



Reporting a Security Violation

Security infractions and violations involve the loss, compromise, (or suspected loss or compromise) of classified or proprietary information, including evidence of tampering with a container used for storage of classified information.

A security infraction is any knowing, willful, or negligent action contrary to the requirements of EO 13292 or its implementing directives that does not constitute a "violation".

A security violation is any knowing, willing or negligent action that could reasonably be expected to result in an unauthorized disclosure of classified information.

What does this mean? The easiest way to explain it is that an infraction is the equivalent of a "boo-boo." You go home at night and forget to lock your safe. You go to lunch and forget you left a classified document laying out on your desk. Most infractions aren't serious; however they can quickly become a violation. A violation exists when it can reasonably be expected to result in the release of unauthorized disclosure of classified information.

Take the example of an infraction. That situation becomes a violation when a member of the cleaning crew enters your office, sees this document on your desk and picks up and reads it. Now multiply that with this cleaning person allowing his or her brother who was smuggled illegally into the US from Cuba, live with them. Can you see how easily it is to transition from an infraction to a violation? There are many factors that can be coupled into these and other situations that quickly grow beyond our control. That's why good security practice is a must.

Failure to report security violations could result in one of the following sanctions:

- Warnings
- Reprimand
- Suspension without pay
- Forfeiture of pay
- Removal
- Loss or denial of access to classified information
- Removal of classification authority
- Actions may also be taken under the applicable criminal law

If you have questions or wish to report a violation, please contact Ms. Susan Gulbranson, Director, Personnel and Document Security Division at (202) 205-9345.