

CLEARED INTEL COMPENSATION REPORT



About Us

For more than 20 years, ClearanceJobs has connected professionals with federal government security clearance and employers to fill the jobs that safeguard our nation. Our career community allows members to connect, engage, and explore opportunities to find a “best fit” match.



1,705,330

Registered Candidates



121,036

Monthly Connections



60,019

Monthly Job Listings



2,063

Hiring Companies



412,459

Searchable Profiles



14,762

New Monthly Candidates



9,855

Active Recruiters



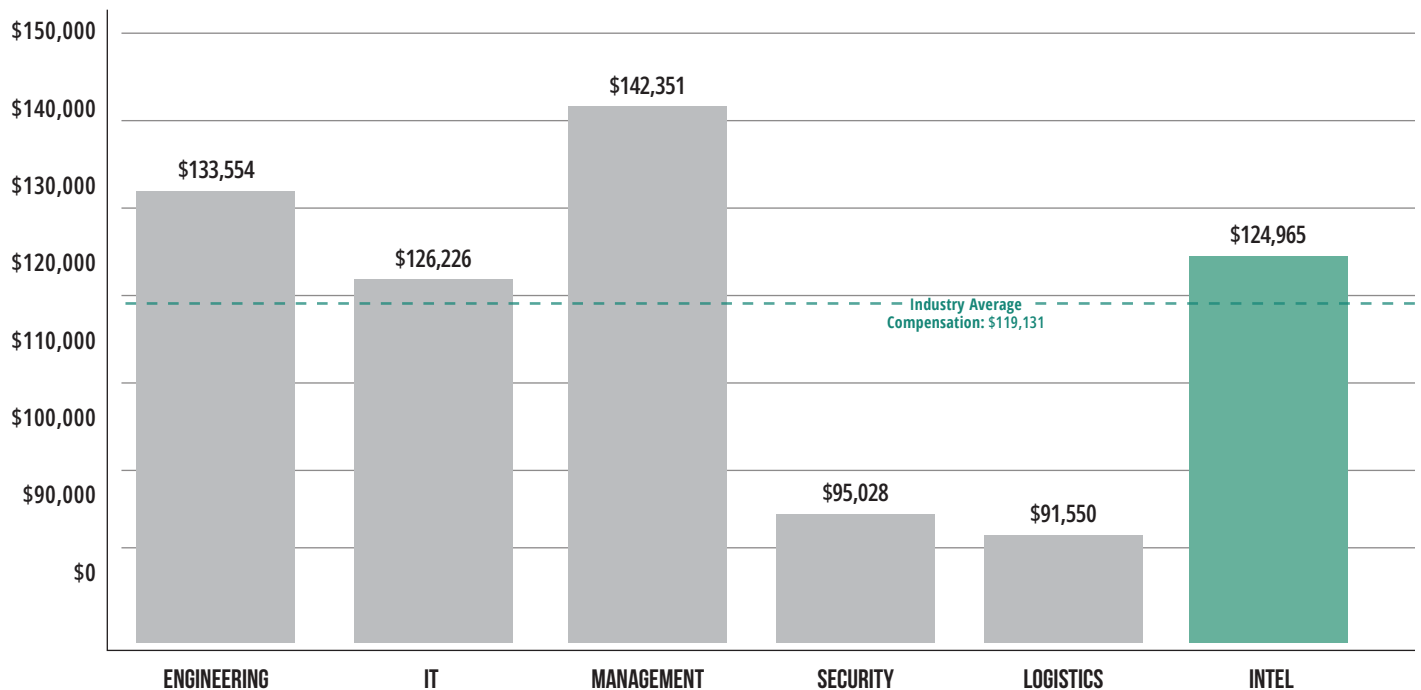
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Networking Groups

Cleared intelligence professionals—whether geospatial analysts, SIGINT specialists, cryptologists, or cyber threat analysts—are some of the most mission-critical personnel in national security. These roles demand discretion, sharp analytical skills, and a clearance level high enough to access the nation’s most sensitive information.

