

CLEARED SECURITY 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



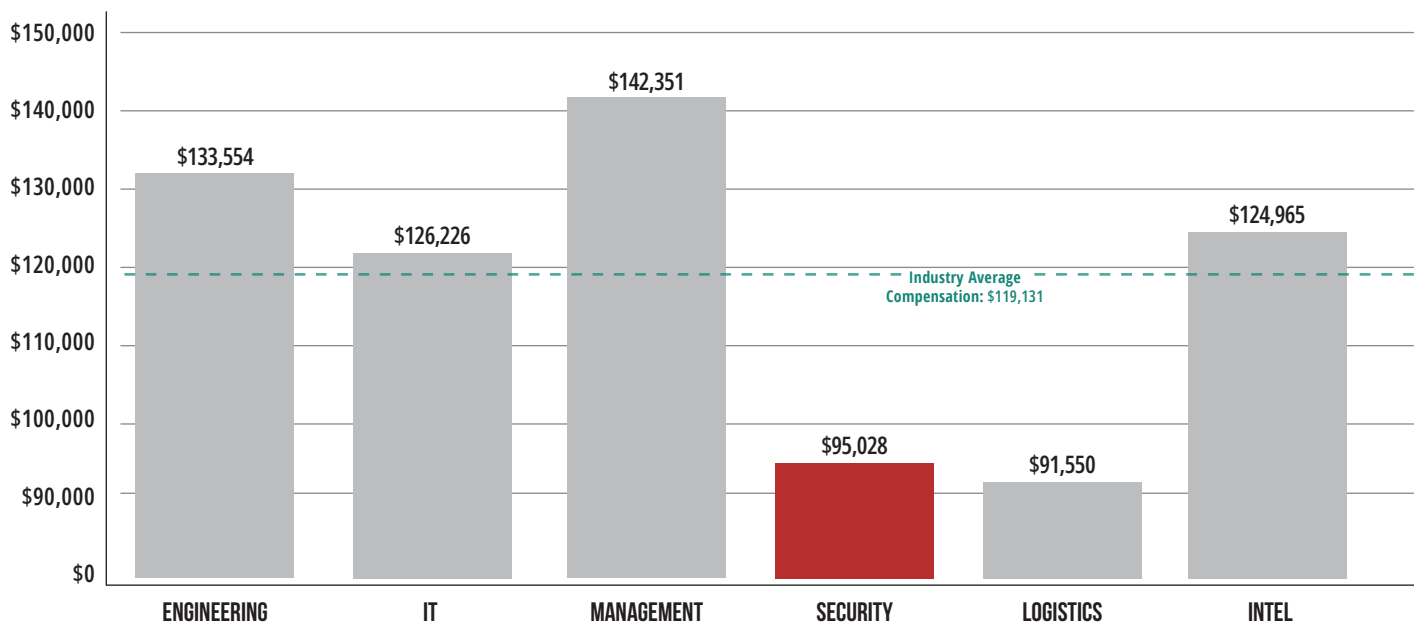
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Networking Groups

Cleared security professionals are the front line of national security operations—whether managing access control, overseeing classified facilities, enforcing physical security standards, or serving as Facility Security Officers (FSOs). These roles require more than vigilance; they demand deep knowledge of federal regulations, strong communication skills, and the ability to manage complex compliance requirements under pressure. In 2025, cleared professionals in security-specific roles reported an average total compensation of \$95,028, reflecting the critical importance of their work.

From monitoring personnel movement to supporting force protection protocols, cleared security staff ensure that sensitive operations stay secure and compliant. Many professionals in these roles start in hands-on positions and grow into leadership—earning additional credentials like the Industrial Security Professional (ISP) certification or Defense Counterintelligence and Security Agency (DCSA) training. The path forward often combines regulatory expertise with operational leadership, and it's an indispensable one in the national security workforce.

