Student Guide

Special Access Program Nomination Process Short

Introduction

To protect our nation and its warfighters, it is essential to control and limit access to sensitive information and programs. We must be especially vigilant in granting access to Special Access Programs (SAPs).

The SAP Nomination Process is the vehicle used to assess whether or not a candidate is eligible for SAP access. It is a standardized security management process that applies enhanced security procedures to determine whether a person is suitable for access to DoD SAPs.

Process Overview

The SAP nomination process begins with a request to grant a candidate SAP access. This request may only be made by an individual already accessed to the SAP. The candidate's nomination package is then completed. The SAP Personnel Security Official, or SPO, then evaluates the nomination package. The final access determination – the decision whether to approve or disapprove the individual's SAP access – is then made by the Access Approval Authority (AAA). Let's take a closer look.

A job aid detailing the SAP nomination process is available at the end of this student guide.

SAP Access Request

When a candidate is nominated for SAP access, there are a number of prerequisites the candidate must meet.

The candidate must be a U.S. citizen, must possess a final TOP SECRET or SECRET clearance as appropriate to the SAP access requested, and must have a current investigation validated by the CA or OA SAPCO, the Cognizant Authority Special Access Program Central Office or Oversight Authority Special Access Program Office. Contractor nominees must have a DD Form 254 or consultant agreement authorizing SAP access.

If the candidate does not meet the prerequisites, the requestor may submit a letter of compelling need, providing facts to determine that it is in the national interest for the CA or OA SAPCO to approve access. The letter must describe the individual's unique skills or knowledge and the benefit the SAP will gain by accessing the individual.

Other Considerations

Candidates who are not U.S. citizens:
- Access is evaluated in accordance with:
  - DoDD 5205.07, "Special Access Program (SAP) Policy" (July 1, 2010)
  - DoDI 5205.11, "Management, Administration, and Oversight of DoD Special Access Programs (SAPs)" (February 6, 2013)

Candidates with existing SAP access:
- Additional SAP access is considered if the prerequisites are met and no new derogatory information is found during the SAP Nomination Process.

Intelligence community candidates:
- Individuals with current SCI access are eligible for DoD SAP access following evaluation and approval of the candidate's nomination package; including responses to the SAP personnel security pre-screening questionnaire.

Nomination Package

The SAP nomination package contains a SAP Personnel Security Pre-Screening Questionnaire completed within the last 365 days with supplemental information supporting "Yes" answers and the Program Access Request (PAR). The Pre-Screening Questionnaire is considered current and reciprocally accepted by all DoD Components if completed within the last year and the answers to all questions are "No." The PAR details the candidate's personal information, qualifications, potential material contribution to the SAP, and need-to-know. The Government Program Manager (GPM) may review the PAR for the candidate's material contribution and concur or non-concur.

SAP Nomination Review Process

Once the nomination package is ready for review, a SPO reviews it for completeness, accuracy, and confirmation that the candidate meets SAP access prerequisites. Next, the SPO reviews the SAP Pre-screening Questionnaire. The SPO checks the approved DoD system of record to validate that the candidate has the appropriate clearance and ensure the candidate's investigation is in scope.

The candidate will be recommended for SAP access if they meet all prerequisites, the system of record reflects a final clearance eligibility, there is a current investigation, and the SAP Personnel Security Pre-Screening Questionnaire is completed within the last 365 days and all questions are answered "No".

The candidate will require additional review based upon CA SAPCO guidance. For example, CA SAPCO may determine that candidates that have certain foreign affections in certain countries may require additional review by the PSO, but allow a favorable determination from friendly countries. A yes answer will require additional review based upon CA or OA SAPCO guidance.

The SPO may not disqualify a candidate for SAP access; the SPO may only recommend additional review to the PSO.

Issues

SAP Nomination Package Issues

- Investigation not current or in-progress:
  SPO will refer the individual to their local security manager or special security officer to initiate Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) SF-86, "Questionnaire for National Security Positions." Once reflected as submitted in the approved system of record, the SPO will prepare the nomination package in accordance with section 3 of the DoDM 5205.07 Vol. 2 Enclosure 4 and execute the Pre-Screening Questionnaire.

- Potentially Derogatory Information:
  SPO will notify the Program Security Officer (PSO) who will provide a recommendation to the AAA.

- Previous Unreported Derogatory Information:
  SPO will refer the individual to their local security officer who will report the new derogatory information to the appropriate DoD adjudications facility. The SPO will forward the nomination package via the PSO to the appropriate CA SAPCO for decision to approve or continue access pending final disposition.

Access Decision

Whether the nomination package comes from the SPO or requires an additional review by the PSO, the package ultimately makes its way to the AAA. The final approval or disapproval of the Nomination Package for SAP access is made by the

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AAA. Candidates who are disapproved may be resubmitted at the requestor's discretion.

Continued Eligibility

Once an individual is granted SAP access, his or her continued eligibility is contingent on the individual's compliance with SAP access requirements.

SAP accessed personnel must report any changes in status that might affect their access eligibility. They must annually revalidate access eligibility by recertifying answers they provided to the pre-screening questionnaire and any supplemental information, or by completing a new pre-screening questionnaire.

