

# Introduction to Personnel Security (PS113.16.V2)

## Practice Test (Sample)

### Study Guide



**Everything you need from our exam experts!**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

**This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:**

## 1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

**Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.**

## 2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

**Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.**

## 3. Learn from the Explanations

**After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.**

## 4. Track Your Progress

**Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.**

## 5. Simulate the Real Exam

**Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.**

## 6. Repeat and Review

**Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.**

**There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!**

## **Questions**

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- 1. What does FIS stand for in the context of personnel security?**
  - A. Federal Investigative Standards**
  - B. Federal Intelligence Services**
  - C. Federal Information Systems**
  - D. Federal Identification Security**
- 2. What type of media contact is reportable under personnel security guidelines?**
  - A. Formal interviews for articles**
  - B. Official statements for press releases**
  - C. Media seeks access to classified information**
  - D. Participation in community service activities**
- 3. What type of positions would typically require a Tier 5 investigation?**
  - A. Non-sensitive positions**
  - B. Moderate-risk public trust positions**
  - C. Critical-sensitive positions**
  - D. Low-risk positions**
- 4. Which type of positions require Tier 3 reinvestigation?**
  - A. Only entry-level positions**
  - B. Noncritical-sensitive positions**
  - C. All contractor positions**
  - D. Only military personnel**
- 5. What does the term 'reciprocity' refer to in personnel security?**
  - A. Re-evaluating an individual's security clearance**
  - B. Mutually accepting national security eligibility among agencies**
  - C. Transferring security clearances between states**
  - D. Generalizing security policies across all federal agencies**

**6. Which level of investigation is required for someone to gain eligibility to access Top Secret information?**

- A. Tier 2**
- B. Tier 3**
- C. Tier 4**
- D. Tier 5**

**7. How long is the investigation period for Tier 2 positions?**

- A. 3 years**
- B. 5 years**
- C. 5-7 years**
- D. 7-10 years**

**8. How long can DOD recipient organizations retain background investigation records?**

- A. Indefinitely**
- B. Until terminated by the employee**
- C. Only as needed for the originally requested official purpose**
- D. For a maximum of one year**

**9. What requirement does Tier 5 Reinvestigation address?**

- A. Eligibility for Confidential access only**
- B. Continuing eligibility for Top Secret, SCI, or DOE "Q" access**
- C. Assessment for job placement in civilian roles**
- D. Periodic assessment for basic security training**

**10. What is the purpose of a Termination Brief?**

- A. A summary of an employee's achievements**
- B. A security brief for terminated individuals or those with restricted access**
- C. A briefing for new hires on company policies**
- D. A report on the organization's security protocols**

## **Answers**

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1. A
2. C
3. C
4. B
5. B
6. D
7. B
8. C
9. B
10. B

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## **Explanations**

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**1. What does FIS stand for in the context of personnel security?**

- A. Federal Investigative Standards**
- B. Federal Intelligence Services**
- C. Federal Information Systems**
- D. Federal Identification Security**

FIS stands for Federal Investigative Standards in the context of personnel security. This term refers to the guidelines and requirements established by the federal government to ensure that background investigations for security clearance are conducted systematically and effectively. These standards are designed to ensure that the investigations are thorough, taking into account various factors such as criminal history, financial responsibility, and personal conduct, which contribute to an individual's reliability and trustworthiness in sensitive positions. Understanding the importance of these standards is crucial for maintaining national security and upholding the integrity of federal operations, as personnel security plays a vital role in safeguarding classified and sensitive information. The other options do not accurately represent the context of personnel security related to investigations; therefore, they do not provide the correct terminology used within this framework.

**2. What type of media contact is reportable under personnel security guidelines?**

- A. Formal interviews for articles**
- B. Official statements for press releases**
- C. Media seeks access to classified information**
- D. Participation in community service activities**

The correct answer highlights a critical aspect of personnel security regarding the protection of sensitive information. When the media seeks access to classified information, it poses a significant risk to national security and the integrity of classified data. Personnel security guidelines mandate that any attempts by the media to obtain classified information must be reported, as this can indicate potential vulnerabilities or breaches in security protocols. Assessment of media contact is an essential part of ensuring that personnel involved in classified work are aware of the risks associated with sharing sensitive information. In contrast, formal interviews for articles, official statements for press releases, and participation in community service activities typically do not involve the same level of risk to classified information. Therefore, these activities are managed under different guidelines and do not necessitate the same level of reporting under personnel security. Keeping classified information secure is paramount, and the choice emphasizing media access to such information clearly aligns with this priority.