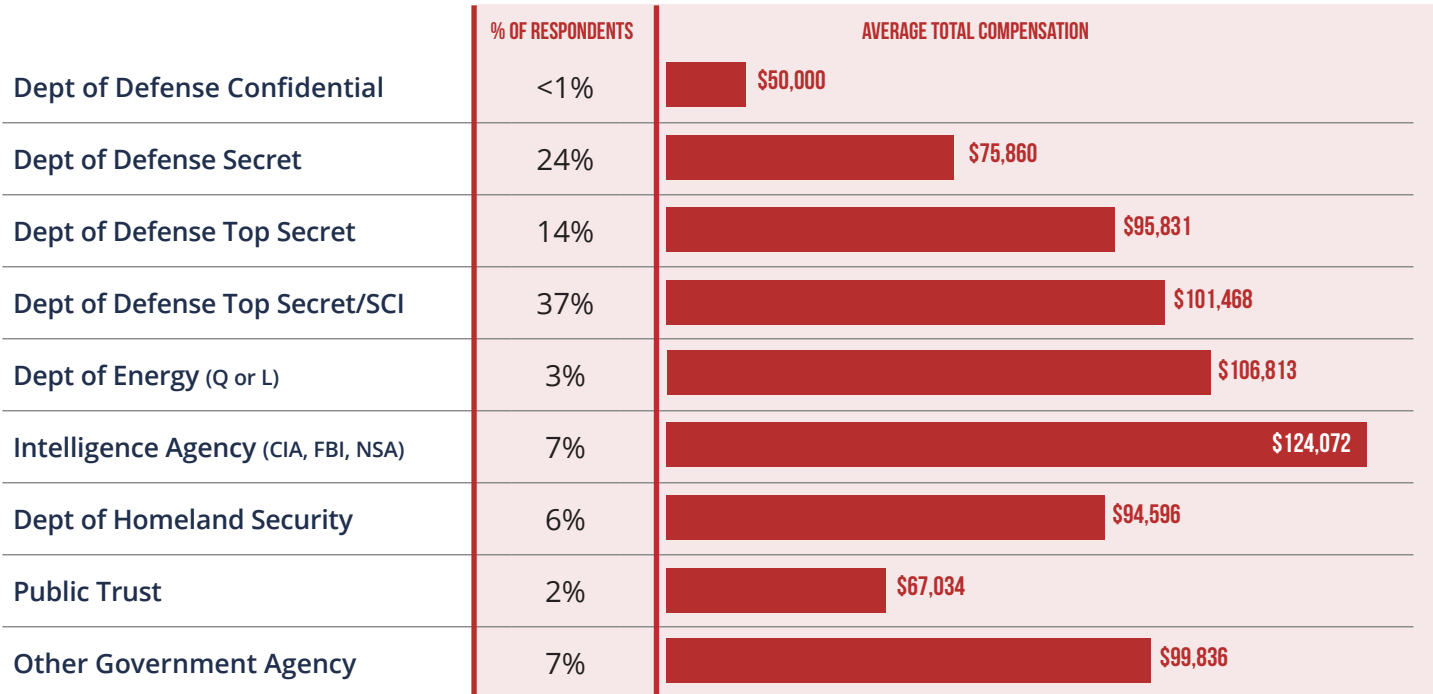
Total Average Compensation for Cleared Careers



