

Introduction to Suitability Adjudications for the DoD SPeD 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. Which tool is used to initiate investigations after the designation stage?**
 - A. PDT**
 - B. e-QIP**
 - C. CVS**
 - D. JPAS**

- 2. Which investigation includes citizenship checks and spouse/cohabitant NACs as required?**
 - A. NAC**
 - B. NACI**
 - C. SSBI**
 - D. PPR**

- 3. Which statement describes the third step of the Position Designation System?**
 - A. To assess the nature of the position**
 - B. To adjust the total risk score based on program designation and level of supervision**
 - C. To determine the final designation**
 - D. To determine the investigation form**

- 4. What is the purpose of JPAS?**
 - A. Track personnel payroll**
 - B. Share medical records**
 - C. Store e-QIP forms**
 - D. Store adjudicative actions and determinations**

- 5. Which action applies to anyone adjudicated for suitability, regardless of status?**
 - A. Cancellation of reinstatement eligibility.**
 - B. Removal from employment.**
 - C. Cancellation of eligibility.**
 - D. Debarment.**

- 6. Which phase includes position designation, prescreening, and initiation of the investigation?**
- A. Preinvestigation phase**
 - B. Postadjudication phase**
 - C. Investigation phase**
 - D. Reinvestigation phase**
- 7. Which of the following is NOT one of the three main types of DoD adjudications?**
- A. HSPD-12 adjudications**
 - B. National security adjudications**
 - C. Fitness determinations**
 - D. Suitability adjudications**
- 8. Debarment is the most serious of the suitability actions and may apply to anyone who is adjudicated for suitability, whether they are an applicant, an appointee, or an employee. Which choice best reflects this statement?**
- A. Cancellation of eligibility applies to applicants.**
 - B. Removal from employment applies to appointees.**
 - C. Cancellation of reinstatement eligibility applies to reemployment.**
 - D. Debarment applies to anyone adjudicated for suitability.**
- 9. Reinvestigation occurs as needed based on which factors?**
- A. Changes in a position's risk or sensitivity**
 - B. Reemployment**
 - C. Discovery of new information**
 - D. All of the above**
- 10. Which form is used for Public Trust Positions?**
- A. SF 85P**
 - B. SF 86**
 - C. SF 85**
 - D. SF 85C**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which tool is used to initiate investigations after the designation stage?

- A. PDT
- B. e-QIP**
- C. CVS
- D. JPAS

Initiating the background investigation after designation relies on collecting the applicant's information through a standardized online questionnaire. This is done with e-QIP, the system specifically designed to start the investigation process by gathering biographical details, employment history, education, residences, and other data needed to begin the background check. Once the applicant submits this information, the investigation workflow is kicked off and the case moves into the next steps with the appropriate offices. The other tools are used later in the process or for different purposes: JPAS is the shared system for recording investigation status and clearance decisions, not for starting the investigation itself. The remaining tools function in verification, case management, or post-initiation activities rather than initiating the investigation.

2. Which investigation includes citizenship checks and spouse/cohabitant NACs as required?

- A. NAC
- B. NACI
- C. SSBI**
- D. PPR

The level of background investigation determines what checks are performed. The Single Scope Background Investigation is the most thorough DoD background check used for higher-level clearances, and it explicitly includes verifying the applicant's citizenship and performing NAC inquiries on the applicant's spouse or cohabitant. This combination helps uncover any foreign influence risks tied to both the individual and their household, which is why this option fits the requirement. The other investigations are more limited in scope: a National Agency Check focuses on federal records, a National Agency Check with Inquiries adds some questions but not the same depth, and the remaining option isn't a standard full-scope background investigation for this purpose.

3. Which statement describes the third step of the Position Designation System?

- A. To assess the nature of the position
- B. To adjust the total risk score based on program designation and level of supervision**
- C. To determine the final designation
- D. To determine the investigation form

The third step in the Position Designation System is to adjust the total risk score based on program designation and level of supervision. After the initial risk is calculated from the position's characteristics, this adjustment accounts for how the job fits within a specific program and how closely it will be supervised. That refinement can raise or lower the overall designation to reflect practical controls and oversight, ensuring the final designation matches real-world risk. Once this adjustment is made, the next step is to determine the final designation, which then guides which investigation form is used. The other statements describe steps that occur earlier (assessing the nature of the position) or later (determining the final designation or the investigation form).

4. What is the purpose of JPAS?

- A. Track personnel payroll
- B. Share medical records
- C. Store e-QIP forms
- D. Store adjudicative actions and determinations**

JPAS is the centralized, secure system that records the outcomes of personnel security investigations. It stores adjudicative actions and determinations—such as grants, denials, suspensions, or revocations of clearance—and keeps a running history of an individual's clearance status. This allows authorized users to verify who is eligible for access to classified information across DoD and related agencies, and to track changes over time. It isn't used to track payroll, and it isn't a repository for medical records. It also doesn't store the actual questionnaire forms themselves; those forms are part of the investigation process, while JPAS records the resulting decisions and status.

