

Why the Pentagon is taking over security clearance checks

The Defense Department is poised to take over background investigations for the federal government, using increased automation and high-tech analysis to tighten controls and tackle an enormous backlog of workers waiting for security clearances, according to U.S. officials.

The change aims to fix a system whose weaknesses were exposed by the case of a Navy contractor who gunned down a dozen people at Washington's Navy Yard in 2013. He was able to maintain a security clearance despite concerns about his mental health and an arrest that investigators never reviewed. Problems had earlier surfaced with former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden, who now lives in Russia to avoid charges for disclosing classified material, and Army Pvt. Chelsea Manning, who went to prison for leaking classified documents, triggering calls to update the antiquated system to include more frequent criminal and financial checks of workers who have security clearances. [Read More...](#)