

Electronic Application Guide

The Electronic Application Guide provides an overview of the background investigation process, instructions on how to login to the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS) system and complete the Electronic Application Form, and how to avoid common form errors.



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I. What is a Subject?

An individual for whom their Personnel Security Investigation Portal (PSIP) Requester has submitted a PSIP request to the Personnel Security Investigation – Center of Excellence (PSI-CoE) for the purpose of a background investigation or requirement to complete an investigative standard form.

II. Who is my PSIP Requester?

Your PSIP Requesters are authorized Agency Representatives that are responsible for submitting PSIP Requests.

III. Who is the PSI-CoE?

The PSI-CoE serves as the Army's centralized activity for the accurate and efficient administrative validation, review and submission of all Army (Active, Guard, and Reserve) background investigations required for security clearances, federal employment, and Common Access Card (CAC) issuance, while providing customer service and support to Army and other Department of Defense stakeholders worldwide.

The PSI-CoE utilizes their Personnel Security Investigation Portal (PSIP) to receive and process these investigative requests from PSIP Requesters.

Once requirements for the PSIP request are completed by the Subject and PSIP Requesters, the completed Electronic Application Form and all applicable documents are submitted to the Investigation Service Provider (ISP) (i.e. the Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA)) for the investigative actions to take place when required.

IV. Who is the DCSA?

The Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) performs investigations on individuals working for or on behalf of the Executive Branch of the United States per Executive Order 13467, as amended. The DCSA also completes background investigations for other branches of the government when it is the most efficient use of Government resources and in the best interest of National Security.

V. Why do I need an investigation?

In the interest of safeguarding the welfare of the American people, it is required that all persons privileged to be employed in the departments and agencies of the United States Government shall be reliable, trustworthy, of good conduct and character, and of complete and unswerving loyalty to the United States. Regulations require a background investigation to be conducted on each federal employee, contractor and military member. For further information please visit <https://www.dcsa.mil/mc/pv/mbi/gicp>.

VI. What is the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS) Electronic Application?

The NBIS Electronic Application is a web-based automated system managed by the DCSA. It is designed to facilitate the processing of standard investigative forms used by the DCSA and other Investigation Service Providers (ISP). These standard forms are used while conducting background investigations for Federal security, suitability, fitness, and credentialing purposes. The Electronic Application allows the user to electronically enter, update and transmit their personal investigative data over a secure internet connection to a requesting agency.

VII. Email communication from the PSI-CoE

Email Subject Line	Description
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Action Required	Sent after 5, 7, and 14 days if the Subject has not logged in to the Electronic Application Form.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Pending Termination - Action Required	Sent when the PSIP request is about to be terminated.
PSI-CoE - Electronic Application Revision Required	Sent requesting revisions to the Electronic Application Form.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Requirements Completed	Sent when all documents required for the PSIP request have been received and the request is submitted to the DCSA.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Terminated	Sent when the PSIP request has been terminated.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Missing Requirements	Sent when the PSIP request is missing requirements such as fingerprints and/or State Criminal History Repository (SCHR) documents
PSI-CoE - Electronic Application Clarification - Response Required	Sent when clarification is being requested for items on the Electronic Application Form.
PSI-CoE - Electronic Application Certified, Pending Release - Action Required	Sent when the Subject has not released the Electronic Application Form to the PSI-CoE.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Terminated: Fingerprints Not Received	Sent when a PSIP request is terminated because fingerprints were not submitted or received in the allotted time frame.
PSI-CoE - Informational Only - Electronic Application Pending Review Notice	Sent when a completed Electronic Application Form is received by the PSI-CoE and is awaiting review.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Request Terminated: Electronic Application Revision(s) Not Completed	Sent when a PSIP request is terminated because Electronic Application Form revisions were not completed.
PSI-CoE - PSIP Requirements Completed and CV Submission Notice	Sent when a PSIP request is submitted for Continuous Vetting (CV) enrollment.
PSI-CoE - CV Enrollment Issue	Sent when there is an issue with the CV enrollment and the PSI-CoE had to submit the investigation to the DCSA.

VIII. How do I access the NBIS Electronic Application Form?

You will receive an email from the PSI-CoE with instructions on how to access the NBIS system to complete the Electronic Application Form.

i. Your NBIS User ID and Password

The NBIS system will create a User ID and Temporary Password for you to gain access to your Electronic Application Form. The User ID and Temporary Password will be emailed to you in two (2) separate emails after the PSI-CoE has initiated your PSIP request.

