



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Australian Government Security Vetting Agency

Security Clearance Applicant Guide Book



Defending Australia and its National Interests
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Australian Government Security Vetting Agency

The Australian Government Security Vetting Agency (AGSVA) is the central vetting agency for the Australian Government and conducts security clearance assessments for federal, state and territory agencies.

Security Clearance Levels

Clearance Level	Level of access
Baseline	Classified resources up to and including PROTECTED.
Negative Vetting Level 1 NV1	Classified resources up to and including SECRET.
Negative Vetting Level 2 NV2	Classified resources up to and including TOP SECRET.
Positive Vetting (PV)	Classified resources up to and including TOP SECRET, including caveated and code word information.

Security Clearance Eligibility & Suitability

Eligibility

To be eligible for an Australian Government security clearance, you must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- **Australian citizenship** – determined by the sponsoring entity before requesting a clearance.
- **Checkable background** – determined by AGSVA as part of the vetting assessment.

In exceptional circumstances the sponsoring entity can elect to waive one or both of these requirements.

Suitability

The security clearance process will determine your suitability to hold a security clearance. Suitability is determined through an assessment of the individual's overall integrity.

In the security context, integrity is defined as a range of character traits sufficient for the Australian Government to have confidence in your ability to protect Government resources and information.

The character traits are:

- Honesty
- Trustworthiness
- Maturity
- Tolerance
- Resilience
- Loyalty

Privacy

AGSVA recognises and respects your privacy. The collection, handling, use and disclosure of your personal information is undertaken in accordance with the Australian Privacy Principles set out in the Privacy Act 1988.

You may be asked questions that explore personal and sensitive aspects of your life, such as your relationships, finances, alcohol and drug use, and social or political views. You may be uncomfortable with some questions, or view them as intrusive, however it is important that you answer all questions openly and honestly.

AGSVA's vetting officers and psychologists are qualified professionals who are committed to completing vetting assessments in an objective manner. AGSVA staff are focused on determining your suitability to access sensitive and classified resources and will undertake careful consideration of the whole person.

Past activity or behaviours do not automatically disqualify you from attaining a security clearance. It can be possible for vetting officers to mitigate risk areas where there is sufficient evidence of reform.

The Vetting Assessment Process

Clearance Request

If your role requires you to hold a security clearance your employer will notify you and submit a clearance request on your behalf to AGSVA. Individuals cannot sponsor their own security clearance.

Security Clearance Application

Once a request is received for a new security clearance, AGSVA will email you details to access the myClearance portal. You will have up to 20 business days from the time you receive your application to complete and submit your security clearance application, including uploading the required supporting documentation.

You will be provided an individualised list of personal documents required at the end of your clearance application process. You must provide all documents stipulated. If you are unable to provide a document you must submit a Statutory Declaration. AGSVA will contact you if more information is required.

Once your Security Clearance Application is submitted, your submission will be assessed for completeness, and any missing information will be requested from you.

Vetting Assessment

Once your Security Clearance application has been accepted as complete, AGSVA’s vetting assessment begins.

Depending on the clearance level requested, AGSVA may contact you to schedule a psychological assessment. AGSVA will initiate external checks and allocate the case to a vetting officer. During the assessment the vetting officer will contact or conduct interviews with you and your referees.

Once all the required information has been gathered the vetting officer will make a recommendation on your suitability to hold a security clearance.

Decision

An authorised decision maker from AGSVA will review the recommendation and finalise the decision for cases being granted or denied. AGSVA will then notify you and your sponsor of the outcome of your security clearance application.

In the event that your clearance application is denied or an existing clearance revoked, you can ask for a review of the decision. For further information on decision review please visit the AGSVA website.

Vetting Timeframes

Clearance level	AGSVA issues Security Clearance Application	Applicant completes Security Clearance Application	AGSVA completes vetting assessment
Baseline	5–10 business days	20 business days	20 business days
Negative Vetting 1	5–10 business days	20 business days	70 business days
Negative Vetting 2	5–10 business days	20 business days	100 business days
Positive Vetting	5–10 business days	20 business days	180 business days

Guide to Applicant Information and Personal Document Requirements

Application Information Requirements

The below table is a guide to the application information you may be required to provide during the security clearance process. You can start gathering this information prior to commencing your security clearance application in myClearance.

Mandatory	If required by AGSVA
✓	*

Information Requirement	Baseline	NV1	NV2	PV
Details of partner and parents <i>Full name, date and place of birth, current address, citizenship, current employment</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Details of all cohabitants over 18yrs old (including siblings and children) <i>Full name, date and place of birth, citizenship, current employment, (details of overseas travel may be required)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Overseas relatives <i>Full name, relationship, country, citizenship, current address, residence since, occupation</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Official Foreign Government Contacts <i>Full name, employment details</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Financial information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Details of your most recent tax return</i> • <i>Annual salary (gross and net)</i> • <i>Average fortnightly expenditure</i> • <i>Loans and other debt statements</i> • <i>Details of other forms of income (pensions, government payments, child support)</i> • <i>Details of bequests, legal settlements, (inheritance)</i> • <i>Details of investment accounts</i> • <i>Details of credit cards (institution, credit limit, type, balance and average payment)</i> 	*	✓	✓	✓

Information Requirement	Baseline	NV1	NV2	PV
Financial information (continued) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of current and previous real estate holdings, (purchase dates, price, value, mortgage provider and account details) • Details of current motor vehicles (make, model, type, registration number, value and loan details) • Details of any other major assets • Details of business interests • Details of all superannuation accounts 	*	✓	✓	✓
Employment history <i>Name of employer, position, dates, address</i>	5 years	10 years	10 years	Since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Address history <i>Full address and dates resided</i>	5 years	10 years	10 years	Since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Education history <i>Name of institution, years attended, qualification received</i>	5 years	10 years	10 years	Since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Overseas travel <i>Country, dates & reason for visit</i>	10 years	10 years	10 years	Since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Passport and Travel Documents <i>Issuing Country, passport number, type, validity</i>	*	*	*	Since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Social memberships <i>Name of club/association, purpose, dates of membership</i>	<i>If applicable</i>			
Legal proceedings <i>Type, description, location, outcome</i>	<i>If applicable</i>			
Security clearance history <i>Details of clearance issued by AGSVA or other government department</i>	<i>If applicable</i>			

Personal Document Requirements

You will be provided an individualised list of personal documents required at the end of your clearance application process. The table below is a guide to the personal documents that may be required during a security clearance process.

