and continues to attend support meetings to keep her sobriety. This concern can be mitigated.

When making a national security trust determination, remember that an investigative file may have multiple adjudicative concerns. This training Short focuses only on National Security Adjudicative Guideline G.

Conclusion

Congratulations! You have completed the Adjudicative Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption Short. You should now be able to review excerpts from an investigation and identify disqualifying and mitigating conditions related to Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption.

For more information on the other Adjudicative Guidelines, please see the other Adjudicative Guideline Shorts. To review Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption, select [Resources](#) to access the Job Aid.

Appendix A: Answer Key

Knowledge Check – Disqualifying Conditions – Roy

Does the information in Roy's file raise a valid security concern under Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption? Review the investigative file, as needed, and then select the disqualifier(s) that apply to Roy's case.

- (a) Alcohol-related incidents away from work, such as driving while under the influence, fighting, child or spouse abuse, disturbing the peace, or other incidents of concern, regardless of the frequency of the individual's alcohol use or whether the individual has been diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (correct response)
 - **Feedback:** Yes, this is a disqualifying condition. Roy had two prior DUIs, which qualify as an alcohol-related incident away from work. He also had a dispute with his neighbor while intoxicated, which required police intervention.
- (b) Alcohol-related incidents at work, such as reporting for work or duty in an intoxicated or impaired condition, drinking on the job, or jeopardizing the welfare and safety of others, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (correct response)
 - **Feedback:** Yes, this is a disqualifying condition. Roy's work performance suffered, and absenteeism increased due to his drinking.
- (c) Habitual or binge consumption of alcohol to the point of impaired judgment, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (correct response)
 - **Feedback:** Yes, this is a disqualifying condition. Roy exhibited both habitual and binge consumption of alcohol in work situations and during his off hours.
- (d) Diagnosis by a duly qualified medical or mental health professional (e.g., physician, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical social worker) of alcohol use disorder
 - **Feedback:** This is NOT a disqualifying condition. There is no indication in the investigation files that Roy was diagnosed with alcohol use disorder.
- (e) The failure to follow treatment advice once diagnosed
 - **Feedback:** This is NOT a disqualifying condition. This is not applicable since Roy was not diagnosed with alcohol use disorder.
- (f) Alcohol consumption, which is not in accordance with treatment recommendations, after a diagnosis of alcohol use disorder

- **Feedback:** This is NOT a disqualifying condition. This is not applicable since Roy was not diagnosed with alcohol use disorder.
- (g) Failure to follow any court order regarding alcohol education, evaluation, treatment, or abstinence (correct response)
 - **Feedback:** Yes, this is a disqualifying condition. Roy did not complete court ordered alcohol counseling sessions after his most recent DUI.

Knowledge Check – Mitigating Conditions – Roy

Do any mitigating conditions apply to Roy's case? Review the investigative file, as needed, and then select the mitigator(s) that apply to Roy's case.

- (a) So much time has passed, or the behavior was so infrequent, or it happened under such unusual circumstances that it is unlikely to recur or does not cast doubt on the individual's current reliability, trustworthiness, or judgment
 - **Feedback:** This is NOT a mitigating condition. According to the investigation, it has only been 10 months since his DUI, and his most recent employer also reported poor job performance related to his drinking.
- (b) The individual acknowledges his or her pattern of maladaptive alcohol use, provides evidence of actions taken to overcome this problem, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations
 - **Feedback:** This is NOT a mitigating condition. The investigation provides no evidence that Roy has recognized his pattern of problematic alcohol use or taken any action to overcome this problem.
- (c) The individual is participating in counseling or a treatment program, has no previous history of treatment and relapse, and is making satisfactory progress in a treatment program
 - **Feedback:** This is NOT a mitigating condition. Roy is not currently engaged in a treatment program.
- (d) The individual has successfully completed a treatment program along with any required aftercare, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations
 - **Feedback:** This is NOT a mitigating condition. Roy has not successfully completed a treatment program.
- No mitigating conditions apply (correct response)

Knowledge Check – Disqualifying Conditions – Serena

Does the information in Serena’s file raise a valid security concern under Guideline G: Alcohol Consumption?

- (a) Alcohol-related incidents away from work, such as driving while under the influence, fighting, child or spouse abuse, disturbing the peace, or other incidents of concern, regardless of the frequency of the individual's alcohol use or whether the individual has been diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (correct response)
- (b) Alcohol-related incidents at work, such as reporting for work or duty in an intoxicated or impaired condition, drinking on the job, or jeopardizing the welfare and safety of others, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (correct response)
- (c) Habitual or binge consumption of alcohol to the point of impaired judgment, regardless of whether the individual is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (correct response)
- (d) Diagnosis by a duly qualified medical or mental health professional (e.g., physician, clinical psychologist, psychiatrist, or licensed clinical social worker) of alcohol use disorder (correct response)
- (e) The failure to follow treatment advice once diagnosed
- (f) Alcohol consumption, which is not in accordance with treatment recommendations, after a diagnosis of alcohol use disorder
- (g) Failure to follow any court order regarding alcohol education, evaluation, treatment, or abstinence
- No disqualifying conditions apply

Feedback: *The information in Serena’s file does raise a valid security concern. Disqualifying conditions that apply to Serena’s file include (a), (b), (c), and (d). Serena experienced alcohol-related incidents both at work and away from work. She also exhibited habitual and binge consumption which contributed to her diagnosis of alcohol use disorder.*

Knowledge Check – Mitigating Conditions – Serena

Do any mitigating conditions apply to Serena’s case?

- (a) So much time has passed, or the behavior was so infrequent, or it happened under such unusual circumstances that it is unlikely to recur or does not cast doubt on the individual's current reliability, trustworthiness, or judgment (correct response)

- (b) The individual acknowledges his or her pattern of maladaptive alcohol use, provides evidence of actions taken to overcome this problem, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations (correct response)
- (c) The individual is participating in counseling or a treatment program, has no previous history of treatment and relapse, and is making satisfactory progress in a treatment program (correct response)
- (d) The individual has successfully completed a treatment program along with any required aftercare, and has demonstrated a clear and established pattern of modified consumption or abstinence in accordance with treatment recommendations (correct response)
- No mitigating conditions apply

Feedback: *Mitigating conditions that apply to Serena's case include (a), (b), (c), and (d). She has maintained sobriety for nine years. In addition, she acknowledged her pattern of maladaptive alcohol use, she successfully completed a treatment program, and she continues to attend weekly support meetings without experiencing a relapse.*