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Security Clearance Information

What is Security Clearance

A series of assessment and background checks covering various aspects of an individual's past and present life, to ensure that people entrusted with security classified resources:

- Are eligible to have access
- Have had their identity established
- Are suitable to have access, and;
- Are willing to comply with the standards that safeguard those resources against misuse

The aim of vetting is to ensure that the character and personal circumstances of an individual are such that he or she can be trusted with sensitive government information provided and obtained during the vetting process will be treated with strict confidence.

Who needs to be vetted?

A security vetting will be sought for a person with a legitimate needs to access security classified resources in order to carry out their duties. These people may include:

- Public Servants
- Police Officers

What makes someone suitable to hold a Security Clearance?

State Security Agency (SSA) determines a person's suitability to access security classified resources through the assessment of a number of suitability indicators, including a person's

Honesty

Trustworthiness

Maturity

Tolerance

Loyalty



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These suitability indicators as well as an appreciation of protection security responsibility and obligations determines a person's suitability.

A number of background assessments and record checks are also conducted to identify vulnerability against factor areas including:

- External loyalties, influences and associations
- Personal relationships and conduct
- Financial considerations
- Alcohol and drug usage
- Criminal history and conduct
- Security attitudes and violations, and
- Mental health disorders

How does the clearance process work?

The information you provide is used as the basis for conducting a range of background checks and enquiries. The background checks will assist in identifying any vulnerable areas in your life or background history that may expose you to manipulation, blackmail or coercion. These checks may include referee interviews, financial checks, search of records held by South African Government Agencies including NIA and the SAPS.

From these, an assessment of your suitability to access security classified material or other valuable resources will be made.

I have an existing security clearance with another department – do I still need to undergo a new clearance process?

You should advise the Security Manager that you have an existing security clearance. The Security Manager will request your previous employee (Government Department) to transfer your previous clearance file to the new Department.



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You may still be required to undergo a new security clearance process if:

- Your existing security clearance has expired
- You need a security clearance at a higher level than your existing clearance; or
- Your original security clearance process was not carried out in accordance with the minimum standards of the MISS

The majority of government agencies require that new employees undergo a PSC (Personal Suitability Check) as part of their engagement process. These checks are not a security clearance and cannot be transferred between Departments.

What is “need-to-know”?

To protect the security of classified resources, government has decided that only those people whose work responsibility requires access to these resources are to have access. These people are commonly referred to as having a 'need-to-know'.

What are the levels of security clearance?



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