



UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Federal Investigative  
Services

**Federal Investigations Notice**

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Notice No. 13-02

Date: April 19, 2013

**SUBJECT: Revised Instructions for Completing Question 21, Standard Form 86,  
“Questionnaire for National Security Positions”**

OPM has revised the Standard Form (SF) 86 instructions at Question 21 in its Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) as approved by the Office of Management and Budget. Effective April 14, 2013, the SF 86 in e-QIP now displays the following additional instructions at Question 21:

“Victims of sexual assault who have consulted with the health care professional regarding an emotional or mental health condition during this period strictly in relation to the sexual assault are instructed to answer 'No'.”

The Director of National Intelligence (DNI), in his role as Security Executive Agent, has issued the attached memorandum directing Executive branch departments and agencies to inform all individuals completing the SF 86 that the instructions for Question 21 have been modified by adding this instruction. The memorandum contains an attachment that is to be provided in hard copy to any individual not using e-QIP to complete the SF 86.

For assistance with questions regarding this notice, please contact Agency Liaison at 724-794-5612.

Merton W. Miller  
Associate Director  
Federal Investigative Services

Attachment: DNI Memorandum with Question 21 Instruction

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Inquiries: Agency Liaison – 724-794-5612  
Code: Investigations  
Distribution: All SOIs/SONs  
Notice Expires: Until superseded

DIRECTOR OF NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20511

ES 00242

MEMORANDUM FOR: Distribution

SUBJECT: Revised Instructions for Completing Question 21, Standard Form 86, "Questionnaire for National Security Positions"

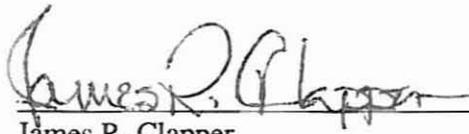
In my role as Security Executive Agent, I have conducted a comprehensive review, in consultation with the Department of Defense and other federal agencies, of Question 21 (Mental and Emotional Health) found on the Standard Form 86 (SF 86). The U.S. Government recognizes the critical importance of mental health and supports proactive management of mental health conditions, wellness, and recovery. Victims of sexual assault may benefit from mental health treatment and support, yet may not seek treatment out of concern for their career or security clearance.

In the interest of encouraging victims of sexual assault to seek the mental health services they may need, I have worked with the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and the Office of Management and Budget to revise the instructions to Question 21 on the SF 86. OPM will modify the instructions to Question 21 in the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (the electronic version of the SF 86 known as e-QIP) system as follows: "Please respond to this question with the following additional instruction: Victims of sexual assault who have consulted with a health care professional regarding an emotional or mental health condition during this period strictly in relation to the sexual assault are instructed to answer No."

Executive branch departments and agencies should instruct all individuals completing the SF 86 that the instructions for Question 21 have been modified to advise victims of sexual assault who have received mental health counseling strictly related to the sexual assault to respond "No" to this question. Other than as authorized by this revised instruction, all individuals completing the SF 86 should continue to answer Question 21 using the existing exemptions found under that question when it applies to them.

I also want to emphasize that an individual's decision to seek mental health care should not, in and of itself, adversely impact that individual's ability to obtain or maintain eligibility to hold a national security sensitive position or eligibility for access to classified information. In fact, the decision to seek personal wellness and recovery may favorably affect a person's eligibility determination. Further, mental health counseling alone cannot form the basis of a denial of a security clearance.

Agencies shall ensure that all personnel are trained specifically on the contents of this memorandum and that the additional instruction regarding responding to question 21, attached here, be provided in hard copy if the electronic form is not used. Questions pertaining to this memorandum should be directed to Mr. Charles Sowell at (571) 204-6508 or SecEA@dni.gov.

  
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James R. Clapper.

12 April 2013  
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Date

Attachment:

1. Question 21 Instruction

SUBJECT: Revised Instructions for Completing Question 21, Standard Form 86, "Questionnaire for National Security Positions"

Distribution:

Secretary of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture  
Secretary of Commerce, Department of Commerce  
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Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence, Department of Defense  
Secretary of the Air Force, U.S. Air Force  
Secretary of the Army, U.S. Army  
Secretary of the Navy, U.S. Navy  
Commandant of the Marine Corps, U.S. Marine Corps  
Chief, National Guard Bureau  
Director, Defense Information Systems Agency

SUBJECT: Revised Instructions for Completing Question 21, Standard Form 86, "Questionnaire for National Security Positions"

Distribution (continued):

Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
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Director, Missile Defense Agency  
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Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency  
Administrator, Equal Employment Opportunity Commission  
Chairman, Federal Reserve Board, Federal Reserve System  
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Chairman, Federal Maritime Commission  
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Chairman, Security and Exchange Commission  
Director, Office of Science and Technology Policy  
Director, Selective Service System  
Administrator, Small Business Administration  
Commissioner, Social Security Administration  
Administrator, United States Agency for International Development  
Commissioner, United States Customs and Border Protection  
U.S Trade Representative  
Director, White House Office of the National Drug Control Policy  
Office of Board of Governors, United States Postal Service

**REVISED INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING QUESTION 21  
OF STANDARD FORM 86, "QUESTIONNAIRE FOR  
NATIONAL SECURITY POSITIONS"**

**EFFECTIVE 4 APRIL 2013**

QUESTION 21 OF THE STANDARD FORM 86 (SF 86) "QUESTIONNAIRE FOR NATIONAL SECURITY POSITIONS" ASKS ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH TREATMENT. IN THE INTEREST OF ENCOURAGING VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT TO SEEK THE MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES THEY MAY NEED, REVISED INSTRUCTIONS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED. THE REVISED QUESTION 21 INSTRUCTION IS AS FOLLOWS:

"PLEASE RESPOND TO THIS QUESTION WITH THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL INSTRUCTION: VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ASSAULT WHO HAVE CONSULTED WITH A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL REGARDING AN EMOTIONAL OR MENTAL HEALTH CONDITION DURING THIS PERIOD STRICTLY IN RELATION TO THE SEXUAL ASSAULT ARE INSTRUCTED TO ANSWER NO."

OTHER THAN AS AUTHORIZED BY THIS REVISED INSTRUCTION, ALL INDIVIDUALS COMPLETING THE SF 86 SHOULD CONTINUE TO ANSWER QUESTION 21 USING THE EXISTING EXEMPTIONS FOUND UNDER THAT QUESTION WHEN IT APPLIES TO THEM.