Below is an example of both e-mails you should receive from the NBIS system: -

Subject Name,

Welcome to the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS). The NBIS system contains the investigative Standard Forms (SF) that federal applicants and employees use to provide the necessary information to process their personnel background investigations.

This is the first of two emails you need to create your account and access the form to complete. Your user ID and the form available for completion is listed below.

User ID:

Form:

Organization:

The temporary password will be sent in another email. To register, visit [NBIS](#) and you will need:

User ID

Temporary password

Last four digits of your social security number

After your account is created, complete the added form as soon as possible to avoid delays.

Important! Do not share this information with anyone.

If you do not receive the email for your temporary password within 24 hours, please contact the NBIS helpdesk [at DCSAAKC@mail.mil](mailto:DCSAAKC@mail.mil).

Subject,

Welcome to the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS). This is the second of two emails you need to create your account. Your temporary password is listed below.

Temporary Password:

The User ID was sent in another email. To register, visit [NBIS](#) and you will need:

User ID

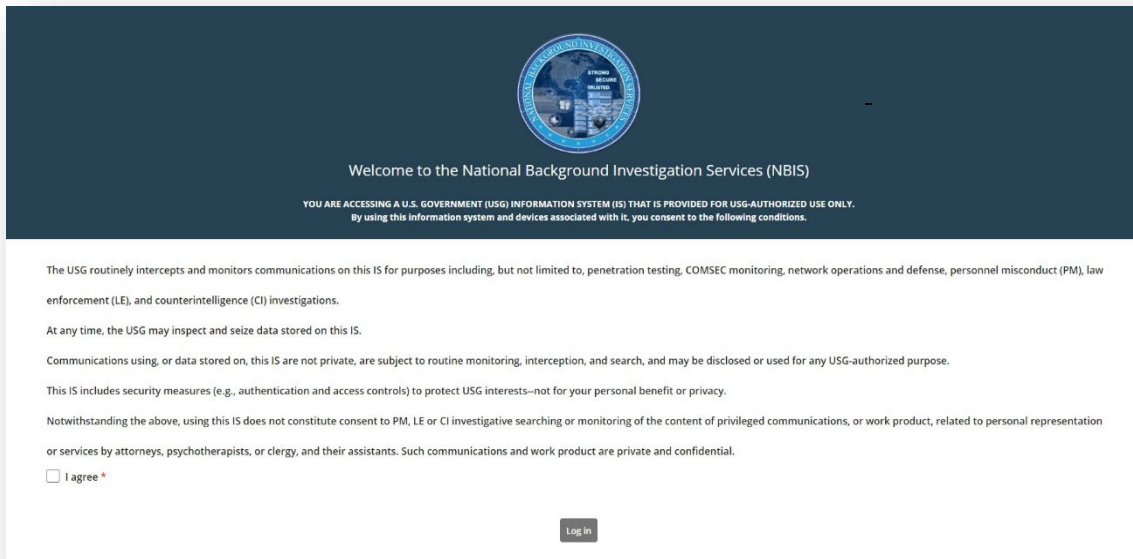
Temporary password

Last four digits of your social security number Important! Do not share this information with anyone.

If you did not receive the email for your user ID, please contact the NBIS helpdesk at DCSAAKC@mail.mil.

ii. First Time User Instructions

1. Open the email with the subject line “NBIS Account Creation (1 of 2 notices) and form available” and click the blue NBIS link located in the body of the email to pull up the NBIS website to login.
2. Check the I Agree* box.
3. Click Login.



The image shows the NBIS (National Background Investigation Services) welcome screen. At the top, there is a dark blue header with the NBIS seal on the left and the text "Welcome to the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS)" in the center. Below the header, a small line of text states: "YOU ARE ACCESSING A U.S. GOVERNMENT (USG) INFORMATION SYSTEM (IS) THAT IS PROVIDED FOR USG-AUTHORIZED USE ONLY. By using this information system and devices associated with it, you consent to the following conditions." The main body of the screen contains several paragraphs of text regarding USG policies on communication interception, data storage, and security. At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled "I agree *" and a "Log In" button.

YOU ARE ACCESSING A U.S. GOVERNMENT (USG) INFORMATION SYSTEM (IS) THAT IS PROVIDED FOR USG-AUTHORIZED USE ONLY.
By using this information system and devices associated with it, you consent to the following conditions.

The USG routinely intercepts and monitors communications on this IS for purposes including, but not limited to, penetration testing, COMSEC monitoring, network operations and defense, personnel misconduct (PM), law enforcement (LE), and counterintelligence (CI) investigations.

