



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Australian Government Security Vetting Agency

Frequently Asked Questions





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Frequently Asked Questions

Security Clearance Applicant

What does the Security Clearance process involve?

Once a request is received for a security clearance, AGSVA will issue you an online ePack to complete as part of the vetting assessment process. You will have 20 business days from the time you receive your ePack to collate, complete and submit your security clearance package, including both the online ePack questionnaire and the required forms and personal documents.

After AGSVA has assessed and accepted your security clearance package as complete, we will conduct a range of checks to determine your eligibility and suitability to hold an Australian Government security clearance. Depending on the level of security clearance, this may include a psychological assessment, referee reports, financial checks and an interview with a vetting officer.

AGSVA will then make an overall assessment based on the following character traits:

- honesty
- trustworthiness
- maturity
- tolerance
- resilience
- loyalty

Please view our [Vetting Assessment Process](#) page or our factsheet '[How to: avoid unnecessary delays during your security clearance process](#)' for further information.

Do you have to be an Australian citizen to be eligible for a security clearance from the Australian Government?

Australian citizenship is a condition of eligibility for security clearances. In exceptional circumstances the head of your employing agency may waive this requirement.

Please see our [Eligibility](#) page for further information.

What does AGSVA need to know about me?

The level of security clearance requested and your individual circumstances will determine the number and complexity of the questions asked and the personal documents required. Depending on the level of security clearance, we may ask for information about your immediate family, cohabitants, finances, employment history, education history and overseas travel. Your Security Clearance Package Checklist, which will become available to you after you submit the online ePack questionnaire, will outline what personal documents you are required to provide.

Please view our factsheet '[Why Does AGSVA Get Personal?](#)' for further information.





How long do I have to complete my security clearance application?

You have 20 business days to complete your ePack and submit the required supporting documentation. If you need an extension please speak to your security advisor.

Will a criminal record result in a security clearance being refused? Do I need to disclose specific details of my police record?

A criminal record does not automatically exclude you from the security clearance process. An overall assessment is made based on an individual's honesty, trustworthiness, maturity, tolerance, resilience and loyalty. The most important thing is to be honest and upfront about your personal history.

Please view our factsheet '[Why Does AGSVA Get Personal?](#)' or our [Suitability](#) page for further information.

What will happen to the information I provide, will it be protected?

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 1998*. We also operate in line with the [Department of Defence Privacy policy](#).

The information provided by you and/or your referees will only be used by authorised personnel who have a legitimate requirement to access it for security purposes.

For more details visit the [Privacy](#) page.

How do I get access to personal information that I have provided AGSVA?

We encourage you to save a copy of your ePack if you would like to access these details in the future. For information on how to request access to personal information you have provided to AGSVA, please visit the [Privacy](#) page.

ePack FAQ

How do I get an ePack?

If your role requires you to hold a security clearance, your employer will notify you and will submit a clearance request on your behalf to AGSVA. AGSVA will then email you the details of how to access your online ePack questionnaire.

Why is my ePack showing a system error?

The eVetting Portal which hosts your ePack can sometimes experience both planned and unplanned ICT outages. Planned outages are advertised at the top of the [AGSVA home page](#). If there is no planned outage advertised on our home page, you can try logging back into the eVetting Portal after a period of time in case the issues has been resolved. If you continue to experience issues please [contact the AGSVA Clearance Support Team](#).





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ePack is not working on my electronic device, what do I do?

The eVetting portal can be accessed through the [AGSVA home page](#). Please ensure your web browser is up to date. If you continue to experience difficulties in accessing the eVetting Portal, please [contact the AGSVA Clearance Support Team](#).

I cannot login to the eVetting Portal, what should I do?

If you are having difficulties logging into the eVetting Portal please consider the following:

- Ensure you are using the full user ID provided to you in the initial email from AGSVA.
- If this is the first time you are accessing the eVetting Portal, you must enter both halves of the password which are provided separately.
- If this is not the first time you are accessing the eVetting Portal, your password is the last one that you created.

