

*From the Desk of Denise Spiller, Director
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Marijuana Reclassification and Security Clearances: Have Any Rules Changed?

Recent news headlines have suggested that the federal government's move to reclassify marijuana represents a major shift in how cannabis is treated nationwide. For many security clearance holders and applicants, the natural question is whether this change makes marijuana use less risky from a security clearance perspective.

The short answer is: NO

After more than 25 years representing security clearance holders and applicants, I have seen similar policy shifts generate confusion. While the recent executive order by the President and this week's Department of Justice action reclassifying certain marijuana products from Schedule I to Schedule III are significant in some respects, their practical impact on security clearance cases is far more limited than many assume.

What the New Policy Actually Does

The recent action reclassifies certain state-licensed and FDA-approved marijuana products as Schedule III substances, a lower-risk category under federal drug laws.

This change is intended primarily to:

- Expand medical research
- Ease regulatory burdens on certain cannabis-related activities
- Align federal policy more closely with state medical marijuana programs

However, and this is important, the change **does not legalize marijuana at the federal level**, particularly for recreational use.

To read the full article: [Marijuana Reclassification and Security Clearances: Have Any Rules Changed?](#)



Terminations and Your Security Clearance: What You Need to Know

Employment terminations are a common concern for both security clearance applicants and current clearance holders. Many individuals assume that being fired automatically disqualifies them from obtaining or maintaining a clearance. In reality, that is not always the case.



In our practice representing clearance holders and applicants, I have seen how terminations, depending on the circumstances, can raise concerns under the adjudicative guidelines. However, when properly addressed, these issues can often be mitigated.

Understanding how terminations are evaluated is critical to protecting your clearance and your career.

Why Terminations Matter in Clearance Cases

Terminations are typically reviewed under Guideline E (Personal Conduct) and, in some cases, Guideline J (Criminal Conduct) or other applicable guidelines, depending on the facts.

The government is not simply concerned with the fact that an individual was terminated. Instead, adjudicators look at several concerns, such as:

- The reason for the termination
- Whether there is a pattern of similar conduct
- The individual's honesty in reporting the event
- Whether the behavior raises concerns about judgment, reliability, or trustworthiness
- A single termination for minor performance issues is viewed very differently from repeated terminations involving misconduct or dishonesty.

Not All Terminations Are Treated the Same

There is a significant difference between:

- A layoff or reduction in force
- A termination for performance issues
- A termination for misconduct (e.g., timecard fraud, misuse of systems, harassment)
- For example, a layoff due to budget cuts generally has little to no impact on a clearance decision. By contrast, a termination involving dishonesty or serious rule violations may raise more security concerns.



Context matters. Adjudicators will evaluate the underlying facts, not just the label of “termination.”

To read the full article: [Terminations and Your Security Clearance: What You Need to Know](#)



2026 Annual Security Refresher Training

For admission to training events, you must RSVP (using your UAH email account) at the link below which corresponds to your chosen date of attendance.

Location: Bob Jones Auditorium on Redstone Arsenal - 5303 Martin Rd SW, Huntsville, AL 35808

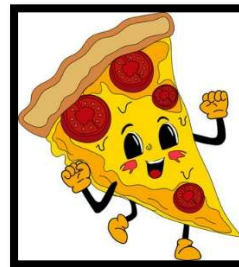
- [Tuesday, June 16th](#)
 - Time: 1:00pm-1:30pm Sign-In and Pizza, 1:30pm-2:30pm Training
Training starts promptly at 1:30pm
- [Thursday, July 16th](#)
 - Time: 1:00pm-1:30pm Sign-In and Pizza, 1:30pm-2:30pm Training
Training starts promptly at 1:30pm

Location: Olin B. King Technology Hall (OKT) S105, 5000 Technology Dr NW, Huntsville, AL 35805

- [Thursday, June 25th](#)
 - Time: 11:00am-11:30am Sign-In and Pizza, 11:30am-12:30pm Training
Training starts promptly at 11:30am

Keep in Mind – One of the requirements to maintain your PCL is to complete Annual Refresher Training. Per the 32 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 117.12(k), contractors will provide all cleared employees with security education and training every 12 months. Refresher training will reinforce the information provided during the initial security briefing, keep cleared employees informed of changes in security regulations, and address issues or concerns identified during contractor self-reviews.

All cleared employees will need to attend an in-person session if they are local to the Huntsville area and within a 2-hour drive.



Please remember to report any suspicious contacts or activity to ORS.

Stay aware and stay safe!



KNOW YOUR SECURITY TEAM!



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