At any time, the USG may inspect and seize data stored on this IS.

Communications using, or data stored on, this IS are not private, are subject to routine monitoring, interception, and search, and may be disclosed or used for any USG-authorized purpose.

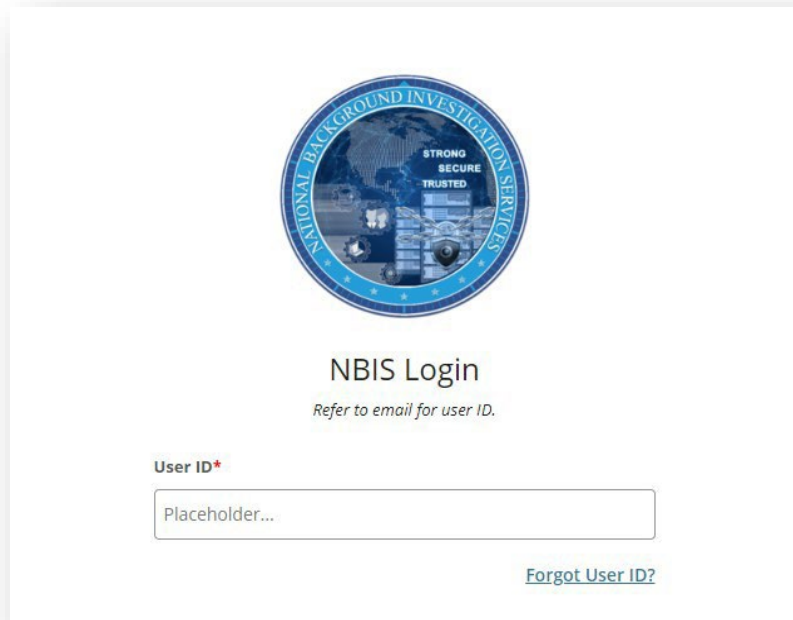
This IS includes security measures (e.g., authentication and access controls) to protect USG interests—not for your personal benefit or privacy.

Notwithstanding the above, using this IS does not constitute consent to PM, LE or CI investigative searching or monitoring of the content of privileged communications, or work product, related to personal representation or services by attorneys, psychotherapists, or clergy, and their assistants. Such communications and work product are private and confidential.

☐ I agree *

Log In

4. Enter the User ID provided to you in the email with the subject line: NBIS Account Creation (1 of 2 notices) and form available.



The image shows the NBIS login screen. At the top, there is a large NBIS seal. Below the seal, the text "NBIS Login" is displayed, followed by the instruction "Refer to email for user ID." Below this, there is a label "User ID*" and a text input field with the placeholder text "Placeholder...". At the bottom right, there is a link that says "Forgot User ID?".

NBIS Login

Refer to email for user ID.

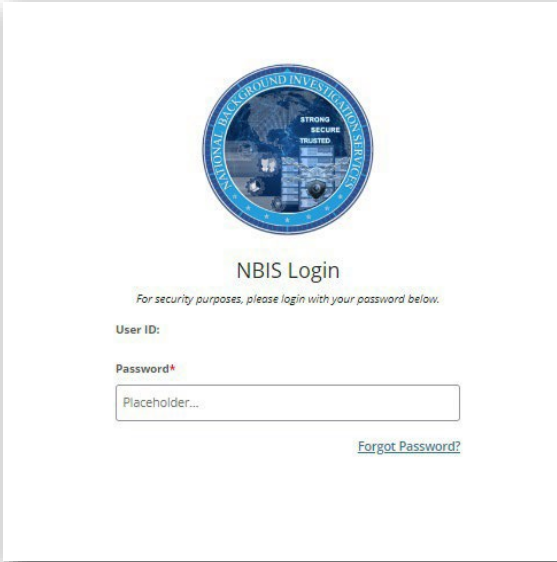
User ID*

Placeholder...