If you continue to experience difficulties logging into the eVetting Portal, please [contact the AGSVA Clearance Support Team](#).

I have forgotten my eVetting Portal password, what should I do?

Please contact your security advisor or another security advisor from within your sponsoring agency. They will be able to reset your password.

I have received an email from AGSVA with log in details for the eVetting Portal but no password. What should I do?

The password will be the same password used to access your previous security clearance ePack. If you have forgotten your password please contact your security advisor. They will be able to reset your password.

Do I have to include all of my personal and business travel? Do I need the exact dates?

You will need to submit all travel information as well as the dates in the ePack so they can be properly assessed. Including approximate dates is appropriate in some circumstances. Once you have completed your ePack, your details will save if you ever need to have your security clearance upgraded or downgraded. We also recommend saving a copy of your submission for your records.

What is the definition of significant overseas relatives?

AGSVA considers significant overseas relatives to be relatives you keep in touch with on a regular and ongoing basis. The contact may be via social media communications, email or by phone.





I don't live with my partner, or share finances with them, do I put them in the ePack?

A partner is defined by AGSVA as a person with whom you share your life. This encompasses romantic, de-facto, married and separated/pre-divorce relationships. Please put your partner in the ePack even if you are in the early stages of the relationship, do not live together or do not share assets and/or finances.

Who should I name as a referee?

A referee needs to be someone who has known you for a minimum of three months in a personal or professional capacity. Collectively, they should cover the whole checkable period for the level of security clearance being sought. Referees may be a work colleague, neighbour or friend. They should not be a family member, spouse, de facto partner, other romantic partner or ex-partner. A current supervisor needs to have supervised you for at least three months; any previous supervisor needs to have supervised you for at least three consecutive months over the last 12 months. **It is important before nominating a referee you check with them first to see if they are available to be a referee.**

The security clearance ePack or our [Nominating Referees](#) page provides further guidance on referee requirements.

I don't have any supervisors who can be referees – what do I do?

Provision of a supervisory referee is mandatory. If you are unable to provide a current supervisor referee, alternative professional referees include: a previous supervisor, who has supervised you for three months within the last 12 months; a workplace referee who is at or above your current position level and who has worked with you for three consecutive months within the last 12 months; a professional colleague who has had regular business contact with you for three consecutive months within the last 12 months; or a personal referee who has had regular contact with you within the last six months.

What will my referee(s) be asked?

Referees play an important role in the security clearance process by providing a reference to AGSVA and verifying information about your life. They will be asked questions about personal and professional aspects of your life, for example, relationships, finances, substance use, and employment history.

AGSVA forms and personal documents

Why do I need to provide additional evidence if born after 20/08/1986?

There were changes to Australian citizenship laws on 20 August 1986. If you were born in Australia on or after 20 August 1986, you need to provide additional documentation as proof of your Australian Citizenship, i.e. Australian passport, parent's full birth certificate showing parent was born in Australia before 20 August 1986 or parent's Australian citizenship certificate issued before your birth.





How do I submit my relevant documentation to AGSVA?

The quickest (and preferred) method for getting your documents to AGSVA is to scan and email them to: agsva.ccc@defence.gov.au

When emailing keep the attachment size **under 15MB** to ensure the submission is received on our end and include your Clearance Subject ID number in the email subject line. Please also ensure documents are scanned in Adobe PDF format.

Alternatively your documentation can be sent via post. The registered mail or express post option enables you to track delivery of your documents.

Please only send documents via one method (email or post), not both.

Registered mail or express post

Australian Government Security Vetting
Agency
Locked Bag 2600
Spring Hill QLD 4004

Free post (i.e. no stamp required)

Australian Government Security Vetting
Agency
Reply Paid 84658
Spring Hill QLD 4004

Do my documents need to be certified?

No, your statutory declaration is all that is required to confirm the authenticity of your documents.

What do I do if my supporting documents are in a language other than English?

Where personal documentation is in a language other than English you will need to obtain a translation of the document from a National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI) accredited provider.