In 2025, intelligence professionals in cleared roles reported an average total compensation of \$119,131, according to the 2025 ClearanceJobs Security Clearance Compensation Report. That premium reflects the level of specialization, high-stakes responsibility, and trust required to operate in the intelligence space. Compensation also varies significantly depending on agency, clearance level, and location.

Total Average Compensation for Cleared Careers



Security Clearances Levels and Polygraphs

More than 60% of cleared intel professionals report holding a TS/SCI clearance—and they're paid accordingly. Within the Intel Community (IC), your specific agency affiliation can also influence compensation. Respondents supporting the CIA, NSA, or FBI reported the highest average earnings—nearly \$160,000—compared to those in Department of Defense intel roles or other federal agencies. That's the highest of any group and highlights the value placed on expertise paired with trust. Mission scope, funding levels, and required expertise can shift the pay scale, even among professionals with similar clearance levels. In this world, where you work often matters just as much as the clearance you hold.

| | % OF RESPONDENTS | AVERAGE TOTAL COMPENSATION |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Dept of Defense Confidential | <1% | N/A* |
| Dept of Defense Secret | 3% | \$76,626 |
| Dept of Defense Top Secret | 4% | \$89,429 |
| Dept of Defense Top Secret/SCI | 64% | \$120,212 |
| Dept of Energy (Q or L) | 1% | \$148,026 |
| Intelligence Agency (CIA, FBI, NSA) | 20% | \$159,755 |
| Dept of Homeland Security | 3% | \$111,685 |
| Public Trust | 1% | \$65,500 |
| Other Government Agency | 3% | \$125,900 |

* N/A due to low sample size

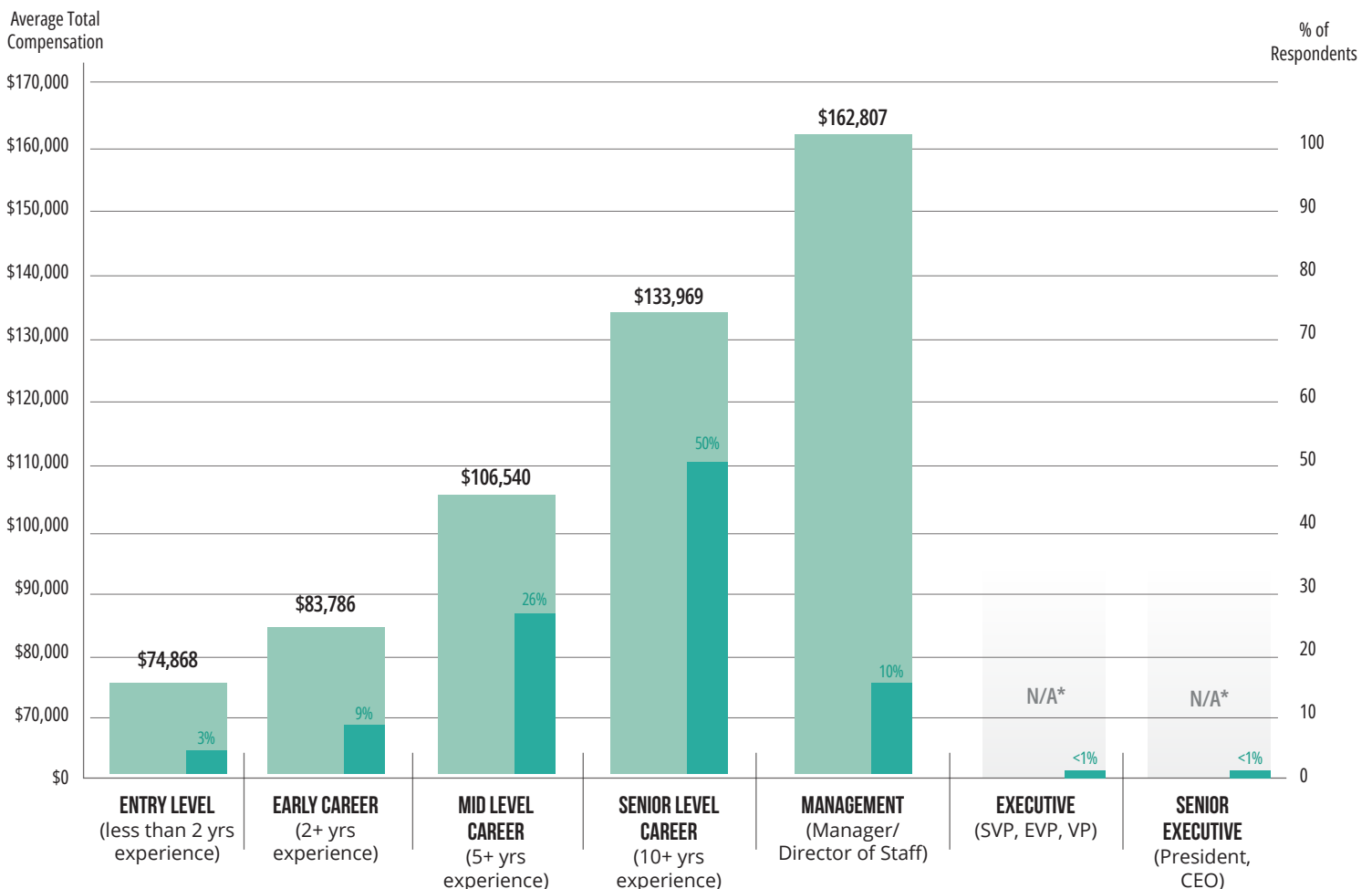
Polygraphs are common in this workforce—two-thirds of respondents hold either a CI or full-scope polygraph. Those with a full-scope poly earn the most: \$153,673 on average. The need to safeguard our most secure networks and operations means clearance and polygraph levels remain strong predictors of pay.

