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Presidential Documents

Title 3—

Executive Order 12968 of August 2, 1995

The President

Access to Classified Information

The national interest requires that certain information be maintained in confidence through a system of classification in order to protect our citizens, our democratic institutions, and our participation within the community of nations. The unauthorized disclosure of information classified in the national interest can cause irreparable damage to the national security and loss of human life.

Security policies designed to protect classified information must ensure consistent, cost effective, and efficient protection of our Nation's classified information, while providing fair and equitable treatment to those Americans upon whom we rely to guard our national security.

This order establishes a uniform Federal personnel security program for employees who will be considered for initial or continued access to classified information.

NOW, THEREFORE, by the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

PART 1—DEFINITIONS, ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION, FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE, AND OTHER ITEMS

- **Section 1.1.** *Definitions.* For the purposes of this order: (a) "Agency" means any "Executive agency," as defined in 5 U.S.C. 105, the "military departments," as defined in 5 U.S.C. 102, and any other entity within the executive branch that comes into the possession of classified information, including the Defense Intelligence Agency, National Security Agency, and the National Reconnaissance Office.
- (b) "Applicant" means a person other than an employee who has received an authorized conditional offer of employment for a position that requires access to classified information.
- (c) "Authorized investigative agency" means an agency authorized by law or regulation to conduct a counterintelligence investigation or investigation of persons who are proposed for access to classified information to ascertain whether such persons satisfy the criteria for obtaining and retaining access to such information.
- (d) "Classified information" means information that has been determined pursuant to Executive Order No. 12958, or any successor order, Executive Order No. 12951, or any successor order, or the Atomic Energy Act of 1954 (42 U.S.C. 2011), to require protection against unauthorized disclosure.
- (e) "Employee" means a person, other than the President and Vice President, employed by, detailed or assigned to, an agency, including members of the Armed Forces; an expert or consultant to an agency; an industrial or commercial contractor, licensee, certificate holder, or grantee of an agency, including all subcontractors; a personal services contractor; or any other category of person who acts for or on behalf of an agency as determined by the appropriate agency head.
- (f) "Foreign power" and "agent of a foreign power" have the meaning provided in 50 U.S.C. 1801.