### 3. What type of positions would typically require a Tier 5 investigation?

- A. Non-sensitive positions**
- B. Moderate-risk public trust positions**
- C. Critical-sensitive positions**
- D. Low-risk positions**

A Tier 5 investigation is typically required for critical-sensitive positions, which are roles that involve access to classified national security information or that could significantly impact the defense of the nation. Individuals in these positions are entrusted with sensitive information and decisions that could have serious implications for national security, making thorough background checks essential. Positions classified as critical-sensitive often include roles within intelligence agencies, defense contractors, or other governmental bodies where the potential for harm or breach of trust is high. The Tier 5 investigation process involves a comprehensive review of an individual's personal and professional history, including criminal, financial, and any behavioral evaluations, to ensure they meet the high standards of trustworthiness necessary for such sensitive roles. In contrast, non-sensitive positions, moderate-risk public trust positions, and low-risk positions have less stringent requirements and would not necessitate the comprehensive background checks associated with a Tier 5 investigation. These roles are typically associated with fewer responsibilities regarding national security and, therefore, do not demand the same level of scrutiny in terms of personnel security.

### 4. Which type of positions require Tier 3 reinvestigation?

- A. Only entry-level positions**
- B. Noncritical-sensitive positions**
- C. All contractor positions**
- D. Only military personnel**

Positions that require Tier 3 reinvestigation are categorized as noncritical-sensitive positions. This type of investigation is designed to ensure ongoing trustworthiness and reliability of individuals who have access to sensitive information or who perform critical functions within an organization but do not have the highest level of security clearance, as seen with critical-sensitive or special-sensitive roles. Noncritical-sensitive positions may involve access to classified information or responsibilities that could lead to a risk to national security if improperly handled. Regular reinvestigations are essential to maintaining a secure environment, as they help to identify any changes in an individual's circumstances that may affect their eligibility for continued access. The other options do not accurately reflect the nature of Tier 3 reinvestigations. Entry-level positions typically fall under lower-tier investigation requirements, contractor positions can vary depending on their specific duties and clearance levels, and while military personnel may undergo various levels of investigations, not all of them would require Tier 3 reinvestigation specifically. Thus, the focus on noncritical-sensitive positions accurately captures the scope of Tier 3 reinvestigation requirements.

## 5. What does the term 'reciprocity' refer to in personnel security?

- A. Re-evaluating an individual's security clearance
- B. Mutually accepting national security eligibility among agencies**
- C. Transferring security clearances between states
- D. Generalizing security policies across all federal agencies

The term 'reciprocity' in personnel security specifically pertains to the concept of mutually accepting national security eligibility among different agencies. This means that if an individual has been granted a security clearance by one agency, other agencies may accept that clearance without requiring the individual to undergo the entire vetting process again, provided the clearance is still valid and the individual meets the necessary conditions. This approach fosters efficiency within the government and reduces redundancy, as it allows individuals to seamlessly move between agencies without the delays that can occur while undergoing multiple background checks. Reciprocity is essential in facilitating collaboration and information-sharing among various entities in national security. In contrast, other options involve aspects that do not fully capture the essence of reciprocity. Re-evaluating an individual's security clearance focuses on the assessment process rather than the mutual acceptance principle. Transferring security clearances between states is more about geographical movement than inter-agency cooperation. Generalizing security policies across all federal agencies addresses standardization, yet it doesn't define the specific inter-agency agreements that reciprocity embodies.

## 6. Which level of investigation is required for someone to gain eligibility to access Top Secret information?

- A. Tier 2
- B. Tier 3
- C. Tier 4
- D. Tier 5**

The correct answer is that a Tier 5 investigation is required for someone to gain eligibility to access Top Secret information. A Tier 5 investigation is the most comprehensive level of security clearance screening, which includes in-depth background checks that investigate an individual's personal and professional history, as well as their character and associations. This thorough examination is necessary for protecting sensitive national security information, as it ensures that those granted Top Secret access have been evaluated for potential vulnerabilities or risks that could compromise security interests. In comparison, Tier 2, Tier 3, and Tier 4 investigations are appropriate for lower levels of clearance, such as Confidential and Secret, which do not require the same level of scrutiny as the Tier 5 investigation. Each tier corresponds to the sensitivity of the information accessed, making it vital to use the correct investigation approach for different clearance levels to maintain national security.