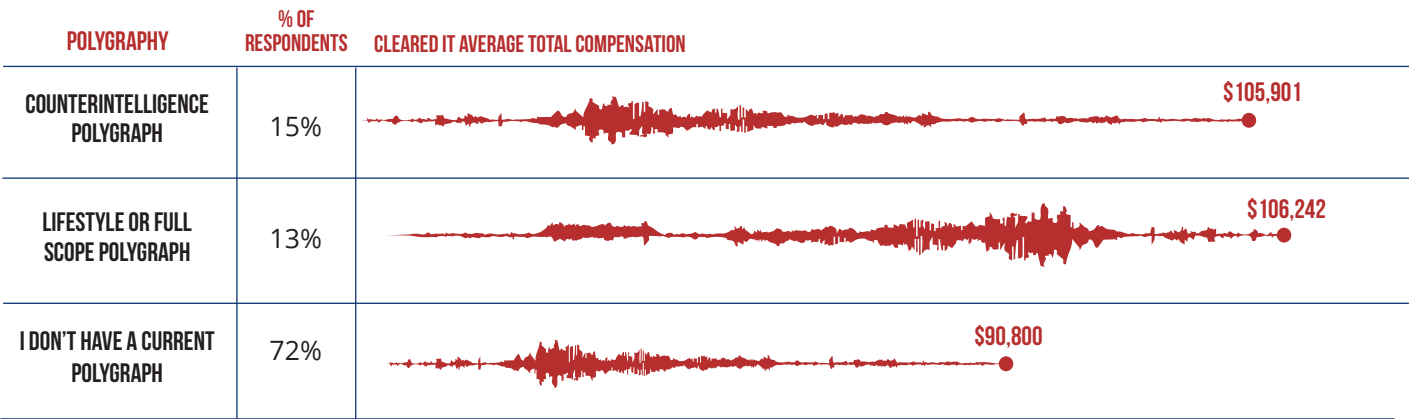
Security Clearances Levels and Polygraphs

When it comes to cleared security roles—like Facility Security Officers (FSOs), physical security, access control, and force protection—holding the right clearance makes a significant impact. Security professionals with a Top Secret/SCI clearance average \$101,468 in total compensation, a substantial boost compared to \$75,860 for those with a Secret clearance. And those working in intelligence agency environments or with Department of Energy access see averages over \$106,000.

These figures underscore the value of specialized security knowledge, compliance expertise, and the ability to protect assets, facilities, and information. National security doesn't run without trusted security professionals, and the numbers show it.



