

March 2008

Security Clearance Jobs Salary Survey Results

A comprehensive salary survey of 4,200 security-cleared job seekers registered on ClearanceJobs.com between March 20, 2007 and February 20, 2008



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Top 10 Highest Salaries by State

Key Points:

- Security-cleared candidates in metro Washington, DC represent a majority of the highest paid locations for the fourth survey in a row
- States leaving the top ten since last survey include AZ, PA, and NY
- States entering the top ten since last survey include MA, OH, and HI
- Massachusetts showed the largest salary increase in the top ten states

Analysis:

As a whole, average reported nationwide salaries of security-cleared candidates were \$72,803, up 6% from 2007 published results of \$68,139. Among the top ten highest paid US states, salaries for security-cleared candidates have increased by 3.3%, or \$2,412 since last surveyed.

For the fourth consecutive survey, metro Washington, DC represents a majority of the highest paid states. Cleared candidates working in the District and Virginia reported a 2% increase in average yearly salaries, while Maryland workers showed a 2% decrease. With the military's Base Realignment and Closure initiative bringing thousands of defense jobs into Maryland, it is suspected that incoming candidates from lower paid states may have an impact on reported salaries.

Security-cleared candidates in Massachusetts reported the highest top ten gains, with an almost 10% increase in reported yearly average salaries since last surveyed. A recent study shows Massachusetts companies ranking eighth highest among states in DoD and DHS contract awards, with Waltham-based Raytheon taking top spot.

New Jersey continues to make a strong showing for defense industry salaries. High technology and

State	This Survey	Last Survey	% Inc/Dec
DC	\$ 80,380	\$ 78,813	1.95%
VA	\$ 78,043	\$ 76,090	2.50%
NJ	\$ 76,556	\$ 74,756	2.35%
CO	\$ 74,448	\$ 69,834	6.20%
MA	\$ 73,750	\$ 66,600	9.69%
MD	\$ 72,844	\$ 74,292	-1.99%
NM	\$ 72,059	\$ 71,800	0.36%
CA	\$ 70,874	\$ 65,700	7.30%
OH	\$ 68,158	\$ 66,600	2.29%
HI	\$ 67,698	\$ 66,205	2.21%

engineering jobs, along with a moderately high cost of living fuels cleared candidate salaries in hotbeds like Ft. Monmouth, Parsippany, and Eatontown.

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com, Worcester (MA) Business Journal, Commonwealth Of Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development



Top 12 Highest Salaries – DC Metro

Key Points:

- Security-cleared candidates in VA are the highest paid in the metro DC area
- The highest concentration of security clearance jobs are in Arlington County

Analysis:

Security-cleared candidates in northern Virginia make up eight of the top twelve highest paid locations in the metro Washington, DC area. While Fairfax and Arlington Counties share an equal number of spots in the list, reported salaries in Arlington are approximately \$2,400 higher per year than Fairfax. This marks a switch from last survey, where reported salaries of candidates in Fairfax were \$5,400 higher than their Arlington counterparts.

In Arlington, the booming area of Crystal City showed a marked 19% increase in reported salaries since the 2007 survey results. With its close proximity to the Pentagon and significant recent construction, Crystal City was rumored to possibly lose many jobs to nearby Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County as a result of BRAC 2005. Instead, many defense industry workers have chosen to stay in place in Crystal City, finding jobs with other contractors.

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com, Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University, Arlington County Economic Development Office

Location	This Survey	Last Survey	% Inc/Dec
VA-Herndon	\$ 94,118	\$ 85,476	9.18%
VA-Crystal City	\$ 90,714	\$ 73,710	18.74%
VA-Arlington	\$ 90,188	\$ 81,042	10.14%
VA-Chantilly	\$ 82,838	\$ 85,690	-3.44%
VA-Alexandria	\$ 81,848	\$ 75,270	8.04%
MD-Montgomery County	\$ 81,458	\$ 81,923	-0.57%
VA-Pentagon	\$ 81,154	\$ 76,667	5.53%
VA-Reston	\$ 81,094	\$ 87,660	-8.10%
DC-Washington	\$ 80,380	\$ 78,813	1.95%
MD-Ft. Meade	\$ 76,264	\$ 73,557	3.55%
VA-Falls Church	\$ 76,200	\$ 75,500	0.92%
MD-Pax River	\$ 76,000	\$ 76,000	0.00%

Security-cleared candidates in northern Virginia make up eight of the top twelve highest paid locations in the metro Washington, DC area.



Average Salaries by Clearance Level

Key Points:

- Earning potential increases as clearance level gets higher
- Salaries for candidates with the lowest Confidential clearance level increased for the third straight survey
- While Dept of Energy cleared candidates still show the highest earnings, reported salary levels remained flat between surveys

Analysis:

Due to a lower supply of candidates at the higher clearance levels, and an increasing number of jobs requiring higher clearances, national averages follow an expected trend with salaries rising as clearance levels are higher. With the exception of Department of Energy cleared candidates, all clearance levels showed a marked increase in reported salaries.