Please be advised you will need to provide us with both the original untranslated document(s) **as well as** the NAATI certified translated document(s).

What if I cannot provide the personal documents that need to be submitted with my security clearance package?

You are required to take all reasonable steps to gather and provide the required personal documents as outlined in your security clearance package checklist. AGSVA may consider exceptional circumstances where it is not possible to provide the information, however this may delay your security clearance or AGSVA may not be able to complete the vetting assessment.

If you are unable to provide certain documents please outline the reasons on your statutory declaration and submit it with your other documentation to AGSVA. Please note a statutory declaration can only be used as a substitute for genuinely unavailable documents.





I received an email stating there were missing items or errors in my security clearance package. What do I need to do?

Once AGSVA has received your completed ePack and the required personal documents and forms, they are assessed to determine if they are complete and if there are any gaps or anomalies in your submission. If they are assessed as being incomplete or contain errors, you will receive an email from AGSVA with details of what is required from you. This is an opportunity to ensure the information and documents you have provided are completed and accurate. If you do not understand what is being asked from you, please read the email carefully and if necessary [contact the AGSVA Clearance Support Team](#).





The Assessment Process

Who will assess my security clearance process?

A vetting officer is assigned to conduct your security clearance assessment and make a recommendation on your eligibility and suitability to hold a security clearance. All vetting officers conducting security clearance assessments for AGSVA hold an Australian Government security clearance and a Certificate IV qualification in Government Security (Personnel Vetting). AGSVA uses a panel of vetting companies to complete parts of the clearance assessment.

How can I verify the credentials of the person contacting me about my security clearance?

Security clearance assessments will be conducted by an AGSVA staff member or an authorised external vetting provider contracted to AGSVA.

The following vetting companies are authorised to undertake security clearance assessments for AGSVA:

- Barrington Corporate Risk Pty Ltd
- Cogent Business Solutions Pty Ltd
- Key Vetting Services Pty Ltd
- Mitchell Personnel Solutions Pty Ltd
- Sirras Consultants Pty Ltd
- Staff Check Pty Ltd

If you have any concerns about the individual who is contacting you in regard to your security clearance, you can verify their credentials by contacting [the AGSVA Clearance Support Team](#).

Will I be interviewed?

An interview is mandatory for security clearances at the Negative Vetting 2 and Positive Vetting levels. However, interviews may be requested for security clearances at other levels to clarify information you have provided.

Please view our factsheet '[Why Does AGSVA Get Personal?](#)' or the [Vetting assessment process](#) page for more information.

Will I have to undergo a Psychological Assessment?

A psychological assessment (PA) is mandatory for a Positive Vetting security clearance. A PA may also be carried out if a job position at a lower level requires it, or if AGSVA needs to clarify information provided.

Please view our factsheet '[Why Does AGSVA Get Personal?](#)' or the [Vetting assessment process](#) page for more information.

Will an ASIO assessment be required?

ASIO assessments are mandatory for all Negative Vetting 1, Negative Vetting 2 and Positive Vetting security clearances. If required, they may also be conducted at the Baseline level.





Processing Timelines

How long will my security clearance take to process?

The vetting process cannot commence until you have submitted your complete security clearance package, including both the ePack and the required forms and personal documents. The time it takes to assess each case will vary depending on the level of the security clearance and the individual circumstances of the clearance applicant.

We aim to complete security clearances within benchmark time frames. However, given the complex nature of vetting, unforeseen delays can and do occur.

Please view the [Vetting Timeframes](#) page or our factsheet '[How to: avoid unnecessary delays during your security clearance process](#)' to learn how you can assist in making the process as fast as possible.

Can I have my security clearance process prioritised?

Security advisors can request priority processing for a clearance request if there is an exceptional business need for the sponsor. The request needs to be endorsed by a SES Band 2 or equivalent and certain conditions need to be met.

How can I confirm the progress of my security clearance?

If your security clearance application process has exceeded the [benchmark timeframes](#) your security advisor will be able to check the status of your security clearance.

Clearance Holder

Will overseas travel to certain countries impact my suitability to hold a security clearance?