[Forgot User ID?](#)

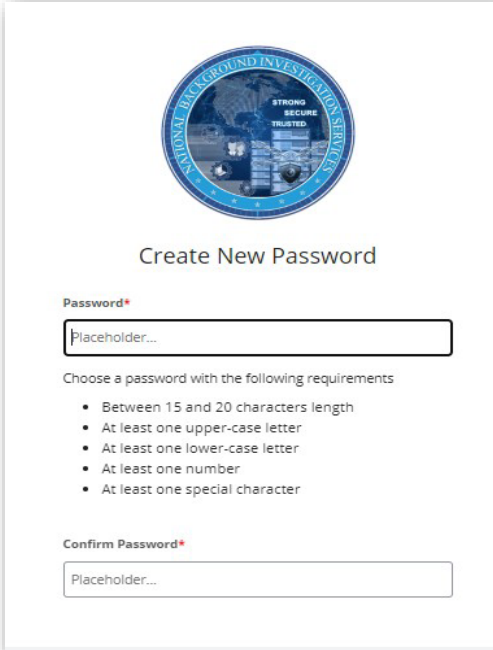
5. Click Continue.

6. Enter the Temporary Password provided to you in the email with the subject line: NBIS Account Creation (2 of 2 notices).



The image shows the NBIS Login screen. At the top is the NBIS seal, which is a circular emblem with a globe in the center and the words 'NATIONAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION SERVICE' around the perimeter. Below the seal, the text 'NBIS Login' is displayed. Underneath that, a smaller line of text reads 'For security purposes, please login with your password below.' Below this is a label 'User ID:' followed by a text input field. Then, there is a label 'Password*' followed by another text input field. At the bottom right of the form, there is a link that says 'Forgot Password?'.

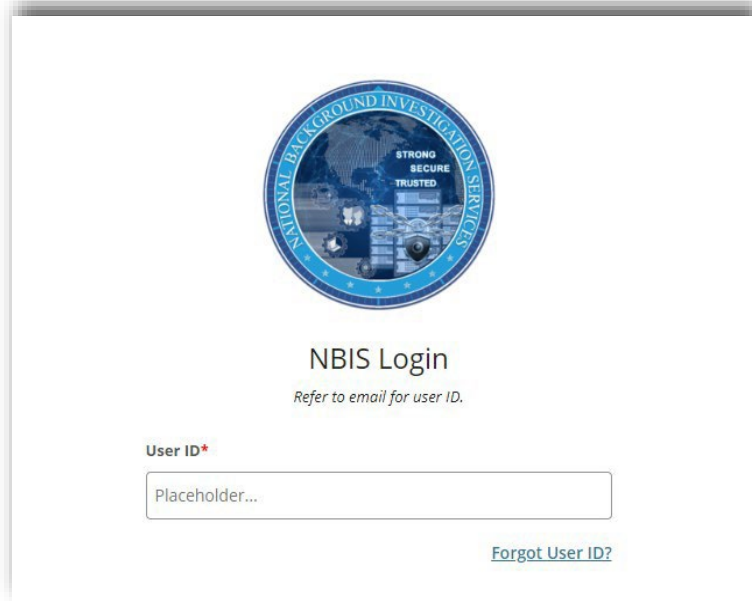
7. Click Continue.
8. Create a new password using the requirements listed below.
9. Between 15 and 20 characters length.
10. At least one upper-case letter.
11. At least one lower-case letter.
12. At least one number.
13. At least one special character.



The image shows the 'Create New Password' screen. It features the same NBIS seal at the top. Below the seal, the text 'Create New Password' is displayed. Underneath that, there is a label 'Password*' followed by a text input field. Below the input field, the text 'Choose a password with the following requirements' is shown, followed by a bulleted list of requirements: 'Between 15 and 20 characters length', 'At least one upper-case letter', 'At least one lower-case letter', 'At least one number', and 'At least one special character'. At the bottom, there is a label 'Confirm Password*' followed by another text input field.

14. Click Continue.

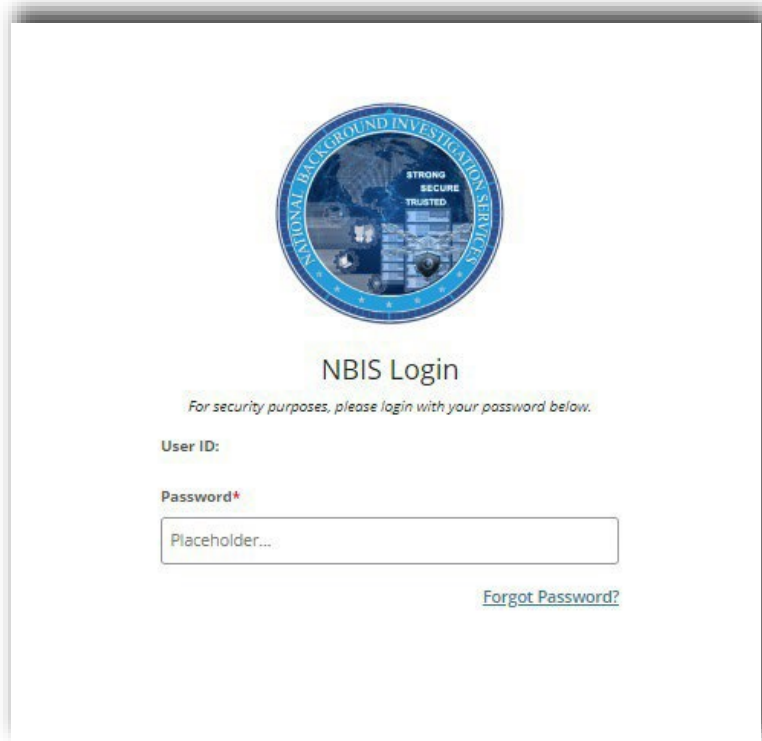
15. Re-enter your User ID.



