



Psychological Health and Your Security Clearance

The US Government recognizes the importance of getting help for a psychological issue. Requesting assistance can be a sign of good judgement, responsible behavior, and a commitment to performance.

Question 21: Questions about your mental health

Actions have been taken to eliminate negative stereotypes about psychological health problems and any impact of treatment on your career. When someone applies for or updates their security clearance, they need to complete the **Standard Form 86 – ‘Questionnaire for National Security Positions.’**

Participating in mental health treatment and counseling, in and of itself, is not a reason to revoke or deny eligibility for access to classified information or for holding a sensitive position, suitability or fitness to obtain or retain Federal or contract employment, or eligibility for physical or logical access to federally controlled facilities or information systems. Seeking or receiving mental health care for personal wellness and recovery may contribute favorably to decisions about your eligibility.

You can answer 'NO' to Questions 21 A-E if you've received counseling strictly related to any of the following:

- Adjustment from service in combat
- Marital or family issues (not court ordered or related to violence you have committed)
- Grief issues
- Being a victim of sexual assault who received counseling related to that trauma

Your Privacy is protected.

There are more ways that the US Government protects your privacy during security clearance:

A security investigator can only ask your health care provider to answer yes or no to the question, 'Does the person under investigation have a condition that could impair his or her judgment, reliability or ability to properly safeguard classified information?'

When the provider's answer is 'no,' the investigator is not allowed to ask further questions.

When the provider's answer is 'yes,' a security investigator may interview the provider and the applicant confidentially to gather additional information to determine the security risk.

Commanders, supervisors and security managers are not authorized to ask an applicant or anyone else about psychological health care revealed in response to Question 21 for purposes unrelated to your suitability/fitness/national security determination. Those responsible for making such a determination are authorized to ask additional questions and/or request documentation from you or your healthcare professional, as needed, in order to make that determination and ensure your safety, as well as that of our agency and our nation.

Applicants do not have to answer any unauthorized questioning about psychological health care. You have various counseling service options when it comes time to seek help for a psychological or personal issue. Remember, seeking help early to improve your performance is a sign of strength and commitment.

CG SUPRT is here to help!

For more information, contact us 24/7/365

Phone: (855) 247-8778 | Online: visit www.cgsuprt.com