Mandatory	If required by AGSVA
✓	*

Document Requirement	Baseline	NV1	NV2	PV
<p>Full Birth Certificate (Born in Australia) <i>Must contain a minimum of one parent's details.</i> <i>An extract is not acceptable.</i> <i>If you were born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986, refer to Proof of Australian Citizenship below.</i></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Full Birth Certificate (Born Overseas) <i>If in a language other English, you must also provide a translation from a translator accredited by NAATI.</i></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Proof of Australian Citizenship <i>Born overseas – Australian citizenship certificate</i> <i>Born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986 – additional documentation required as proof of Australian Citizenship, i.e. your Australian passport, parent's full birth certificate showing parent was born in Australia before 20 August 1986, parent's Australian passport issued on or after 20 August 1986 issued before your birth, or parent's Australian citizenship certificate issued before your birth.</i></p>	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p>Current Marriage Certificate <i>Issued by the Registrar of Birth, Deaths and Marriages</i></p>	<i>If applicable</i>			
<p>Divorce certificate(s) <i>Decree nisi or decree absolute for all previous Divorces</i></p>	<i>If applicable</i>			
<p>Change of name certificate(s) <i>Legal name change document or deed poll</i></p>	<i>If applicable</i>			
<p>Certificate of Service or discharge <i>Military service record for previous service in the Defence Forces of any country</i></p>	<i>If applicable</i>			

Document Requirement	Baseline	NV1	NV2	PV
Current Photo identification <i>Must contain a clear identification photograph and legible signature (e.g. drivers licence)</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Current Secondary identification <i>Current Medicare card <u>OR</u> Identity card issued by Australian Defence Force</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Current credit or bank card <i>Issued by a Financial Institution</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proof of current address <i>Drivers licence, utility bill, rates notice, bank statement</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proof of previous addresses <i>Drivers licence, utility bill, rates notice, bank statement NB: BL/NV1/NV2 one previous address</i>	✓	✓	✓	All addresses since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Proof of current employment <i>Pay slips, payment summary, statement of service, letter of offer for proposed employment</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓
Proof of previous employment <i>eg Pay slips, payment summary, statement of service NB: NV1/NV2 <u>one</u> previous employment</i>	*	✓	✓	All employers since age 16, or 10 years for applicants under 26
Passport(s) <i>Details page and all stamped pages for each current, expired or cancelled passport</i>	*	*	*	✓
Financial statements <i>For past 3 months for all bank accounts, credit cards</i>	*	*	*	✓
Tax Return <i>Your last Tax Return</i>	*	*	*	✓
Notice of Tax Assessment <i>Your last Notice of Assessment</i>	*	*	*	✓
Payslip <i>Your most recent from all current employers</i>	*	*	*	✓

Nominating Referees

Referees play an important role in the security clearance assessment, helping to support information provided by you and collected during the vetting process.

When selecting your referees, consider the following:

- Where possible, referees should be Australian Citizens or permanent residents. Where this is not possible, referees should be citizens of the USA, Canada, the UK, or New Zealand. Referees from other countries may be considered, however additional coverage may be required.
- A referee must know you in either a personal or professional capacity; they cannot be related to you, or be a partner/ex-partner.
- A referee must have had regular contact with you over an extended period of time.

You may nominate multiple referees to cover different times over the checkable period where individual referees have not had continuous contact with you.

Please ensure your referees are available to be part of the process. One cause of delays during a security clearance process is the availability and responsiveness of referees.

Referee requirements by clearance level

Clearance Level	Minimum Referee Requirement
Baseline	1 referee, including 1 supervisor who can account for a period of at least 3 months
Negative Vetting Level 1	2 referees, including 1 supervisor who can account for a period of at least 3 months, and 1 or more personal referees to cover every period of your life for the past 10 years
Negative Vetting Level 2	2 referees, including 1 supervisor who can account for a period of at least 3 months, and 1 or more personal referees to cover every period of your life for the past 10 years
Positive Vetting (PV)	5 referees, including 1–2 supervisors, and 3–4 personal referees to cover every period of your life since the age of 16, or for the past 10 years (whichever is greater)

Maintaining your clearance

Reporting changes in circumstance

In order to maintain your Australian Government security clearance you have a personal obligation to inform AGSVA of any significant changes to your personal circumstances.

You can report changes in personal circumstances to AGSVA by completing a Change of Circumstance via the myClearance portal.

Visit the AGSVA website for a list of reportable changes <https://www.agsva.gov.au>

Periodic revalidations

All security clearances are required to be reviewed at regular intervals. AGSVA will advise you when your security clearance is due for review.

Clearance Level	Baseline	Negative Vetting 1	Negative Vetting 2	Positive Vetting
Revalidation Interval	15 Years	10 Years	7 Years	7 Years

Further Information

<https://www.agsva.gov.au>

Clearance Support Team: **1800 640 450**

Email: securityclearances@defence.gov.au