The image shows the NBIS Login screen. At the top is the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS) seal, which is circular with a blue border containing the text "NATIONAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION SERVICES". Inside the seal, there is a globe and the words "STRONG", "SECURE", and "TRUSTED". Below the seal, the text "NBIS Login" is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Underneath this, in a smaller font, it says "Refer to email for user ID." Below that, there is a label "User ID*" in bold. Under the label is a text input field with a placeholder text "Placeholder...". At the bottom right of the input field area, there is a link that says "Forgot User ID?" in blue text.

16. Click Continue.

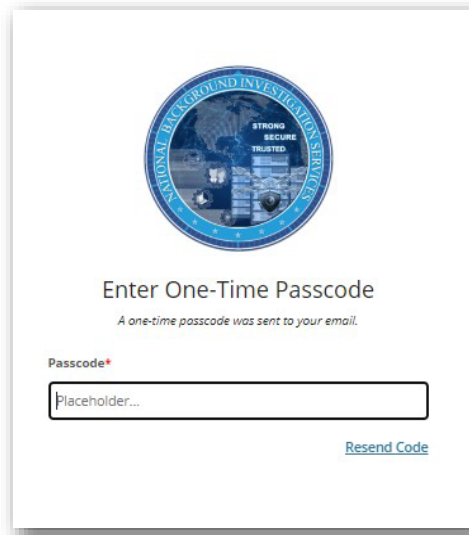
17. Enter the new Password you just created.



The image shows the NBIS Login screen. At the top is the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS) seal, which is circular with a blue border containing the text "NATIONAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION SERVICES". Inside the seal, there is a globe and the words "STRONG", "SECURE", and "TRUSTED". Below the seal, the text "NBIS Login" is displayed in a large, bold, black font. Underneath this, in a smaller font, it says "For security purposes, please login with your password below." Below that, there is a label "User ID:" in bold. Under the label is a text input field with a placeholder text "Placeholder...". At the bottom right of the input field area, there is a link that says "Forgot Password?" in blue text.

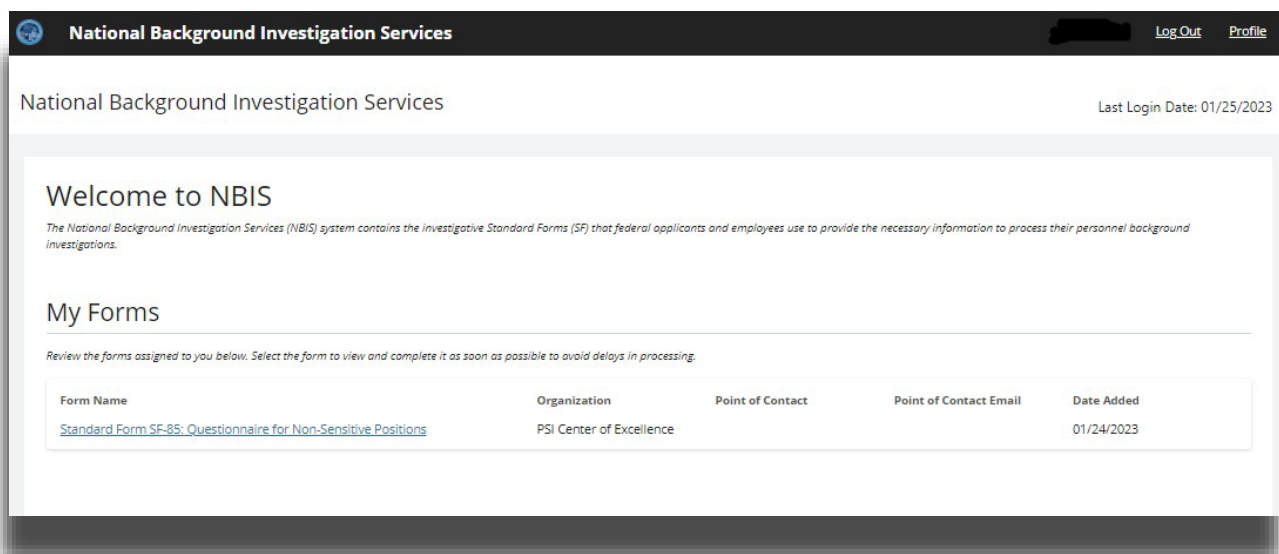
18. Click Continue, a one-time passcode will be sent to you via email to use in the next step.

