
CHAPTER 1. PURPOSE, AUTHORITY, AND ACCESS TO
CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

- 1-1. PURPOSE. The interests of the United States and its citizens are best served by making information regarding the affairs of Government readily available to the public. This concept of an informed citizenry is reflected in the Freedom of Information Act and in the current public information policies of the executive branch.

Within the Federal Government there is some official information which, because it bears directly on the effectiveness of our national defense and the conduct of our foreign relations, must be subject to some constraints for the security of our Nation and the safety of our people and our allies. To protect against actions hostile to the United States, of both an overt and covert nature, it is essential that such official information be given limited dissemination.

To ensure that such information is protected, but only to the extent and for such period as is necessary, this Handbook identifies the information to be protected, and prescribes classification, downgrading, declassification and safeguarding procedures to be followed.

- 1-2. AUTHORITY.

- a. Executive Order 12356, entitled, "National Security Information."
- b. Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO); Directive No. 1 concerning National Security Information.

- 1-3. GENERAL ACCESS REQUIREMENTS. Access to classified information shall be granted in accordance with the following:

- a. Determination of Trustworthiness. No person shall be given access to classified information unless a favorable determination has been made as to his or her trustworthiness. The determination of eligibility, referred to as a security clearance, shall be based on such investigations as the Department may require in accordance with the applicable standards and criteria of EO 10450, entitled, "Security Requirements For Government Employment."

- b. Determination of Need-to-know. In addition to a security clearance, a person must have a demonstrable need for access to the particular classified information or material sought in connection with the performance of his or her official duties or contractual obligations. The determination of that need shall be made by officials having responsibility for the classified information.

- c. Administrative Withdrawal of Security Clearance. The Department shall administratively withdraw the security clearance of any person who no longer requires access to classified information in connection with the performance of his or her official duties. Likewise, when a person no longer needs access to a particular security classification designation, the security clearance shall be adjusted to the classification designation still required for the performance of his or her duties and obligations. In both instances, such action shall be without prejudice to the person's eligibility for a security clearance should the need again arise.