Defense Security Service
Facility Clearance Qualifications and Processes

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Presented by:

J. Patrick Fields
Special Agent
Defense Security Service
Facility Clearance Branch
The NISP was established by Executive Order 12829 for the protection of classified information.

The NISP applies to all Executive Branch Departments and Agencies and to all cleared contractor facilities located within the United States.

The National Industrial Security Program Operating Manual (NISPOM) prescribes the requirements, restrictions, and other safeguards to prevent unauthorized disclosure of classified information.
DSS Mission and Vision:

- Through partnership and innovation, safeguard our Nation's interests as the premier provider of industrial security risk management and security professional development services.

- DSS oversees the protection of U.S. and foreign classified information and technologies in the hands of cleared industry under the National Industrial Security Program by providing professional risk management services.
An FCL is an administrative determination that a company is eligible for access to classified information or award of a classified contract (NISPO M 2-100).

- An FCL is valid for access to classified information at the same or lower classification level as the FCL granted (NISPO M 2-100a).

Contract award may be made prior to the issuance of an FCL (NISPO M 2-100). It is not a NISPO M requirement that a facility be cleared in order to bid on or be awarded a classified contract.
NISPOM FCL Eligibility Requirements

- The company must need access to the classified information in connection with a legitimate U.S. Government or foreign government requirement.
- The company must be organized and existing under the laws of any of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, or Puerto Rico, and be located in the United States or its territorial areas.
- The company must have a reputation for integrity and lawful conduct in its business dealings. The company and its key managers must not be barred from participating in U.S. Government contracts.
- The company must not be under FOCI to such a degree that the granting of the FCL would be inconsistent with the national interest.
Facility Clearance Processing Roles

- The DSS Facility Clearance Branch (FCB) reviews and validates FCL requests and manages the FCL process from DSS headquarters.
- Industrial Security Representatives (ISR) work face to face with facilities.
- Office of Personnel Management (OPM) conducts the background investigation.
- DOD CAF adjudicates investigations for facility Key Management Personnel (KMP) clearances.
FCL Sponsorship

An FCL Sponsorship Letter and a DD Form 254 or other justification for the FCL must be included with the sponsorship request.

A Justification should include information regarding the nature of the tasks or services to be performed by the company requiring access to classified information. Examples of Justification include:

1. DD Form 254 (most common)
2. Security Aspects Letter
3. Contract or statement of work
4. Request for proposal
5. Request for quotation
6. A Cooperative Research and Development Agreement (CRADA)
The following items are reviewed for accuracy on the sponsorship letter:

- Legal Name of Facility
- CAGE Code
- Physical Address (no P.O. Boxes)
- City, State and Zip Code
- Government Contracting Activity (GCA) POC: Name, Title, email and phone
- Sponsored Facility Point of Contact (POC) (Someone knowledgeable of the Request)
- POC Name, phone and email
- Requestor POC: Name, Title, email and phone
- Requestor Signature
- Requestor CAGE Code (if NISP cleared contractor)
- Level of Clearance Required (CONFIDENTIAL, SECRET, or TOP SECRET)
- Is Safeguarding Required? If so, what level?
FCL Sponsorship (Cont.)

Other information gathered by FCB regarding the sponsored facility:

Is the Facility located on a Government Installation?

Is this a Service Contract?

Is this a one-person facility?

Does the Facility hold a Facility Clearance with another government agency?
Has the contract/subcontract been awarded? If the contract has not been awarded, does the facility require access to classified information in the pre-award phase?

Does the facility have a bona fide contractual requirement to access classified information?

Has the facility registered for a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) Code?
FCL Processing

- FCB will build a record for the facility in both the Industrial Security Facilities Database (ISFD) and the e-FCL system.
- Notify facility and the requestor of the acceptance of the FCL request and identify discontinuation points.
- Conduct the telephonic survey within 5-10 days of acceptance of the FCL request.
- The facility begins uploading legal documents into the e-FCL system.
Identify KMP required to be cleared.

Verify business structure and ownership of the facility.

Brief overview of the NISP

Security Education requirements.

KMP Responsibilities and FSO duties.
DSS will review eligibility once all of the following actions have been taken:

- There is no Foreign Ownership, Control or Influence (FOCI) at the facility (or the FOCI has been favorably adjudicated by the IS Rep or DSS HQ, as applicable).
- Any home office or parent companies have been cleared or excluded.
- An FCL Orientation Meeting has been conducted at the site.
- All KMP Have at least Interim eligibility
DSS will review eligibility once all of the following actions have been taken:

- There is no FOCI at the facility or the FOCI has been favorably adjudicated locally or by DSS HQ.
- Any home office or parent companies have been cleared or excluded, as appropriate.
- An FCL Orientation Meeting has been conducted at the facility.
- All KMP have received final favorable adjudication.
Key Resources

- CAGE codes www.sam.gov
- FCL Sponsorship: DSS.FC.B@mail.mil
- The DSS Knowledge Center (888-282-7682)
Questions?