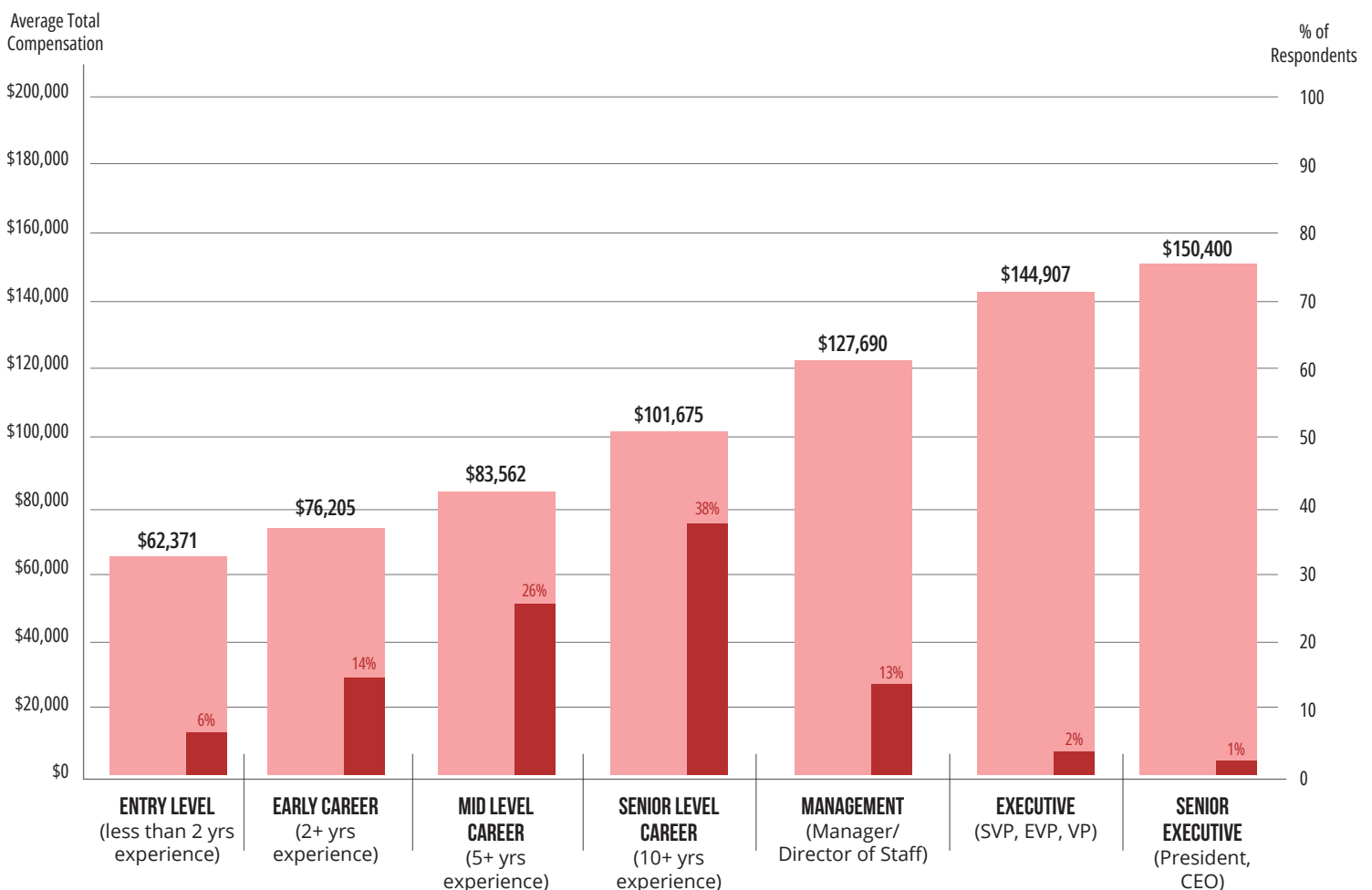
Meanwhile, those with polygraphs continue to pull ahead. Security professionals holding a CI or full-scope polygraph earn around \$106,000—far above the \$90,800 earned by those without a poly. It's a signal that when it comes to handling the most sensitive missions, compensation follows the responsibility.



Career Level

Cleared security professionals see steady compensation growth with experience. Entry-level roles (less than two years) come in around \$62,371, but early-career professionals break into the \$70K–\$80K range quickly. At the senior level (10+ years), average compensation climbs over \$100,000.

Professionals in management or director-level security roles see averages above \$127,000—and those who rise to executive levels cross into the \$140K–\$150K territory. For those who commit to building a long-term cleared security career, the compensation ceiling is high.



Education

Education plays a role—but it’s not everything. Many cleared security professionals come up through the ranks with associate degrees or vocational training and still reach six-figure salaries. Respondents with bachelor’s degrees report around \$100,775 on average, while those with master’s degrees exceed \$120,000.

What matters most is how you combine education with clearance, training, and on-the-ground experience. Security certifications and real-world responsibility often outweigh formal credentials alone.

	% OF RESPONDENTS	AVERAGE TOTAL COMPENSATION
High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example: GED)	10%	\$76,512
Some college credit, no degree	22%	\$80,348
Trade/technical/vocational training	6%	\$90,700
Associate degree	13%	\$90,724
Bachelor’s degree	33%	\$100,775
Master’s degree	14%	\$120,556
Professional degree	<1%	\$147,667
Doctorate degree	1%	\$152,468
I prefer not to answer	1%	\$94,000

Certifications

Certifications are a clear differentiator for cleared security professionals. Whether it’s the Industrial Security Professional (ISP) certification, a DCSA FSO course, or a compliance-related credential, professionals with at least one certification earn over \$100,195 on average—compared to \$92,365 for those without.