## 7. How long is the investigation period for Tier 2 positions?

- A. 3 years
- B. 5 years**
- C. 5-7 years
- D. 7-10 years

The investigation period for Tier 2 positions is indeed set at 5 years. This timeframe is in line with regulations for personnel security clearances, ensuring that individuals in these positions undergo periodic checks to maintain their eligibility. This duration is designed to be sufficient for a thorough review of an individual's background, which includes checks related to criminal history, credit issues, and any other factors that might impact their security clearance. The 5-year interval allows for a balanced approach between necessary vigilance and practical resource management, as it ensures that individuals are routinely evaluated without imposing excessive burdens on the investigative process. This period aligns with the higher-level requirements typically associated with Tier 2 positions, which necessitate a deeper scrutiny than those at Tier 1 but doesn't require the more frequent updates applicable to higher tiers.

## 8. How long can DOD recipient organizations retain background investigation records?

- A. Indefinitely
- B. Until terminated by the employee
- C. Only as needed for the originally requested official purpose**
- D. For a maximum of one year

The retention of background investigation records by DOD recipient organizations is governed by established guidelines that emphasize the need for maintaining these records only for specific official purposes related to personnel security. This aligns with the principle of data minimization and ensures that sensitive information is not retained longer than necessary. Retaining such records only as needed for the originally requested official purpose means that organizations should keep these records as long as they are relevant to the role or functioning of the individual being investigated, and not beyond that. This helps in ensuring that personnel security measures remain effective, while also minimizing the risk of unauthorized access to potentially sensitive information. By adhering to this guideline, organizations can manage their personnel security processes effectively while complying with legal and administrative requirements regarding data privacy and protection. The other options imply indefinite retention, retention based solely on employee termination, or a fixed maximum period, which do not align with the correct guideline of retaining records only as necessary for official purposes.

## 9. What requirement does Tier 5 Reinvestigation address?

- A. Eligibility for Confidential access only
- B. Continuing eligibility for Top Secret, SCI, or DOE "Q" access**
- C. Assessment for job placement in civilian roles
- D. Periodic assessment for basic security training

Tier 5 Reinvestigation focuses on ensuring that individuals with access to sensitive information, specifically those holding Top Secret clearance or access to Sensitive Compartmented Information (SCI) or Department of Energy "Q" clearance, continue to meet security eligibility requirements over time. This process involves a thorough review of the individual's background, financial stability, personal relationships, and any changes in circumstances that may affect their suitability for holding such high levels of access. The need for Tier 5 Reinvestigation is rooted in the understanding that circumstances can change after an individual has initially been granted a clearance. This ongoing evaluation helps in mitigating risks and ensuring that only those who consistently uphold the required standards of trustworthiness and reliability maintain access to critical and sensitive information, thereby enhancing overall national security. The other options do not align with the intent or scope of Tier 5 Reinvestigation, which is specifically geared toward those holding high-level clearances, rather than general training assessments or job placement evaluations.

## 10. What is the purpose of a Termination Brief?

- A. A summary of an employee's achievements
- B. A security brief for terminated individuals or those with restricted access**
- C. A briefing for new hires on company policies
- D. A report on the organization's security protocols

The purpose of a Termination Brief is specifically to provide a security briefing for individuals who have been terminated from their positions or who have had their access restricted. This briefing serves important functions, including outlining the reasons for termination, clarifying the protocols regarding sensitive information and assets, and reminding the individual of their obligations concerning confidentiality and non-disclosure agreements. Such a briefing is important in ensuring that security measures are reinforced post-termination, minimizing the risks associated with someone who no longer has a role in the organization. It helps in addressing potential concerns about the security of data, proprietary information, and organizational assets that may be at risk once an employee leaves. The other choices do not align with the specific focus of a Termination Brief. It is not intended to summarize achievements, provide orientation for new hires, or serve as a general report on security protocols, although each of those documents has its place in personnel management and security practices.

# Next Steps

**Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.**

**As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.**

**If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).**

**Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:**

**<https://introtopersonnelsec.examzify.com>**

**We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!**

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