5. Which action applies to anyone adjudicated for suitability, regardless of status?

- A. Cancellation of reinstatement eligibility.
- B. Removal from employment.
- C. Cancellation of eligibility.
- D. Debarment.**

When someone is adjudicated for suitability, the action that applies to them regardless of status is debarment. Debarment serves as a blanket prohibition on federal employment and on access to positions requiring this kind of clearance or trust. It isn't tied to a person's current job, employer, or current status; it follows the individual across agencies and positions, making it the most universal remedy for suitability concerns. The other options are more limited in scope. Cancellation of reinstatement eligibility only affects whether the person can reapply after a certain period; removal from employment is an action by a single employer and doesn't automatically apply across the federal system; cancellation of eligibility refers to losing the right to pursue certain opportunities but isn't the broad, cross-agency bar that debarment represents.

6. Which phase includes position designation, prescreening, and initiation of the investigation?

- A. Preinvestigation phase**
- B. Postadjudication phase**
- C. Investigation phase**
- D. Reinvestigation phase**

Understanding the phases of a suitability investigation helps you see why these steps belong together. The preinvestigation phase covers preparatory actions taken before the formal inquiry begins. Assigning the position to be reviewed (position designation) sets the scope. Prescreening handles an initial check to determine whether a full investigation is warranted. Initiation of the investigation starts the formal process, lining up records, notices, and the plan for the inquiry. These are all preparatory, leading into the actual investigation phase where evidence is gathered and analyzed. Reinvestigation occurs later to refresh or update findings, and postadjudication comes after a determination has been made. So, the described activities fit the preinvestigation phase.

7. Which of the following is NOT one of the three main types of DoD adjudications?

- A. HSPD-12 adjudications**
- B. National security adjudications**
- C. Fitness determinations**
- D. Suitability adjudications**

The main idea here is that DoD adjudications are grouped into three tracks: suitability adjudications, which evaluate a person's character, trustworthiness, and reliability for employment or duties; national security adjudications, which determine eligibility for access to classified information or sensitive duties; and HSPD-12 adjudications, which decide eligibility for federal credentials and facility access. Fitness determinations don't fit into those groups because they focus on medical or physical readiness to perform duties, not on trustworthiness, eligibility for security access, or credentialing. So fitness determinations are not one of the three main adjudication types.

8. Debarment is the most serious of the suitability actions and may apply to anyone who is adjudicated for suitability, whether they are an applicant, an appointee, or an employee. Which choice best reflects this statement?

- A. Cancellation of eligibility applies to applicants.**
- B. Removal from employment applies to appointees.**
- C. Cancellation of reinstatement eligibility applies to reemployment.**
- D. Debarment applies to anyone adjudicated for suitability.**

Debarment is the most severe suitability action because it creates a lasting bar from eligibility for federal service. Its defining feature is that it can be imposed on anyone who is adjudicated for suitability—whether they are an applicant, an appointee, or an employee. In contrast, the other actions are limited to specific situations: cancellation of eligibility targets applicants who have not yet obtained a position, removal from employment applies to appointees who are already in a role, and cancellation of reinstatement eligibility affects individuals seeking to be rehired after a break in service. Debarment’s universality across status makes it the best reflection of the statement.

9. Reinvestigation occurs as needed based on which factors?

- A. Changes in a position's risk or sensitivity**
- B. Reemployment**
- C. Discovery of new information**
- D. All of the above**

Reinvestigation is triggered when circumstances around a position or the individual change in ways that could affect suitability. If a position becomes more sensitive or its risk level increases, rechecking the individual’s background helps ensure continued trustworthiness. When someone reenters a DoD role after a break, a reinvestigation is typically needed to confirm ongoing suitability and catch any new issues since the last check. New information about the individual—such as changes in personal circumstances, or newly discovered criminal, financial, or other relevant details—also prompts a reinvestigation to reassess risk. Because any of these scenarios can alter overall risk, reinvestigation occurs based on all of these factors.

10. Which form is used for Public Trust Positions?

- A. SF 85P**
- B. SF 86**
- C. SF 85**
- D. SF 85C**

Public Trust positions require a background check focused on trustworthiness rather than a full security clearance. The SF-85P is the questionnaire specifically designed for Public Trust determinations, gathering the information needed to assess reliability, honesty, and judgment. It covers employment, education, residence history, finances, criminal history, drug use, foreign contacts, and citizenship to help adjudicators evaluate risk appropriate for entrusted duties. Because this form is tailored for the public trust category, it's the standard and most appropriate tool for these positions, while other forms correspond to non-sensitive roles or national security investigations. The SF-85C exists for specific, less common scenarios and is not the primary form used for Public Trust determinations.

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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.

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

<https://introtosuitabilityadjudications.examzify.com>

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

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