19. Enter the One-Time Passcode from the email with the subject line of: NBIS One-time Passcode.



The image shows a web page for the National Background Investigation Services (NBIS). At the top is the NBIS seal, which is a circular emblem with a globe in the center and the words 'NATIONAL BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION SERVICES' around the perimeter. Below the seal, the text 'Enter One-Time Passcode' is displayed, followed by a smaller line of text: 'A one-time passcode was sent to your email.' Below this is a text input field labeled 'Passcode*' with a placeholder text 'Placeholder...'. To the right of the input field is a blue link that says 'Resend Code'.

20. Click Continue.



The image shows the NBIS welcome screen. At the top is a dark header bar with the NBIS logo on the left and 'Log Out' and 'Profile' links on the right. Below the header, the text 'National Background Investigation Services' is displayed on the left and 'Last Login Date: 01/25/2023' on the right. The main content area has a heading 'Welcome to NBIS' followed by a paragraph: 'The National Background Investigation Services (NBIS) system contains the Investigative Standard Forms (SF) that federal applicants and employees use to provide the necessary information to process their personnel background investigations.' Below this is a section titled 'My Forms' with a subtext: 'Review the forms assigned to you below. Select the form to view and complete it as soon as possible to avoid delays in processing.' Below the subtext is a table with the following data:

Form Name	Organization	Point of Contact	Point of Contact Email	Date Added
Standard Form SF-85: Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions	PSI Center of Excellence			01/24/2023

21. Click the blue link under the "Form Name" field to begin the form. If you have more than one agency requesting your information you may have more than one Electronic Application Form from which to choose. If you need help determining which form to begin entering data into, contact the PSI-CoE for help.

If you are unable to login please contact the [Customer Service Center](#).

IX. How to Complete the Electronic Application Form

i. How to Avoid Common Form Errors

General Tips:

- If you are unable to provide any of the requested information throughout the Electronic Application Form, check the box labeled "I do not know the requested information", then enter a detailed explanation as to why the information is unable to be obtained along with attempts taken to obtain information.
- Please be aware that any Explanations and Additional/Optional Comments provided on the form are subject to review and will need to be detailed with complete information that would have been required if it was entered as an entry. If information is not complete your investigation may be delayed.
- Make sure all sections have current information and remove any outdated entries/information.

Ensure that the following information is entered correctly on your Electronic Application Form:

"Personally Identifiable Information (PII)"

- Current full legal name (Last, First, Middle, Suffix)
- If you have only initials in your name(s), provide them and indicate
- "initial only." If you do not have a middle name(s), indicate "no middle name" (or NMN)
- If you are a "Jr.," "Sr.," etc. enter this under "suffix"
- If a name is provide in "Other names used" We will need an entry for your name at birth even if it is your current name
- Date of birth
- Place of birth

"Where You Have Lived" Section

- Entries should reflect your physical location during that time period
- You are not required to list temporary locations of less than 90 days that did not serve as your permanent or mailing address

"Your Employment Activities" Section

- Be sure to select the appropriate "**Type of Employment**" for each entry
 - ◆ Active Military Duty Station
 - ◆ National Guard/Reserve
 - ◆ Other Federal Employment
 - ◆ State Government (Non-Federal employment)
 - ◆ Self-Employment
 - ◇ You are only considered self-employed if you work for yourself rather than an employer
 - ◇ Provide the name of your business. (If you did not have a name for your business and you simply used your own name, then list your name in the "**Name of your employer**" field, provide a comment explaining you used your name as the business name.
 - ◆ Unemployment
 - ◇ Use for periods of time when you were not working or strictly a student, regardless of if you collected unemployment
 - ◇ **DO NOT** create unemployment entry if serving in the National Guard/Reserves, regardless of if you collected unemployment
 - ◆ Federal Contractor
 - ◆ Non-Government Employment (excluding self-employment)
 - ◆ Other
- If "**Provide the name of your employer**" is prompted, then provide the name of the company/organization you work(ed) under
- Employment and Unemployment entry dates should not overlap each other
- All military service needs to be provided in Your Employment Activities section as well as the "**Military History**" Section
- Ensure the dates provided coincide with the military service entered in the "**Military History**" Section

