



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Personnel Security Bulletin #06-05, Subject: Background Investigation Processing Requirements

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Office of the
Assistant
Secretary
For Administration

Office of
Procurement and
Property
Management

Personnel and
Document Security
Division
Mail Stop 9305

1400
Independence
Avenue SW

Washington, DC
20250-9305

Issue:

This Bulletin clarifies case processing procedures for Standard Forms (SF) 86, "Questionnaire for National Security Positions," and SF 85P, "Questionnaire for Public Trust Positions," within the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) system. Specific timelines are set forth below.

Date Issued:

March 7, 2006

Effective Date:

March 15, 2006

Scope and Effect:

This is an internal advisory document for use by USDA personnel involved in implementing USDA's personnel security program.

Supersession:

None

Background:

In an effort to develop plans to meet the timeliness expectations set forth by the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has established various performance requirements for departments and agencies that process and grant national security clearances. A key requirement affecting the Personnel and Document Security Division (PDSD) and USDA agencies is that required investigations are submitted to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) within **14 calendar days** of Subject's (i.e. the employee's) completion of the SF 86.

The PDSD has not previously set any specific timeliness requirements external to PDSD for processing national security clearance or public trust requests. As a result, cases are being submitted with significant lag times in the front end portion of case processing. For example, the PDSD received a SF 86 via e-QIP on November 30, 2005, which the employee had signed on August 18, 2005. Such delays defeat the intent of an electronic processing and are no longer acceptable.

Procedure:

USDA agencies shall provide a completed security packet to the PDSD within no more than 7 calendar days of the Subject signing the form and required releases. This short turn around time is required in order for the Department to meet the OMB performance requirements. The PDSD will no longer accept e-QIP forms separate from the timely receipt of a completed security packet, which includes an AD-1187 (Request for Personnel Security Services form), AD-1188, Justification, and all other applicable attachments. It is recommended that agencies attempt to coordinate the electronic release of the SF-86 to PDSD in e-QIP with the mailing of the remainder of the packet to PDSD. Agencies located outside of the National Capital Region should consider making full use of priority mail services for national security investigative requests to

comply with the timeliness requirements above.

Agencies are further advised that the PDSO will reject SF-86 packets for the following:

- ✓ signatures older than 30 days
- ✓ no scanned or improperly scanned attachments
- ✓ incomplete packets (to include missing AD-1187 and AD-1188)

While the OMB timeliness requirement applies only to SF 86 processing, every effort should be made to apply the same processing timeliness for SF 85P submissions.

Further Information: Contact Susan Gulbranson or Arviet Thorpe on (202) 720-7373.

/s/

Martin W. Brumback, Chief
Personnel and Document Security Division