



**MAR 02 2016**

## **MEMORANDUM TO HEADS OF EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES**

**SUBJECT:** Guidance on Executive Branch-Wide Requirements for Issuing Personal Identity Verification (PIV) Credentials and Suspension Mechanism

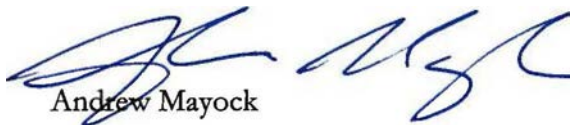
In the fall of 2013, at the direction of the President, the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) undertook a 120 day assessment of, and recommended improvements to, the processes governing the determination of suitability or fitness; eligibility for access to classified information or assignment to a national security sensitive position; and eligibility for logical or physical access to agency systems and facilities. These processes apply to Federal employees and employees of government contractors performing work on behalf of Federal agencies.

The resulting report, issued in February 2014, entitled *Suitability and Security Process Review Report to the President* (the 120-Day Report) found that existing basic credentialing standards for evaluating whether an individual should be issued a Federal credential did not adequately address the full panoply of risks to people, property, and information. The 120-Day Report recommended that the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) mandate a uniform set of criteria for issuing PIV credentials to all employees and contractors, which should include the optional supplemental credentialing standards documented in the July 31, 2008, OPM Memorandum, entitled *Final Credentialing Standards for Issuing Personal Identity Verification Cards under HSPD-12* (the 2008 Credentialing Memo). The 120-Day Report also found that there were no standard processes used by agencies for suspending the PIV credential of a Federal employee or employee of a government contractor performing work on behalf of a Federal agency. Thus, the 120-Day Report recommended that OPM "Revise the Final Credentialing Standards to establish a suspension mechanism" ... "when an issue concerning character or conduct emerges after the credential has been issued." The President accepted both of these 120-Day Report recommendations, and they were incorporated into the Administration's Insider Threat and Security Cross-Agency Priority Goal.

Accordingly, effective immediately, all Executive departments and agencies will apply both the basic and supplemental credentialing standards specified in the 2008 Credentialing Memo to determine initial eligibility for a PIV credential of all personnel who require a PIV, but who are not otherwise subject to a suitability determination or a determination of eligibility for access to classified information or assignment to a sensitive national security position. This includes both Federal employees and employees of government contractors who are performing work on behalf of a Federal agency as well as agency unique or specific categories of individuals such as guest researchers, volunteers, or intermittent or seasonal employees unless they are short-term (i.e., less

than 6 months) employees per OMB Memorandum M-05-24 of August 5, 2005. The remaining provisions of the 2008 Credentialing Memo are unchanged, with one addition to the provision that states, "If an individual who otherwise meets these standards is found: (1) unsuitable for the competitive civil service under 5 CFR part 731, (2) ineligible for access to classified information under E.O. 12968, or (3) disqualified from appointment in the excepted service or from working on a contract, the unfavorable decision is a sufficient basis for non-issuance or revocation of a PIV [credential]." To the types of outcomes in this provision we add a fourth-a determination that the individual is ineligible to hold a national security sensitive position-which covers those designated national security sensitive positions where the individual could bring about a material adverse impact to national security, even when he or she does not require access to classified information in the position.

Not later than 60 days from the date of this memorandum, with the advice and assistance of the Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of Defense, and the Administrator of the U.S. General Services Administration, the Director of OPM will develop and issue interim guidance on the criteria for issuing credentials and procedures for immediate suspension of personal identity verification credentials, when appropriate, when there is a credible concern that the credential holder poses an unacceptable risk, pending any necessary investigation and resolution of the concern.



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