Countries of significance may vary depending on the clearance holder's role and their agency's responsibilities. AGSVA will assess any overseas travel as part of your initial clearance process, as well as any clearance upgrade or revalidation. You should maintain accurate records of any overseas travel and comply with any pre-departure or post-travel obligations required by your employer, such as reporting planned travel or participating in security briefings. It is your responsibility to familiarise yourself with any such requirements.

What type of changes in my circumstances do I need to report?

As part of the [responsibilities of holding a security clearance](#) you are obliged to advise AGSVA of changes in personal circumstances. Visit our [Reporting Changes in Circumstances](#) page for a non-exhaustive list of what changes in circumstances you are obliged to report.





How do I update my contact information?

To ensure AGSVA has your most current contact information, we recommend using a personal email address rather than a work email address. You can update your contact information by completing a *SVA003 Change of Circumstances* form available via the [eVetting Portal](#), or alternatively you can call AGSVA on 1800 640 450.

How do I report security concerns or suspected wrong-doing about other clearance holders?

As a clearance holder you should report significant changes in the personal circumstances of other clearance holders where you believe there may be implications for security. You can provide this information to your agency's security section, your security advisor or directly to AGSVA via the *SVA004 Change of Circumstances Report* available on the [Resources](#) page of our website.

How can I confirm my security clearance level?

Contact your security advisor for any questions regarding your current security clearance level.

How often is a security clearance revalidated?

All security clearances are required to be revalidated at regular intervals. The interval depends on the level of security clearance:

Baseline – 15 years
Negative Vetting Level 1 – 10 years
Negative Vetting Level 2 – 7 years
Positive Vetting - 7 years

A Positive Vetting security clearance is also required to undergo an annual security appraisal.

What is the process for getting a security clearance revalidation?

AGSVA is responsible for initiating and managing the revalidation process. As we will contact you when you are required to undergo a revalidation, it is important to ensure your contact details are kept up to date.

Do I need to provide previously submitted documents for my security clearance revalidation?

If your current security clearance was granted by AGSVA, we will have a record of all your previous documents. You will only need to provide documents that have been generated through changes in your circumstances since your previous security clearance action.

If your current security clearance was granted by another agency, we may not have a record of all your previously submitted documentation, and you may be required to resubmit documents. If you do need to provide documents, AGSVA will notify you of what documents are required.





My sponsor has submitted a request to reinstate my clearance but they have said there is an outstanding change of circumstance that needs to be processed first – what does this mean?

Reinstatement of a clearance requires submission of any changes of circumstance as you have not been required to submit changes of circumstance while your clearance has been inactive. In order to reactivate your clearance AGSVA will need to update your record and process your latest change of circumstance.

Will my security clearance be transferable to other government agencies?

All Australian security clearances granted by AGSVA and exempt agencies in accordance with the Protective Security Policy Framework are transferable between agencies.

A transfer of security clearance sponsorship will be required and you may also be required to undergo additional checks. You should discuss these requirements with your security advisor.

What happens if I change my employer?

If you are leaving your sponsoring agency, you need to contact your security advisor so they can advise AGSVA. If you are transferring to a new agency and still require a security clearance, you need to ensure your security advisor at the new agency registers their sponsorship of your clearance before your former employer removes sponsorship. If they do not do this in time it may result in your security clearance becoming inactive due to the lack of an Australian Government sponsor.

My sponsor has taken inappropriate action in removing their sponsorship of my clearance – what do I do?

All AGSVA clearances require sponsorship by an authorised agency. If your clearance has become inactive in error your security advisor or sponsor will need to resolve this with AGSVA. A sponsor can reactivate a security clearance under certain conditions.

How long does my security clearance last if I stop working for the government?

For your security clearance to remain active, you need a current Australian Government sponsor. If you are leaving the public service your sponsoring agency security advisor must advise AGSVA. A security clearance can be reactivated providing it is within the revalidation period. For Positive Vetting security clearances, an annual security appraisal must also have been completed within the last two years.