| POLYGRAPHY | % OF RESPONDENTS | CLEARED IT AVERAGE TOTAL COMPENSATION |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------------------------------------|
| COUNTERINTELLIGENCE POLYGRAPH | 49% | \$127,476 |
| LIFESTYLE OR FULL SCOPE POLYGRAPH | 18% | \$153,673 |
| I DON'T HAVE A CURRENT POLYGRAPH | 33% | \$105,890 |

Career Level

Experience pays off in intelligence. Entry-level professionals average \$74,868, while mid-career intel analysts earn over \$106,000. Senior-level intel roles push compensation close to \$134,000. When intel professionals move into management, they average over \$162,000.

The trend is clear: the longer you stay and the more complex your responsibilities, the higher the return. Deep domain knowledge combined with clearance and mission alignment leads to top-tier earnings.



* N/A due to low sample size

Education

Most intel professionals hold a bachelor’s or master’s degree—39% and 32%, respectively—and their compensation reflects it. Master’s holders earn an average of \$135,860, while doctorate degrees push that even higher. Still, some professionals with associate degrees or technical training are earning six figures thanks to the critical skills they bring to the table.

In intelligence, education is a foundation—but it’s the combination of analytical ability, clearance, and agency experience that truly drives pay.

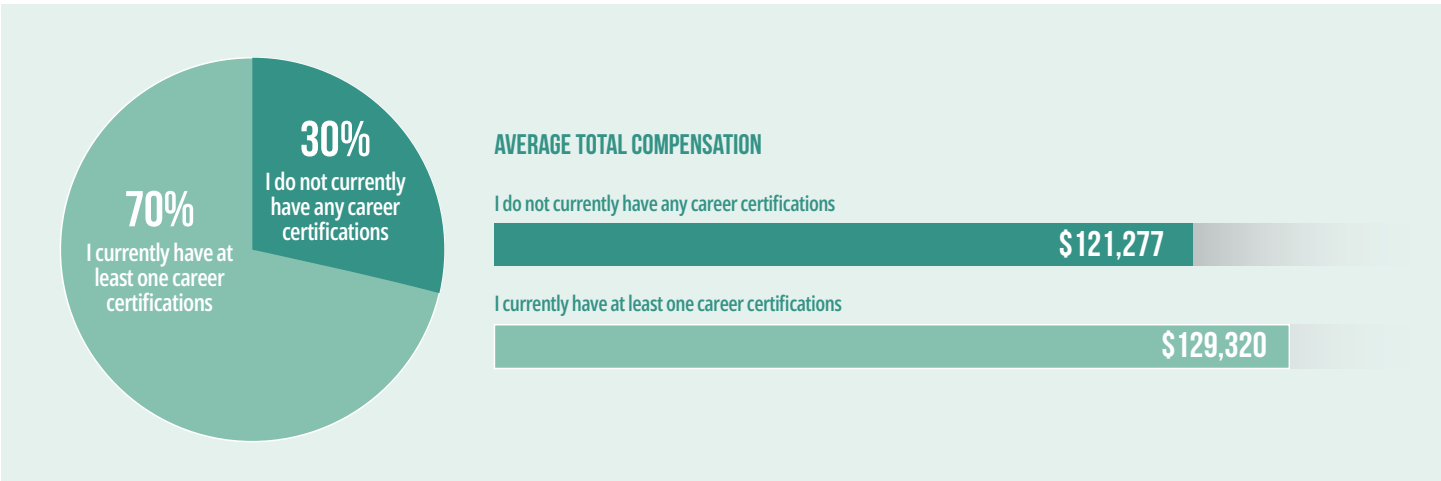