Salaries are expected to continue to rise as stricter requirements reduce the pool of potential cleared candidates for hire.

For the second straight survey, candidates holding the lowest Confidential clearance level reported sharp gains in salaries. With a 12% increase since last surveyed, many defense contractors have alluded that they are finding it easier to “upgrade” Confidential cleared candidates to higher clearance levels, making them valid potential hires.

With the exception of Department of Energy cleared candidates, all clearance levels showed a marked increase in reported salaries.

Clearance	This Survey	Last Survey	% Inc/Dec
Dept of Energy (Q or L)	\$100,600	\$100,550	0%
NSA or CIA issued	\$ 94,677	\$ 89,151	6%
Top Secret	\$ 76,414	\$ 70,443	8%
Secret	\$ 65,425	\$ 61,779	6%
Confidential	\$ 64,375	\$ 56,522	12%

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com



Average Salaries by Polygraph Level

Key Points:

- Earning potential increases as polygraph level gets higher
- Candidates with polygraphs earn approximately 15% more per year than cleared candidates without one

Analysis:

The purpose of a polygraph exam is to assist in determining whether or not an applicant can be trusted with sensitive information. For screening purposes, two types of polygraph exams exist, and either may be administered.

A Counterintelligence Polygraph asks the candidate questions to determine whether the examinee ever had any involvement with or knowledge of espionage/sabotage against the United States, unauthorized contact with representatives of a foreign government, or disclosure of classified material. A Counterintelligence Polygraph is the most common polygraph.

A Lifestyle Polygraph asks questions that concern the subject's personal life and past and present conduct. A Lifestyle Polygraph attempts to look for issues in a person's private life for which he or she might be susceptible to blackmail or coercion.

A Full Scope Polygraph is a combination of both the Counterintelligence and Lifestyle polygraphs.

With demand high and overall supply low, candidates that have passed polygraph exams continue to have significant added earning potential. Survey results show candidates with polygraphs earn an approximate average of 15% more per year than cleared candidates without polygraphs.

Polygraph	This Survey	Last Survey	% Inc/Dec
Lifestyle or Full Scope Polygraph	\$ 87,836	\$ 82,745	6%
Counter Intelligence Polygraph	\$ 80,162	\$ 71,925	10%
No Polygraph	\$ 71,110	\$ 66,983	6%

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com

Approximately 20% of all security-cleared candidates have passed a Counter Intelligence or Lifestyle Polygraph.



Top 20 Highest Salaries by Job Category

Key Points:

- Among the top 20 highest paid job categories, security-cleared candidates earn an average of 22% more than their non-cleared counterparts.
- Salary difference between cleared and closest non-cleared equivalents increased from 20% to 22% since last surveyed

Analysis:

Candidates holding security clearances continue to report higher earnings than their closest equivalent non-cleared counterparts. Based on survey results of the top 20 highest paid job categories for security-cleared candidates, cleared candidates earn an average of \$19,138 (or 22%) more per year than non-cleared candidates in similar jobs outside of the defense industry.

The most current U.S. Department of Labor statistics show a nationwide average nationwide yearly salary of \$51,147 for white collar, non-sales positions. The average yearly nationwide salary of all polled security-cleared workers on ClearanceJobs.com is \$72,803 a difference of \$21,656 (or 30%) over the Department of Labor-reported national average.

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com, PayScale.com, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Job Category	This Survey	Last Survey	Uncleared Comparison
IT Management-Executive	\$116,935	\$110,645	\$ 86,179
Database Admin-Oracle	\$101,905	\$ 83,182	\$ 75,000
IT Management-Project Manager	\$100,089	\$101,744	\$ 75,000
Project/Program Management	\$ 94,231	\$ 95,327	\$ 57,549
Systems Engineer	\$ 93,202	\$ 85,361	\$ 60,000
IT Software-Java/J2EE	\$ 93,036	\$ 94,412	\$ 73,776
Engineering-Aerospace and Aviation	\$ 92,923	\$ 77,105	\$ 69,700
Software Development	\$ 91,273	\$ 81,591	\$ 66,232
Network/LAN/WAN Design	\$ 84,545	\$ 84,500	\$ 72,107
Security-Network Management	\$ 83,309	\$ 80,104	\$ 72,500
Security-Intrusion Detection	\$ 83,158	\$ 82,810	\$ 75,365
IT Software-Prog	\$ 83,125	\$ 75,606	\$ 61,000
Engineering-Military Software	\$ 82,821	\$ 93,824	\$ 66,060
IT Hardware-Unix	\$ 82,708	\$ 79,000	\$ 74,050
Engineering-Military Hardware	\$ 80,625	\$ 79,286	\$ 66,240
Engineering-RF	\$ 80,500	\$ 80,040	\$ 72,359
Engineering-Electrical	\$ 80,392	\$ 72,188	\$ 62,280
Contract Admin	\$ 78,600	\$ 77,000	\$ 53,441
Engineering-Telecommunications	\$ 76,293	\$ 74,615	\$ 66,232
Linguist, Translator or Interpreter	\$ 70,952	\$ 66,108	\$ 62,789



