



Security Clearance Jobs Salary Survey Results

Q3 2006

A salary survey of over 2,175 job seekers with active or current U.S. security clearances registered on ClearanceJobs.com between January 21, 2006 and September 30, 2006.

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Top 10 Highest Salaries by State

Key Points:

- Cleared candidates in metro Washington, DC (DC, MD, VA) represent a large portion of the highest paid locations
- Reported salaries in the Washington, DC area are down almost 10% since Q1 reporting
- Dangerous work securing and rebuilding Iraq continues to pay premium wages

Analysis:

The U.S. northeast region dominates the top 10 highest state salaries. As the seat of government, the DC area is home to more security-clearance jobs per capita than any other area in the country. Survey results show polled cleared candidates in the metro Washington, DC region (DC, MD, VA) continue to be paid higher salaries than most other states, even though salaries are down almost 10% since Q1 reporting. Other indicators show salaries of cleared workers in the DC area may finally be leveling off after a long period of over-inflated earnings.

As indicated in the table below, jobs in Iraq understandably offer both high pay and high risks. Salaries for cleared workers in Iraq increased 6.4% since Q1 reporting. Typical security clearance jobs in Iraq include linguists, information technology, engineering, security, and intelligence analysis.

For the first time in this survey, cleared workers in Pennsylvania report very strong earnings. In the Q1 salary survey, Pennsylvania missed the top 10 by only one position. However, Fortune 500 employers like Boeing, Raytheon, AT&T, and EDS all have substantial homeland security and defense operations in Pennsylvania, particularly around Allentown and Philadelphia.

High level System and Embedded Software Engineering jobs in the Binghamton and Syracuse areas of New York continue to push salaries to a premium.

Although clearance job salaries in Arizona dropped approximately 5.5% since the Q1 report, the state still managed to claim the tenth spot for the second time. Clearance jobs in Phoenix are reported as being the best paid in the state.

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 Q3
Iraq	98,387.10
MD	78,422.00
VA	76,500.00
PA	76,451.61
DC	73,428.45
NY	69,444.44
NJ	69,032.26
MA	65,740.74
IL	65,476.00
AZ	64,423.08



National Salaries by Clearance Level

Key Points:

- The higher a candidate's clearance level, the higher his or her earning potential
- Salary range within each clearance level is wide - pay is not solely determined by clearance level
- Salaries for candidates with a Confidential clearance level are up 13.46%

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. However average salaries for this high clearance level have come down by almost 4.7% since Q1, possibly indicating the over inflation of NSA and CIA clearance holders' salaries have finally reached their peak.

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 the job and the industry itself as well as experience level and other factors.

Interestingly, although jobs that require higher clearance levels (TS or greater) are up by almost 10% on ClearanceJobs.com since Q1, the largest boost in salary comes to those candidates with the lowest Confidential level clearance. As employers begin to find it easier to "upgrade" Confidential cleared candidates to higher clearance levels, more of these job seekers become valid potential hires.

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	Q3 Cleared Average	Q1 Cleared Average	% Increase/Decrease from Q1
Department of Energy (DOE)	101,000.00	102,500.00	-1.49%
NSA or CIA-Issued	88,359.38	92,500.00	-4.69%
Top Secret (TS)	70,223.62	69,031.00	1.70%
Secret (S)	62,160.58	62,290.00	-0.21%
Confidential (C)	52,000.00	45,000.00	13.46%



National Salaries by Polygraph Level

Key Points:

- The higher a candidate's polygraph level, the higher his or her earning potential
- Candidates with polygraphs earn an average of almost \$11,000 or 14%, more per year than cleared candidates without one
- On average, polygraph cleared candidates are earning almost 2.5% higher salaries than those reported in Q1

Analysis:

Approximately 20% of all security-cleared candidates nationwide have passed a Counter Intelligence or Lifestyle Polygraph. With demand high and increasing and overall supply low, candidates with polygraphs continue to have additional earning potential. Survey results show candidates with polygraphs earn an approximate average of almost \$11,000 more per year than cleared candidates without polygraphs. Candidates with the more common Counter Intelligence Polygraph outnumber those with Lifestyle Polygraphs by approximately 3 to 1 on ClearanceJobs.com. At the same time, the number of jobs posted to ClearanceJobs.com that require polygraph have increased by 4% since Q1.

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.

Polygraph	Q3 Cleared Average	Q1 Cleared Average	% Increase/Decrease from Q1
Lifestyle Polygraph	82,189.78	80,319.00	2.28%
Counter Intelligence Polygraph	71,086.47	70,169.00	2.66%
No Polygraph	66,146.76	65,684.00	0.70%



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 20% more (or \$17,367) than their equivalent uncleared counterparts
- Salaries for cleared workers in the top 20 highest paid industries remained at similar levels to Q1 reported data, with a negative 2% change overall

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 \$17,367 (or 20%) more per year than non-cleared candidates in the same industry. Salaries for the top 20 highest paid industries are down 2% from Q1 reported data. Similarly, the U.S. Department of Labor published a nationwide average nationwide yearly salary of \$51,147 for white collar, non-sales positions in June 2005. The average yearly nationwide salary of polled security-cleared workers on ClearanceJobs.com is \$67,429 a difference of \$16,282 (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. New entries into the top 20 list are indicated with an "n/a" flag below.

Industry	Q3 Cleared Avg	Uncleared Avg	% Increase/Decrease from Q1
IT Management-Executive	111,578.95	86,179.00	5.90%
IT Management-Project Manager	99,322.03	75,000.00	6.62%
Engineering-Military Software	95,526.32	66,060.00	n/a
Project/Program Management	94,420.29	57,549.00	3.24%
IT Software-Java/J2EE	89,318.18	73,776.00	3.72%
Professional Services	87,489.00	60,000.00	n/a
Engineering-Military Hardware	85,000.00	66,240.00	n/a
Software Development	84,208.50	66,232.00	-8.86%
Systems Engineer	84,200.00	60,000.00	1.55%
Database Admin-Oracle	83,182.76	75,000.00	9.84%
Systems Analysis	81,666.67	76,108.00	3.06%
Security-Network Management	80,769.23	72,500.00	-1.43%
IT Hardware-Unix	77,894.74	62,000.00	7.38%
Engineering-Aerospace and Aviation	76,851.85	69,700.00	3.28%
Engineering-Telecommunications	74,610.05	66,232.00	-18.95%
IT Software-Prog	74,285.71	61,000.00	-0.96%
Network/LAN/WAN Design	73,022.27	60,000.00	-4.99%
Engineering-Electrical	70,909.09	62,280.00	-9.29%
Finance	69,666.67	50,000.00	n/a
Engineering-Military Communications	69,285.71	50,000.00	n/a



National Cleared/Uncleared Salary Gender Gap

Key Points:

- The salary gender gap between male and female cleared candidates is smaller than the gap between uncleared candidates
- Cleared women closed the gender gap by another 3.75% since Q1, but still earn approximately 12% less than equivalent male counterparts

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	Q3 Cleared Average	Uncleared Average	Q1 Cleared Average	% Increase/Decrease from Q1
Male	68,887.00	61,418.00	68,840.00	0.07%
Female	60,833.00	48,098.00	58,076.00	4.53%