“Military History” Section

- Entries must be made within this section if you have ever served in the U.S. Military

“Marital Status” / “Relatives” Sections

- **DO NOT list family members or roommates as a cohabitant.** A cohabitant is a person with whom you share bonds of affection, obligation, or other commitment
- You must provide the SSN for your Spouse/Cohabitant
- You must enter complete citizenship information for all foreign-born relatives to include spouse or cohabitant. Select one of the following types of documentation that he or she possesses and provide the document number if applicable:
 - ◆ 5.2.1. One or more of the following documents, or their successors, are acceptable documents to corroborate U.S. citizenship by birth, including by birth abroad to a U.S. citizen
 - ◆ 5.2.1.1. A birth certificate certified with the registrar's signature, which bears the raised, embossed, impressed, or multicolored seal of the registrar's office
 - ◆ 5.2.1.2. A current or expired U.S. passport or passport card that is unaltered and undamaged and was originally issued to the individual
 - ◆ 5.2.1.3. A Department of State Form FS-240, Consular Report of Birth Abroad of a Citizen of the United States of America
 - ◆ 5.2.1.4. A Department of State Form FS-545 or DS-1350, Certification of Report of Birth
 - ◆ 5.2.2.1. A U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Form N-560 or N-561, Certificate of U.S. Citizenship
 - ◆ 5.2.2.2. A USCIS Form 550, 551 or 570, Naturalization Certificate
 - ◆ 5.2.2.3. A valid or expired U.S. passport or passport card that is unaltered and undamaged and was originally issued to the individual
 - ◆ 5.2.3.1. A current USCIS Form 1-551, Permanent Resident Card or Resident Alien Card
 - ◆ 5.2.3.2. A Form 1-94 Departure Record with an acceptable visa that authorizes employment in the United States
 - ◆ 5.2.3.3. A valid USCIS Form 1-766, Employment Authorization Card
 - ◆ 5.2.3.4. A valid U.S. Travel Document issued as a Permit to Re-enter the United States Form 1- 327 or as a Refugee Travel Document Form 1-571
- You must select each type of relative applicable to you, regardless if they are living or deceased and provide complete information for each entry. You must provide at a minimum the first and last name of each relative, and provide a detailed comment for any information you are unable to obtain
- Must provide entries for your mother-in-law and father-in-law (spouse's parents) if applicable

Address formats for all sections:

Follow the below address formats to ensure a complete address is provided.

- Do not use a P.O. Box (Is acceptable for a school address)
- APO addresses are acceptable as a U.S. address
- Military unit/brigade numbers may be used to complete the street portion of the address if an actual street name is not available (Is not acceptable for “**People Who Know You Well**”)
- If using a rural route, provide a street name and directions on how to arrive at the address in the comments field
- For assistance with locating a zip code you may use <http://maps.google.com>
- In the “**People Who Know You Well**” Section, if using an APO address see special guidance below as they require special formatting

“People Who Know You Well” Section - APO Address:

****Note:** Only listing the Military Unit in the street field is not acceptable

Street: Complete APO/FPO address including (building number, apt./house number, military unit/brigade number, as well as street/camp name) AND APO/FPO, AE/AA/AP and ZIP Code

State: Leave Blank Zip Code: Leave Blank Country: Required

APO Address:

Street: building/street/apt./house/military unit/brigade number AND street/camp name City: Required (APO/FPO)

State: Required (AA/AE/AP)

Zip Code: Required Country: Leave Blank

Examples:

- Camp Freedom or F.O.B. Kalsu, APO, AE, 90098
- CMR 415 Box 7759, APO, AE, 09114

Abroad Address:

Street: building/street/apt./house/military unit/brigade number AND street/camp name City: Required

State: Leave Blank Zip Code: Leave Blank Country: Required

Examples:

- Schorbach Strasse 899, Berlin, Germany
- Camp Freedom, Kuwait City, Kuwait

US Address:

Street: building/street number AND street name City: Required

State: Required Zip Code: Required

Country: Leave Blank

Examples:

- 524 N. Robinson St., Baltimore, MD, 21225
- Building 3240, Keesler AFB, MS, 39534
- 1-48th Infantry Regiment, Fort Gordon, GA, 23445
- RR 2 Box 3, Nowata, OK, 74048 (Rural address)
- 125 S 300 E, Topeka, KS, 66609 (Address Point ID)

US Territories	Compact of Free Association
American Samoa (AS)	Federated States of Micronesia (FM)
Guam (GU)	Republic of the Marshall Islands (MH)
Northern Mariana Islands (MP)	Palau (PW)
Puerto Rico (PR)	
Virgin Islands (VI)	

ii. Review and Release your Electronic Application Form for Review

If there are errors: After clicking Next under Additional Comments, if the page states “Some fields are incomplete” you can navigate to the field(s) listed by clicking each one to make the necessary changes.

The screenshot shows a sidebar on the left with a progress indicator '9/10 Sections complete'. The sidebar lists 10 sections, all marked with green checkmarks, and a 'Review and submit' button. The main content area has a heading 'Some required fields are incomplete' and a message 'Please fix the errors listed below.' Below this is a red bar with a white exclamation mark icon. A 'List of incomplete sections' follows, stating 'Use the list below to complete all incomplete sections or sections with errors.' The list contains one item: 'Information about you' with a sub-item 'Your contact information'. A 'Back to section' button is provided for this item.

Once all fields are complete, the screen will state “All required fields are complete, and you will be prompted to read and sign release forms.

1. Select the “Click to Sign” button and then select “Go to next release” on each form.

The screenshot shows the same sidebar as the previous image, but the main content area now displays 'All required fields are complete' with a green bar and a checkmark icon. Below this is a message 'Not a guarantee of acceptance, but all required fields are complete.' The next section is 'Please sign the releases below and submit your form', followed by a certification table. The table has three rows: 'Certification' with a '+' icon, 'Release of Information & HIPAA' with a '+' icon, and 'Credit reporting disclosure' with a '-' icon. Below the table is a section titled 'United States of America Fair Credit Reporting Disclosure and Authorization'. This section includes a 'Disclosure' paragraph, a 'Purpose' paragraph, an 'Authorization' paragraph, and a 'Note' paragraph. At the bottom, there is a 'Click to sign' button and a line for a signature, and a 'Date' label.

2. Once all releases have been signed, select Submit your SF-8x. A notice will pop up asking you to confirm that you are ready to submit. Select Submit

Submit your SF-86

Once you submit, your form will be locked and you will no longer be able to make changes.

After submission you will be able to download a copy of your completed SF-86 and all signed certification and released documents.

Are you sure you are ready to submit your SF-86?

[Back to review](#) [Submit](#)

3. You will see a pop up that your form has been submitted successfully.
4. It is strongly recommended that you save or print a version of your submitted information for your own records. Select Download for each document you want to save.

Download your documents

If you need assistance contact the office who initiated your form.

You have successfully submitted your SF86

[Download your completed SF86 form](#)

This PDF copy will be available until Wednesday, February 8, 2023 at 4:36 PM Eastern Standard Time

Signed certification and releases

The following are archival documents corresponding to your digitally signed certification and releases

[Download](#) [signature-form.23025BEYE1538039.pdf](#)

[Download](#) [release-credit.23025BEYE1538039.pdf](#)

[Download](#) [release-medical.23025BEYE1538039.pdf](#)

[Download](#) [release-information.23025BEYE1538039.pdf](#)



X. What to Expect After Completing the Electronic Application Form

The PSI-CoE will review the Electronic Application Form for completeness and verify all the supporting documents have been received. If any additional information or documentation is required, you will be notified by email. Please refer to email communication from the PSI-CoE for explanations.

XI. Need Help?

The PSI-CoE will help Subjects who need assistance with logging into NBIS Electronic Application, obtaining their NBIS login information, and/or completing the Electronic Application Form. The PSI-CoE is closed on weekends and federal holidays.

- Call the Customer Service Center (CSC) at (410) 278-4194 or DSN 312-298-4194 between the hours of 0800-1600 ET Monday-Friday (times are subject to change based upon mission requirements).
- Email usarmy.apg.inscom.mbx.psip-questions@army.mil (Please allow up to two (2) business days for a response to any email sent).

The Agency Representative(s) provide assistance with uploading documents to the PSI-CoE, answering questions why this investigation is needed, and completing fingerprints (if required).