Average Salaries by Gender

Key Points:

- The salary gender gap between cleared candidates is smaller than the gap between non-cleared candidates
- For the first time since surveyed, the gender gap between men and women widened, albeit less than 1%

Gender	This Survey	Last Survey
Male	\$ 74,033	\$ 69,811
Female	\$ 65,228	\$ 61,864

Analysis:

Based on survey results, women with security clearances earn about .89 cents to every one dollar cleared men earn. In comparison, non-cleared women earn .77 cents to every one dollar non-cleared men earn. Indications have suggested that the security clearance has a slight leveling effect on the salary gender gap.

For the first time since running the security clearance salary survey, the gender gap widened, although by less than 1%. Past surveys reported women closing wage earnings between men and women.

Based on survey results, women with security clearances earn about .89 cents to every one dollar cleared men earn. In comparison, non-cleared women earn .77 cents to every one dollar non-cleared men earn.

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com, WageProject.org, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, WeForum.org



Average Salaries by Employer Type

Key Points:

- Security-cleared government contractors earn 22% more than cleared civil servants
- Non-monetary incentives are important to people choosing civil service

Analysis:

Cleared government contractors surveyed report 22% higher average salaries versus cleared government employees. While the salary gap is large, recent research indicates that workers do not enter civil service to get wealthy. Non-monetary incentives like excellent healthcare, a structured promotional ladder, and meaningful work are equally important to candidates that choose to be government employees.

Methodology:

Data is for average salaries. In all sets of data, the anomalies (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.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com, Partnership for Public Service

Employer Type	This Survey
Government Contractor	\$ 80,688
Government Employee	\$ 63,153

Non-monetary incentives like excellent healthcare, a structured promotional ladder, and meaningful work are equally important to candidates that choose to be government employees.



Salary Satisfaction

Key Points:

- **59% of polled candidates with clearances were satisfied with their present salaries**
- **Salary satisfaction has increased significantly in the past twelve months along with the increase in average salaries among cleared workers**

Analysis:

Surveyed security-cleared candidates were asked how satisfied they were with their current salaries. Just fewer than 60% of polled cleared candidates expressed satisfaction with their current salaries. By gender, men and women were almost equally split among each category, with neither gender expressing more or less salary satisfaction over the other. As expected, the higher the satisfaction, the higher the candidates' reported salary level.

In the 2007 survey, where average salaries for cleared workers increased only 1%, salary satisfaction was predominantly low. For this survey, where average salaries have increased by 6% overall, salary satisfaction has risen considerably.

Methodology:

Results based on replies from 4,177 polled job seekers holding security clearances between March 20th 2007 and February 20th 2008.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com

Salary Satisfaction	This Survey	Last Survey
Very Dissatisfied	6%	22%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	16%	35%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	19%	16%
Somewhat Satisfied	35%	20%
Very Satisfied	24%	7%

By gender, men and women were almost equally split among each category, with neither gender expressing more or less salary satisfaction over the other. As expected, the higher the satisfaction, the higher the candidates' reported salary level.



Job Satisfaction

Key Points:

- 67% of polled candidates with clearances were satisfied with their present careers
- 17% of polled candidates with clearances were dissatisfied with their present careers

Analysis:

Cleared candidates' job satisfaction remains mostly high, primarily due to optimism about growth of the U.S. defense industry and relative confidence in job security. The defense and homeland security markets often work with cutting-edge technology and earn more which helps keep job satisfaction higher. 17% expressed dissatisfaction with their jobs, and 16% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

Job satisfaction numbers are most likely skewed towards the negative as polled candidates come from a segment that are actively looking for new career opportunities.

Methodology:

Results based on replies from 4,177 polled job seekers holding security clearances between March 20th 2007 and February 20th 2008.

Data and Research Sources:

ClearanceJobs.com

Job Satisfaction	This Survey
Very Dissatisfied	5%
Somewhat Dissatisfied	12%
Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	16%
Somewhat Satisfied	32%
Very Satisfied	35%

Cleared candidates' job satisfaction remains mostly high, primarily due to optimism about growth of the U.S. defense industry and relative confidence in job security.