| High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED) | % OF RESPONDENTS 2% | AVERAGE TOTAL COMPENSATION N/A* |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Some college credit, no degree | 13% | \$102,404 |
| Trade/technical/vocational training | 2% | \$113,474 |
| Associate degree | 8% | \$117,354 |
| Bachelor’s degree | 39% | \$121,631 |
| Master’s degree | 32% | \$135,860 |
| Professional degree | 1% | \$155,000 |
| Doctorate degree | 2% | \$152,850 |
| I prefer not to answer | 2% | \$135,875 |

* N/A due to low sample size

Certifications

Thirty percent of intel professionals hold at least one certification—and they earn roughly \$8,000 more on average than those without. Certifications like Certified Intelligence Analyst (CIA), CISSP, and PMP aren’t just résumé boosters—they demonstrate a commitment to mastery and cross-functional knowledge.

For intel professionals looking to move into lead or mission director roles, certifications are a smart step toward broader influence and higher compensation.



Top States

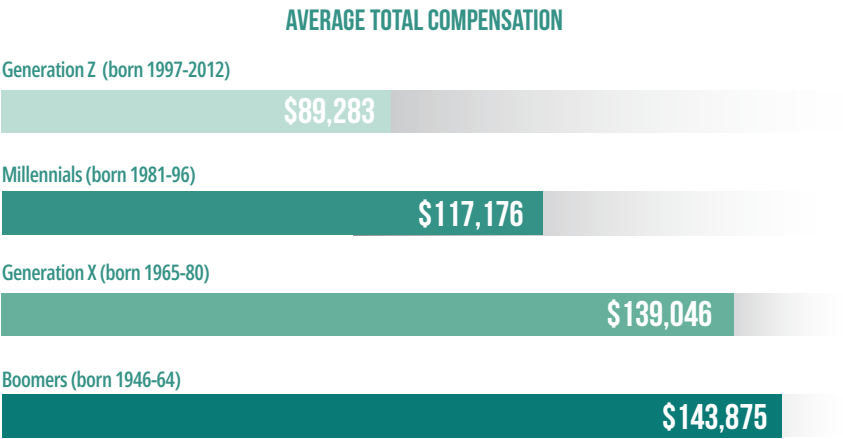
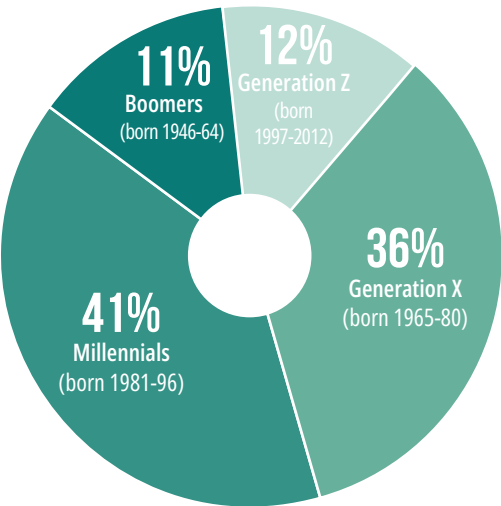
The intel workforce remains concentrated in the D.C. metro area, with Virginia, Maryland, and D.C. home to the majority of respondents. But pay isn't evenly distributed—Maryland leads the pack at \$149,648, followed by D.C. at \$135,691 and Colorado at \$134,333.

