

# Getting a Top Secret Security Clearance

## A guide to gathering information for the online questionnaires

Once your organisation confirms that you need a top secret security clearance, you need to fill out two online questionnaires. The questionnaires are part of the security vetting process for a clearance.

Use the tips and checklists in this guide to help you identify and find the information you need for the questionnaires. If you gather the information before you go online, you'll find it much easier and quicker to do the questionnaires.

### About the questionnaires

The *Initial Questionnaire* comes first and takes about 1 hour to finish. It asks you to:

- provide some basic personal information
- consent to the New Zealand Security Intelligence Service (NZSIS) accessing your personal information.

The *Security Questionnaire* comes next and asks for information on your background. It covers the last 10 years, or back to age 18 if you are under 28 years.

Set aside 4–5 hours to complete this questionnaire. You can save your information and enter it over a few sessions.

### How you get access to the questionnaires

You'll get an email with a login link for the *Initial Questionnaire*. You must log in within 5 days to set your password.

After you complete the *Initial Questionnaire* and the NZSIS confirms it, you'll get another email with a link to the *Security Questionnaire*.

Aim to complete both questionnaires within 2 weeks of receiving the first email or sooner if you can.

### Where to get more information about the vetting process for your clearance

To understand more about the vetting process: what it's about, why it's important, and what to expect, go to: [protectivesecurity.govt.nz/personnel-security/clearances/getting-a-clearance](https://protectivesecurity.govt.nz/personnel-security/clearances/getting-a-clearance)

If you have questions about the information you need to provide in the questionnaires, talk to the organisation that is sponsoring your application for a security clearance. If you don't know who is sponsoring your clearance or who to contact, check with your manager.

## Tips to help you gather the right information

<b>Personal information on other people</b>	<p>The best way to get the information you need on other people is to ask them directly. When you can't ask directly, try:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• asking other friends or family</li><li>• using family records, such as birth, death, or marriage certificates; or passports</li><li>• checking public records, such as registers of births, deaths, and marriages.</li></ul>
<b>Citizenship information</b>	<p>To find citizenship information, go to: <a href="https://govt.nz/browse/passports-citizenship-and-identity/nz-citizenship">govt.nz/browse/passports-citizenship-and-identity/nz-citizenship</a></p>
<b>Visa information</b>	<p>To find visa information, go to: <a href="https://immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas">immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas</a></p>
<b>Previous addresses</b>	<p>To find previous addresses, try old electronic or paper documents. For example, old power or phone accounts, rates invoices, sale and purchase agreements, or rental agreements.</p>
<b>Previous jobs or employer details</b>	<p>To find information about jobs you've had in the past or previous employers, you could look in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• your curriculum vitae (CV) — current or previous copies</li><li>• your LinkedIn profile</li><li>• the Companies Register — <a href="https://companiesoffice.govt.nz">companiesoffice.govt.nz</a></li><li>• relevant websites.</li></ul>
<b>Passports</b>	<p>To check or get passport information, go to: <a href="https://passports.govt.nz">passports.govt.nz</a></p>
<b>Other countries visited</b>	<p>To find overseas travel information, try checking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• your emails for booking confirmations (accommodation, flights) or travel itineraries</li><li>• your social media account(s) for posts on your travels</li><li>• your passports (old and new) for visa or travel stamps</li><li>• with people you travelled with to see if they have any records you can use</li><li>• any travel logs or diaries you kept.</li></ul> <p>You can also request a summary of your previous travel movements, but it can take up to 20 working days to get it. Go to: <a href="https://customs.govt.nz/about-us/travel-movements-request">customs.govt.nz/about-us/travel-movements-request</a></p>