If an individual fails to comply with the continued eligibility requirements it could result in suspension and/or revocation of SAP access.

Maintaining Access Eligibility

- SPO will instruct the nominated individual to forward previously unreported derogatory information to the local security officer for submission to the appropriate DoD adjudications facility

- A candidate who willfully or negligently withholds information or fails to make timely notification faces possible access suspension and /or revocation of access:

  - Discretion rests with the Cognizant Authority Special Access Program Central Office (CA SAPCO) or Oversight Authority Special Access Program Central Office (OA SAPCO) to approve or continue access pending CAF review of derogatory information

  - Any decision by the CAF to suspend or revoke the candidate's clearance supersedes the SAP nomination process

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Conclusion

You just learned how the SAP nomination process applies enhanced security procedures to determine personnel suitability for access to DoD SAPs.

This process is an important part of controlling and limiting access to sensitive information and programs and protecting our nation and its warfighters.

Knowledge Check

(1 of 2)

Sarah, a DOD civilian, was nominated for access to a TOP SECRET SAP. She is a U.S. citizen and possesses an interim TOP SECRET clearance. Does this candidate meet the SAP nomination process prerequisites?

Select the correct response.

- ○ Yes. The candidate meets the prerequisites.
- ○ No. The candidate does not meet the prerequisites.

(2 of 2)

Sarah now has a final TOP SECRET clearance and her nomination package is complete. The SAP Personnel Security Official (SPO) is reviewing her information and finds the package complete, accurate, and answered "No" to all questions on the pre-screening questionnaire. Based on this information, can the SPO recommend her for SAP access?

- ○ Yes. The candidate meets the prerequisites.
- ○ No. The candidate does not meet the prerequisites.

Answer Key – Knowledge Check

(1 of 2)

Sarah a DOD civilian was nominated for SAP access. She is a U.S. citizen and possesses an interim TOP SECRET clearance. Does this candidate meet the SAP nomination process prerequisites?

- ○ Yes. The candidate meets the prerequisites. (incorrect)
- ⊙ No. The candidate does not meet the prerequisites. (correct)

Feedback: The candidate does not meet the prerequisites. She possesses an interim TOP SECRET clearance. A final clearance is required to meet the prerequisite.

(2 of 2)

Sarah now has a final TOP SECRET clearance and her nomination package is complete. The Security Official is reviewing her information and finds the package complete, accurate, and answered "No" to all questions on the prescreening questionnaire. Based on this information, can the Security Official recommend her for SAP access?

- ⊙ Yes. The candidate meets the prerequisites. (correct)
- ○ No. The candidate does not meet the prerequisites. (incorrect)

Feedback: The candidate does meet the requirements and can be recommended for SAP access. The Access Approval Authority (AAA) will make the final access decision.

Special Access Program (SAP) Nomination Process Job Aid

SAP Access Request	Nomination Package	SAP Nomination Review Process	Access Decision
Requests must be made by a SAP-accessed individual. **Candidate prerequisites** Candidate must: • Be a U.S. citizen • Possess final TOP SECRET or SECRET clearance appropriate for requesting SAP • Have a current investigation (within 5 years) • Contractors: Must have DD Form 254 or consultant agreement authorizing SAP access • Be subject to a random CI-scope polygraph examination. **Letter of Compelling Need** • May be submitted by the requestor if the candidate does not meet prerequisites • Provides the facts needed to determine that approval is in the national interest	The package consists of the Program Access Request (PAR) and SAP Personnel Security Pre-Screening Questionnaire. **Program Access Request (PAR)** Details the candidate's: • Personal information • Qualifications • Potential material contribution* • Need-to-know *The Government Program Manager (GPM) may review and concur or non-concur. **SAP Personnel Security Pre-Screening Questionnaire** Considered current and reciprocally accepted by all DoD components if: • Completed within last year • All questions are answered "No" • Or until a change in status occurs	A SAP Security Official* (SO) reviews the nomination package and verifies clearance and investigation. *e.g., Program Security Officer (PSO), Government SAP Security Officer (GSSO), Contractor Program Security Officer (CPSO) **Nomination Package** Review confirms: • Completeness and accuracy • Prerequisites met • SAP Personnel Pre-Screening Questionnaire is current and all responses are "No" • Execute the SAP Nomination Process Questionnaire **Approved DoD Security Clearance Database Check (**JPAS/Scattered Castles) Validates: • Appropriate clearance • Current investigation (within 5 years) Security Official Recommendation* • If all requirements are met: Access is recommended. • If all requirements are not met: Additional review is recommended. *The SO may not disqualify a candidate for SAP access; the SO may only recommend additional review.	The Access Approval Authority (AAA) makes the final decision of whether to approve or disapprove SAP access. If the candidate is not approved, the requestor may resubmit the candidate at their discretion. **Maintaining Access Eligibility** SAP-accessed individuals maintain eligibility by: • Reporting any changes in status which may affect eligibility • Annually revalidating access eligibility by: – Recertifying answers provided to the pre-screening questionnaire and any supplemental information provided, **or** – Completing a new pre-screening questionnaire