Virginia houses the largest share of intelligence professionals but lags slightly behind in average compensation. That's a result of agency location and cost of living differences across the region. Intel professionals in these markets often move between contracts and agencies, which keeps demand—and wages—competitive.

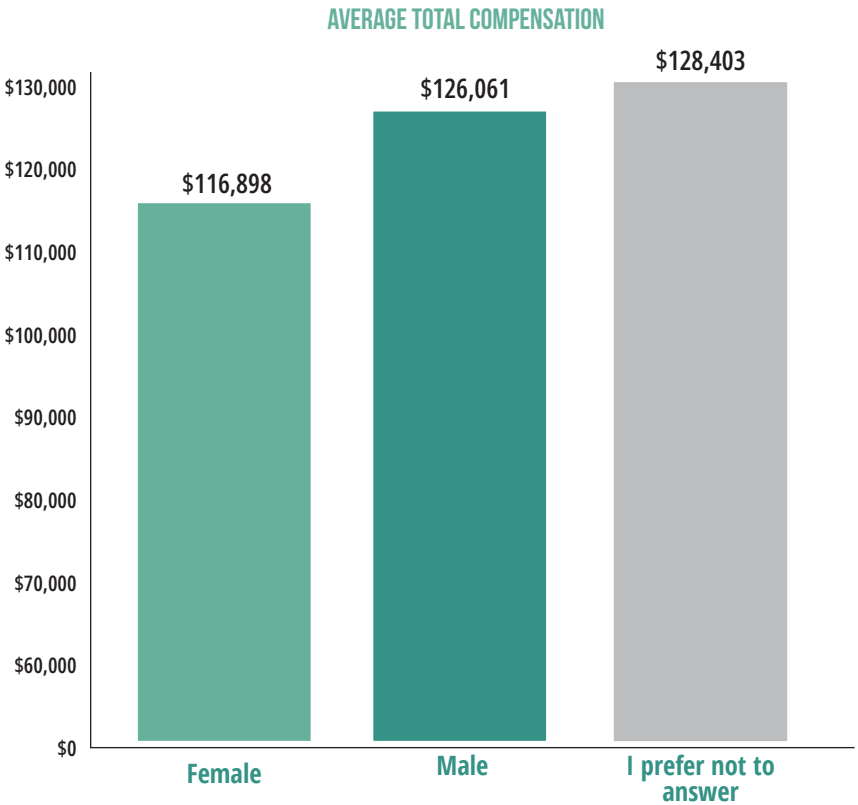
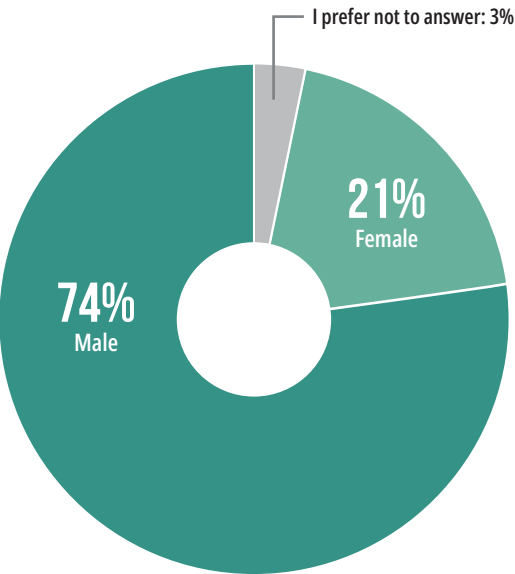
| State | % of Respondents | Average Total Compensation | State | % of Respondents | Average Total Compensation |
|------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------|----------------------------|
| Alabama | <1% | N/A | Georgia | 5% | \$109,017 |
| Arizona | 2% | \$101,000 | Maryland | 13% | \$149,648 |
| California | 3% | \$112,100 | North Carolina | 3% | \$109,824 |
| Colorado | 3% | \$134,333 | Texas | 6% | \$110,622 |
| D.C. | 12% | \$135,691 | Virginia | 32% | \$127,424 |
| Florida | 6% | \$111,695 | Other | 16% | \$111,068 |

