

For: FFAS Employees

Personnel Security Process Update

Approved by: Deputy Administrator, Management



1 Processing of Fingerprints Background Investigations

A Background

Notice AO-1478 was released on September 27, 2010, alerting FFAS employees of the Emergency Preparedness Division's (EPD's) assumption of responsibility for the FSA personnel security program for FTE's. EPD had already been performing personnel security functions for contractors.

To meet OPM requirements, paper versions of SF-85's, SF-85P's, and SF-86's are **no** longer accepted. Instead, the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) system will be used to initiate background investigations.

All employees hired require a **favorable** OF-306 and pre-employment fingerprint adjudication before establishing an enter-on-duty date. The **only** exception is when an employee is promoted or reassigned within the same agency, such as FSA, FAS, or RMA. However, employees moving from the FSA non-Federal (CO) system to FSA Federal (GS) system or from the FSA Federal (GS) system to the FSA non-Federal (CO) system are not considered staying within the "same agency" and **must** be fingerprinted. Employees staying within the FSA non-Federal (CO) system, e.g., converting from temporary to permanent, or staying within the FSA Federal (GS), e.g., changing positions within the State Office, do **not** require new fingerprints.

After analyzing the process put in place by Notice AO-1478 and bringing on new staff, EPD has determined that an adjustment is required for maximum program efficiency.

Disposal Date	Distribution
April 1, 2011	All FAS, FSA, and RMA employees; State Offices relay to County Offices

Notice AO-1485

1 Processing of Fingerprints Background Investigations (Continued)

B Purpose

This notice:

- informs all FSA State Offices and other employees serviced by FSA HRD in Washington, DC, and Kansas City, MO, that effective **January 3, 2011**, EPD will:
 - service the State Offices based on geography according to paragraph 2
 - process both fingerprints and background investigations in the same office where they are sent
- notifies State Offices that EPD is in the process of working on a National policy for background investigations for janitors, landlords, contractors, and non-full-time Federal/non-Federal employees, e.g., Field Technicians
- reminds personnel to use SF-87 for **all** employees (GS and CO)
- informs personnel that FSA-786, item 14 should be used to indicate the position sensitivity level of the employee
- informs personnel that FSA-786, item 3 should be used to provide the anticipated entry on duty date for the employee
- informs State Offices that the only documentation that will be received on closed investigations will be the certificate of investigation according to personnel management guidelines
- informs personnel that EPD will make every attempt to complete fingerprint adjudications within 3 to 5 days of receiving completed security package
- revises FSA-786 (Exhibit 1)
- obsoletes Notice AO-1478.

Notice AO-1485

2 Implementation Actions

A FSA State Office Actions

Pre-employment fingerprint and adjudication will be handled by EPD as follows.

IF located in...	THEN send security packages to...
AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, MI, MN, MO, MT, ND, NE, NM, NV, OH, OK, OR, SD, TX, UT, WA, WI, or WY	EPD-KC BEACON FACILITY - MAIL STOP 8388 9240 TROOST AVENUE KANSAS CITY, MO 64131 Telephone: 816-926-6689.
AL, AR, CT, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MS, NC, NH, NJ, NY, PA, PR, RI, SC, TN, VA, VT, or WV	EPD-WDC MAIL STOP 0543, ROOM 0092 1400 INDEPENDENCE AVE SW WASHINGTON, DC 20250 Telephone: 202-260-8165.

For:

- **non-Federal (CO) positions**, the FSA State Office will submit selectee’s SF-87, FSA-786, resume or FSA-675, and OF-306 for processing according to the table in this subparagraph

Notes: OF-306 should be acceptable to State Office human resources contact before submitting the security package to EPD.

After fingerprints are adjudicated, EPD will alert those listed on FSA-786 as to the preliminary suitability of the selectee.

- **Federal (GS) positions**, the FSA State Office will submit selectee’s OF-306 to the Servicing HR Specialist in HRD for review and approval.

Notes: After approved, HRD will initial OF-306 and return it to the State Office. The State Office will send OF-306, SF-87, FSA-786, and resume or OF-612 to EPD by FedEx for processing according to the table in this subparagraph. After fingerprints are adjudicated, EPD will notify those listed on FSA-786 as to the preliminary suitability of the selectee.

After finding criminal activity on the selectee’s fingerprint results that should have been recorded on his or her OF-306, EPD adjudicator will contact the appropriate offices listed in this subparagraph, including ELRB if necessary, informing that further investigation or review needs to be conducted before a determination can be made. After consulting with all necessary parties, including selectee, a determination will be made as to whether the selectee is suitable for employment.

Notice AO-1485

2 Implementation Actions (Continued)

A FSA State Office Actions (Continued)

Using “non-ink” fingerprints, where the local law enforcement official prints the fingerprints onto SF-87, is acceptable. However, 2 separate sets of fingerprints must be taken and printed by the law enforcement official (not just a copy).

If FSA State Offices have any questions, contact EPD according to paragraph 3.

For **background investigations**, instead of submitting SF-85, SF-85P, and/or SF-86, FSA State security contacts will submit FSA-786 to EPD with the information necessary to initiate the employee in the e-QIP system.

After EPD receives FSA-786 and the fingerprints results are favorably adjudicated, the selectee will be invited by EPD to the e-QIP web site and receive instructions on completing the electronic SF-85, SF-85P, and/or SF-86.

Note: To assist new employees and expedite completing their electronic SF-85, servicing offices will include a link to the applicable form to use as a worksheet (SF-85, SF-85P, and/or SF-86) in their Official Offer Letter.