## Checklist for providing the right information about you

Subject area and definition	Information to provide	Applies to you?	Done?
<b>Dual citizenship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you currently hold dual citizenships?</li> <li>Have you held dual citizenships in the past?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All citizenships — current and previous</li> </ul>		
<b>New Zealand citizenship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are you a NZ citizen?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NZ citizenship number or passport number</li> </ul>		
<b>Country of birth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were you born overseas?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The date you arrived in NZ</li> <li>Your town and country of birth</li> </ul>		
<b>Resident Class Visa/NZ Permanent Resident</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you hold a Resident Class Visa?</li> <li>Do you hold a NZ Permanent Resident Visa?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The type of visa you hold</li> </ul>		
<b>Addresses</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>At any time over the past 10 years, have you lived overseas for more than 3 months at a time?</li> <li><b>Note:</b> Include any deployments or work placements.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overseas residential addresses</li> <li>Dates you lived at these addresses</li> </ul>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Over the past 10 years, have you lived anywhere different from your current address?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Previous addresses</li> <li>Dates lived at these addresses</li> </ul>		
<b>Employment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are you currently employed? Who by?</li> <li>Over the past 10 years, have you been employed by any other employers in NZ (not counting your current employer)?</li> <li>Over the past 10 years, have you been employed overseas for any period?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dates of employment — from/to</li> <li>Position held — your job title</li> <li>Employer</li> <li>Business address</li> <li>Reason for leaving</li> </ul>		
<b>Passports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Do you currently hold a New Zealand or foreign passport?</li> <li>Have you previously held a New Zealand or foreign passport?</li> </ul>	Passport numbers, and issue and expiry dates for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current passports</li> <li>Expired passports (where possible)</li> <li>Passport(s) you have held under a different name</li> </ul>		
<b>Other countries visited</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you visited any overseas countries in the past 10 years?</li> <li>Note: If you went on a tour, include all the countries you visited.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All countries visited</li> <li>Dates of visits (approximate dates are ok)</li> <li>Reason for travel</li> </ul>		
<b>Education</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have you attended any secondary schools, high schools, universities or other tertiary institutions?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dates of study</li> <li>Institute of study</li> <li>Qualifications complete/incomplete</li> </ul>		

## Checklist for providing the right information about other people

Subject area and definition	Information to provide	Applies to you?	Done?
<p><b>Children</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children aged 16 years or over (include any step- or adopted children)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full name</li> <li>Date and country of birth</li> <li>Date of death (if applicable)</li> <li>All current and former citizenships</li> <li>Date of arrival in NZ (if applicable)</li> <li>Occupation</li> <li>Employer</li> <li>Residential address</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Siblings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full and half siblings, and any adoptive or step-brothers and sisters</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Parents or caregivers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tell us about your birth parents and any other people who have played a significant role in your upbringing. For example, whānau, adoptive parents, step-parents, or guardians.</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Current spouse or partner</b> <b>AND</b> <b>Any previous spouse or partner from the past 10 years</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spouse means a person you're married to or in a civil union with.</li> <li>Partner means a person you're in a steady, live-in, or committed relationship with. Partner includes anyone you're currently involved with or may be entering a relationship with.</li> </ul>	<p>Same information as above, plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Duration of relationship</li> <li>Date and place of marriage/civil union (if applicable)</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Parents of spouse or partner</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Your spouse or partner's birth parents and any other person who played a significant role in their upbringing. For example, whānau, adoptive parents, step-parents, or guardians.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full name</li> <li>Date and country of birth</li> <li>Date of death (if applicable)</li> <li>All current and former citizenships</li> <li>Date of arrival in NZ (if applicable)</li> <li>Occupation</li> <li>Employer</li> <li>Residential address</li> </ul>		
<p><b>Shared accommodation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Anyone else aged 16 years or older who you live with that is not listed above. For example, flatmates.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Full name — include all middle names, any other names they are known by, maiden names, and previous married names</li> <li>Date and country of birth</li> <li>Occupation</li> <li>Employer</li> </ul>		

## Checklist for providing the right information about other people continued

Subject area and definition	Information to provide	Applies to you?	Done?
<p><b>Referees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Referee 1</b> — a work supervisor, immediate manager or another person who has overseen some work or study you have completed. Ideally, they've known you for at least 2 years.</li> <li>• <b>Referee 2</b> — a work colleague or fellow member of an organisation you belong to. Ideally, they've known you for at least 2 years.</li> <li>• <b>Referees 3 &amp; 4</b> — friends or colleagues you know within a social environment. Ideally, they've known you for at least 5 years.</li> </ul> <p><b>Note:</b> Your referees need to be contactable for a period of at least 6 weeks</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full name — include all middle names, any other names they are known by, maiden names, and previous married names.</li> <li>• Date and country of birth</li> <li>• Occupation</li> <li>• Employer</li> <li>• Email address — we'll use this to contact your referee, so please ensure it is correct and their most used email address</li> </ul>		