Demographics

Millennials make up the largest group in cleared intelligence, followed closely by Gen X. But it's Gen X and Boomers who earn the most, reporting average compensation of \$139,046 and \$143,875, respectively.



Women represent 21% of this specialized workforce and report average earnings of \$116,898—about \$9,000 less than their male counterparts. While not insignificant, the gap has narrowed in recent years, especially as more women move into senior analytical and leadership roles.



Cleared Security Job Market

Cleared intelligence professionals are at the front lines of America's national security. Their compensation reflects not just their clearance level but the complexity and critical nature of their work.

From cyber defense to HUMINT analysis, these roles require adaptability, discretion, and technical rigor. The path to compensation growth is tied to experience, agency alignment, clearance upgrades, and developing a deep bench of intelligence tradecraft. For those who commit to this career field, the payoff—financially and professionally—is substantial.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The Security Clearance Jobs Salary Survey is administered online by ClearanceJobs. The 2024 data presented here was collected between August 27 and December 31, 2024. Security-cleared respondents were invited to participate in the survey through notifications on ClearanceJobs home page and various communications and links. This report focuses on both the findings for the 2024 survey and the comparison of those results for a nearly identical survey conducted one year prior (2023 compensation information).

In 2024, there were 31,001 survey participants, a decrease of -6% over the 2023 survey. After excluding survey respondents not having security clearance, those who were unemployed, active-duty military, students, those whose compensation was below \$18,000 or above \$400,000, and finally incomplete or duplicate questionnaires, there remained 13,177 usable responses in 2024 and 14,251 usable responses in 2023.

By definition, all respondents included in this analysis have an active or current security clearance issued by the U.S. federal government, are not active-duty military, are employed, and reported compensation figures between \$18,000 and \$400,000. Note that in reports completed prior to 2020, active-duty military were included in the analysis universe.

Dollars are as reported in the survey year and not adjusted for inflation. Also, prior to 2022, the high-end cap for compensation figures was \$300,000. That increased to \$350,000 in 2022 and then increased to \$400,000 in 2024. This had a negligible impact on overall compensation figures for 2024 (no impact on median, increased mean total compensation by \$453 and increased mean base pay by \$78).

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ManTech's Total Rewards package encompasses comprehensive benefits and rewards focused on our employees' well-being. In 2024, we significantly enhanced our benefits, including the addition of a paid holiday, demonstrating our commitment and investment to our employees' satisfaction and work-life balance.



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ClearanceJobs is your all-in-one recruiting solution. Much like a CRM, our unique system lets you target top candidate leads, converting cool passives to active candidates ready to make a move—to your company.

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- Convert passives to active potential hires.



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