B National Office-Based Employees (Non-State and County Offices)

For all offices serviced by HRD in Washington, DC, and Kansas City, MO, EPD will now complete pre-employment fingerprinting and adjudication as follows.

IF employee is located in...	THEN office will now be serviced by...
FAS, FSA, and RMA office that is located in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area	EPD-WDC and should contact the EPD at 202-260-8165.
FSA and RMA offices outside the Washington, DC, metropolitan area, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kansas City, MO, RMA Regional Offices • St. Louis, MO • APFO 	<p>EPD-KC and should contact either of the following for pre-employment fingerprinting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carmen Pitts by telephone at 816-926-6112 • Don Butler by telephone at 816-926-1679. <p>Note: Remote employees, e.g., APFO, RMA Regional Offices, St. Louis, should submit SF-87's to EPD-KC using FedEx to the following address.</p> <p align="center"> EPD-KC BEACON FACILITY- MAIL STOP 8388 9240 TROOST AVENUE KANSAS CITY, MO 64131 Telephone: 816-926-6689 </p>

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2 Implementation Actions (Continued)

C EPD Actions

After fingerprints are adjudicated, EPD will alert those listed on FSA-786.

EPD will initiate all employees, **except** FAS employees that require a security clearance (i.e. Confidential, Secret, and Top Secret), in the e-QIP system for the **background investigation** to be completed.

New employees will have 10 workdays from date of initiation to complete the information in the e-QIP system.

EPD will review and adjudicate all background investigations.

Note: To assist new employees and expedite completing their e-QIP SF-85, SF-85P, and/or SF-86, servicing offices will include a link to SF-85, SF-85P, and/or SF-86 worksheet in their Official Offer Letter. After the employee has been initiated in e-QIP, EPD will send an e-mail to the employee with instructions on how to complete the e-QIP SF-85, SF-85P, and/or SF-86.

3 Contacts

A EPD Contacts

If there are any questions about this notice, contact any of the following:

- Jerry Epting, EPD Director, by either of the following:
 - e-mail to jerry.epting@wdc.usda.gov
 - telephone at 202-720-7696
- Josh Bornstein, EPD Deputy Director, by either of the following:
 - e-mail to josh.bornstein@wdc.usda.gov
 - telephone at 202-690-4770.

Example of FSA-786

The following is an example of the revised FSA-786.

<p>This form is available electronically.</p> <p>FSA-786 (12-07-10)</p> <p>U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Farm Service Agency</p> <p align="center">INFORMATION NEEDED FOR BACKGROUND INVESTIGATIONS FOR ALL NEW HIRES</p>				<p>1. GS or CO <input type="checkbox"/> GS <input type="checkbox"/> CO</p>
				<p>2. Employed By <input type="checkbox"/> FSA <input type="checkbox"/> FAS <input type="checkbox"/> FSA/CO <input type="checkbox"/> RMA</p>
				<p>3. Expected Entry On Duty Date</p>
<p>NOTE: <i>This collection of information is completed by current Federal Government employees and is therefore excluded from the Paperwork Reduction Act requirement as specified in the 5 CFR 1320.3, and OMB approval is not required for this collection of information.</i></p> <p align="center"><i>The provisions of appropriate criminal and civil fraud, privacy, and other statutes may be applicable to the information provided.</i></p>				
<p>Instructions: Enter the information below for the applicant. Enter the applicant's complete name and address as it appears on their government-issued ID, such as a driver's license or passport. If the information doesn't match, the applicant will encounter problems during the enrollment process and may have to reapply. THIS FORM IS NOT FOR CONTRACTORS, VOLUNTEERS OR INTERNS.</p> <p>ROUTING: COUNTY OFFICE SEND TO STATE OFFICE, STATE OFFICE SEND TO EPD.</p>				
4. New Employee Name (First, Middle (if any), Last, Suffix (if any))			5. Telephone No. (Include Area Code)	
			6. Place of Birth (City/State, If outside U.S., enter City/Country)	
7. Social Security No. (9-Digits)	8. Date of Birth	9. Country of Citizenship (Enter the applicant's country of citizenship)	10. Country (Enter the country in which the applicant resides)	
11. Home address (Enter the applicant's home address as shown on their government-issued ID, such as a driver's license or passport)				
12. Previous Background Investigation (Has the United States government ever investigated applicant's background and/or granted him/her a security clearance?)				
Please check one: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DON'T KNOW <input type="checkbox"/>				
If "YES", enter Agency Name that conducted the background investigation:				
TO BE COMPLETED BY STO				
13A. State Name		13B. Employee Duty Station (City and State)		
14. Position Sensitivity Level as listed in Position Description (Check one)				
<input type="checkbox"/> Fingerprint Only - Special Case <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Sensitive/Low Risk (Most employees)/1N <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate Risk (Public Trust)/5N <input type="checkbox"/> High Risk (Public Trust)/6N <input type="checkbox"/> Other (must provide documentation – e.g., National Security Clearance required):				
* If you are unsure as to the position sensitivity level, contact your HR servicing professional.				
15. Employee Position Title	16. HRD Point of Contact Name and Phone No. (Include Area Code)	17. STO Point of Contact Name and Phone No. (Include Area Code)	18. State Office Security Liaison Representatives (If applicable)	
<p><i>The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Stop 9410, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call toll-free at (866) 632-9992 (English) or (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (English Federal-relay) or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish Federal-relay). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.</i></p>				