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# Security Clearance Jobs Salary Survey Results

Q1 2006

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A salary survey of over 700 job seekers with active or current security clearances registered on ClearanceJobs.com between November 20, 2005 and January 20, 2006.

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## Top 10 Highest Salaries by Location

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### Key Points:

- Cleared candidates in metro Washington, DC (DC, MD, VA) represent a large portion of the highest paid locations
- Dangerous work securing and rebuilding Iraq continues to pay premium wages

### Analysis:

Survey results show polled cleared candidates in metro Washington, DC region (DC, MD, VA) continue to be paid higher salaries than most other states. Since many U.S. defense contractors have multiple offices in the DC area, the need for cleared candidates is large. As indicated in the tables below, jobs in Iraq understandably offer high pay and high risks. While Ohio has always been a strong location for the military and defense industry, its high rank was not expected. Cleared candidates in New Mexico show strong earnings, most likely due to the high number of Department of Energy scientists in the area working for national laboratories like Los Alamos and Sandia. High level System Engineering jobs in the Oswego and Syracuse areas of New York push salaries to a premium. Similarly, since most aerospace contractors have a strong presence in California and employ thousands of skilled Electrical, Design, and Systems Engineers, wages are naturally higher for these cleared candidates.

### Methodology:

In all sets of data, the anomalies (overly extreme high or low salary data) are excluded from the calculation. This ensures salaries reported are representative of what is typically seen in the marketplace. Additionally, locations represented by less than 1% of the total number of survey participants are excluded from the calculation.

Location	Average Salary
Iraq	92,142.86
MD	89,111.11
OH	86,111.11
NM	83,888.89
NY	80,937.50
Germany	80,000.00
VA	77,108.21
DC	70,072.46
CA	69,216.13
AZ	68,000.00

Location	Median Salary
Iraq	125,000.00
MD	87,500.00
NM	85,000.00
OH	81,666.67
NY	80,937.50
DC	75,000.00
Germany	75,000.00
VA	74,333.33
AZ	70,000.00
CA	68,333.33



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## National Salaries by Clearance Level

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### Key Points:

- The higher a candidate's clearance level, the higher the earning potential
- Salary range within each clearance level is wide - pay is not solely determined by clearance level

### Analysis:

National average and median salaries by clearance level follow an expected trend, with candidates having the highest level clearances issued by the National Security Agency (NSA) and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) earning more than candidates with lower level Department of Defense-issued clearances. With NSA and CIA cleared candidates in short supply, these clearance holders' salaries are at a premium.

A common misconception is that candidates with higher clearances have more "important" jobs than candidates with lower clearance levels. This is not necessarily the case, as the wide range of salaries within each clearance level indicates the jobs available come from many genres. For example, a Senior Systems Engineer and an entry-level HVAC Technician may share the same clearance level. However, their salaries will reflect the average pay for job and industry itself as well as experience level and other factors.

Three factors allow candidates with Department of Energy (DOE) Q or L clearances to command the highest salaries. First, these candidates tend to have specialized and unique skill sets, often coming from valuable scientific and/or research backgrounds. Second, fewer DOE clearance holders are available in the labor market. They tend to not change jobs as often as other candidates do. Third, many DOE clearance holders are directly employed by the Federal government rather than contractors. For energy workers, the government-sponsored labs often pay better than contractors and offer added job security.

### Methodology:

In all sets of data, the anomalies (overly extreme high or low salary data) are excluded from the calculation. This ensures salaries reported are representative of what is typically seen in the marketplace. Candidates with Top Secret, Top Secret SCI, or Top Secret SSBI are combined into the single "Top Secret" heading. Collateral clearances below (C, S, TS) are all Department of Defense issued.

Clearance	Cleared Average	Cleared Median	StdDev
Department of Energy (DOE)	102,500.00	105,000.00	26,299.56
NSA or CIA	92,500.00	95,000.00	30,928.61
Top Secret (TS)	69,030.50	65,000.00	25,955.12
Secret (S)	62,289.72	55,000.00	26,864.99
Confidential (C)	45,000.00	35,000.00	26,457.51



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## National Salaries by Polygraph Level

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**Key Points:**

- The higher a candidate’s polygraph level, the higher the earning potential
- Candidates with polygraphs earn an average of \$10,000 more per year than cleared candidates without one

**Analysis:**

Approximately 20% of all cleared candidates nationwide have passed a Counter Intelligence or Lifestyle Polygraph. With demand high and overall supply low, candidates with polygraphs continue to have additional earning potential. Survey results show candidates with polygraphs earn an approximate average of \$10,000 more per year than cleared candidates without polygraphs.

**Methodology:**

In all sets of data, the anomalies (overly extreme high or low salary data) are excluded from the calculation. This ensures salaries reported are representative of what is typically seen in the marketplace. Candidates that have a polygraph but chose to not specify the level for confidentiality were not included in the calculation.

<b>Polygraph</b>	<b>Average Salary</b>	<b>Median Salary</b>	<b>StdDev</b>
Lifestyle Polygraph	80,319.15	85,000.00	26,362.94
Counter Intelligence Polygraph	70,168.54	65,000.00	30,826.21
No Polygraph	65,472.97	65,000.00	27,551.92



## Top 20 Highest Salaries by Industry with Cleared / Uncleared Salary Comparison

### Key Points:

- Candidates with security clearances in the highest paying positions earn an average of approximately 23% more (or \$18,603) than their equivalent uncleared counterparts

### Analysis:

Candidates with security clearances continue to be valued more than their equivalent uncleared counterparts. Based on survey results of the top 20 highest paid industries for security-cleared candidates (see below), cleared candidates earn an average of \$18,603 (or 23%) more per year than non-cleared candidates in the same industry.

Similarly, the U.S. Department of Labor published a nationwide average nationwide yearly salary of \$49,650 for white collar, non-sales positions in 2004. The average yearly nationwide salary of polled security-cleared workers on ClearanceJobs.com is \$65,684 a difference of \$16,034 (or 24%) over the Department of Labor-reported national average.

### Methodology:

In all sets of data, the anomalies (overly extreme high or low salary data) are excluded from the calculation. This ensures salaries reported are representative of what is typically seen in the marketplace. Uncleared salary data is from PayScale.com. It is understood that a while a small number of the candidates polled on PayScale.com and from the U.S. Department of Labor surveys will have security clearances, the large majority will not.

Industry	Cleared Avg	Uncleared Avg	Cleared Median	Uncleared Median
IT Management-Executive	105,000.00	86,179.00	95,000.00	77,500.00
IT Management-Project Manager	92,750.00	63,106.00	85,000.00	60,000.00
Software Development	91,666.67	62,827.00	90,000.00	66,232.00
Project Manager	91,363.64	57,549.00	90,000.00	53,000.00
Engineering-Telecommunications	88,750.00	62,612.00	85,000.00	61,250.00
IT Software-Java	86,000.00	62,124.00	80,000.00	60,000.00
Security-Disaster Recovery	83,000.00	72,964.00	85,000.00	73,000.00
Systems Engineer	82,894.74	63,340.00	85,000.00	60,000.00
Security-Network Management	81,923.08	72,964.00	75,000.00	73,000.00
Systems Analysis	79,166.67	57,728.00	80,000.00	58,800.00
Engineering-Electrical	77,500.00	61,369.00	70,000.00	62,280.00
Network/LAN/WAN Design	76,666.67	63,340.00	85,000.00	60,000.00
Procurement	76,666.67	64,083.00	70,000.00	54,000.00
System Admin-User Admin.	75,000.00	45,955.00	65,000.00	45,000.00
Database Admin-Oracle	75,000.00	52,707.00	70,000.00	67,842.00
IT Software-Programming	75,000.00	62,827.00	75,000.00	66,232.00
Engineering-Aviation	74,333.33	72,546.00	65,000.00	71,000.00
IT Hardware-Unix	72,142.86	64,092.00	75,000.00	63,000.00
Contract Admin	70,909.09	48,954.00	75,000.00	45,750.00
Facilities	69,000.00	55,399.00	55,000.00	52,000.00



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## National Cleared/Uncleared Salary Gender Gap

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**Key Points:**

- The salary gender gap between male and female cleared candidates is smaller than between uncleared candidates

**Analysis:**

Based on survey results, women with security clearances earn .85 cents to every one dollar cleared men earn. In comparison, uncleared women earn .77 cents to every one dollar uncleared men earn. This may indicate that the security clearance has a slight leveling effect on the salary gender gap. This is especially interesting considering males are the predominant gender making up the U.S. defense industry.

**Methodology:**

In all sets of data, the anomalies (overly extreme high or low salary data) are excluded from the calculation. This ensures salaries reported are representative of what is typically seen in the marketplace. Gender gap information obtained from WageProject.org. Uncleared salary data obtained from PayScale.com.

Gender	Cleared Average	Uncleared Average
Male	68,840.00	61,418.00
Female	58,076.00	48,098.00