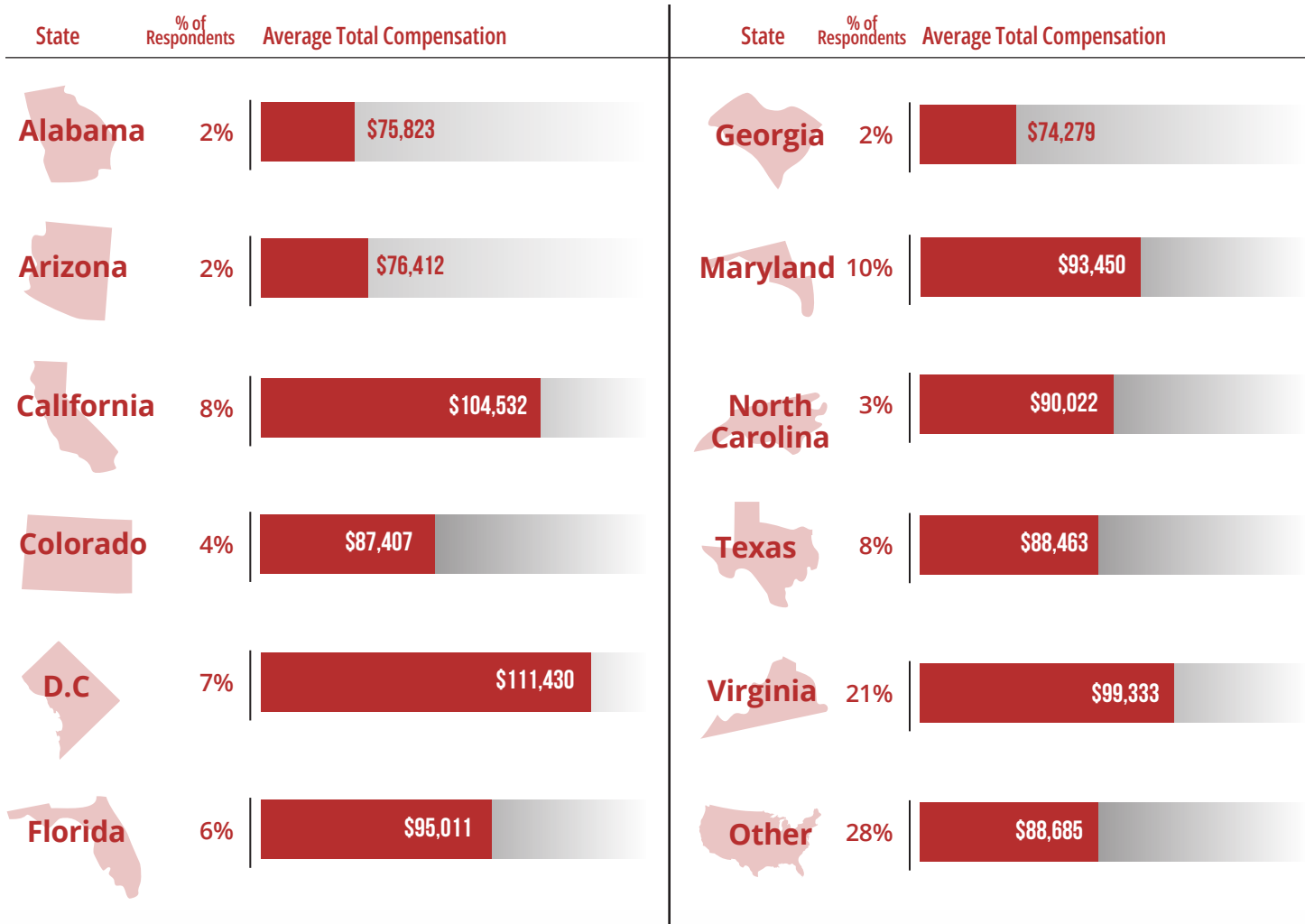
Certifications show commitment to the profession and signal that a candidate is ready for more advanced compliance and oversight responsibilities.



Top States

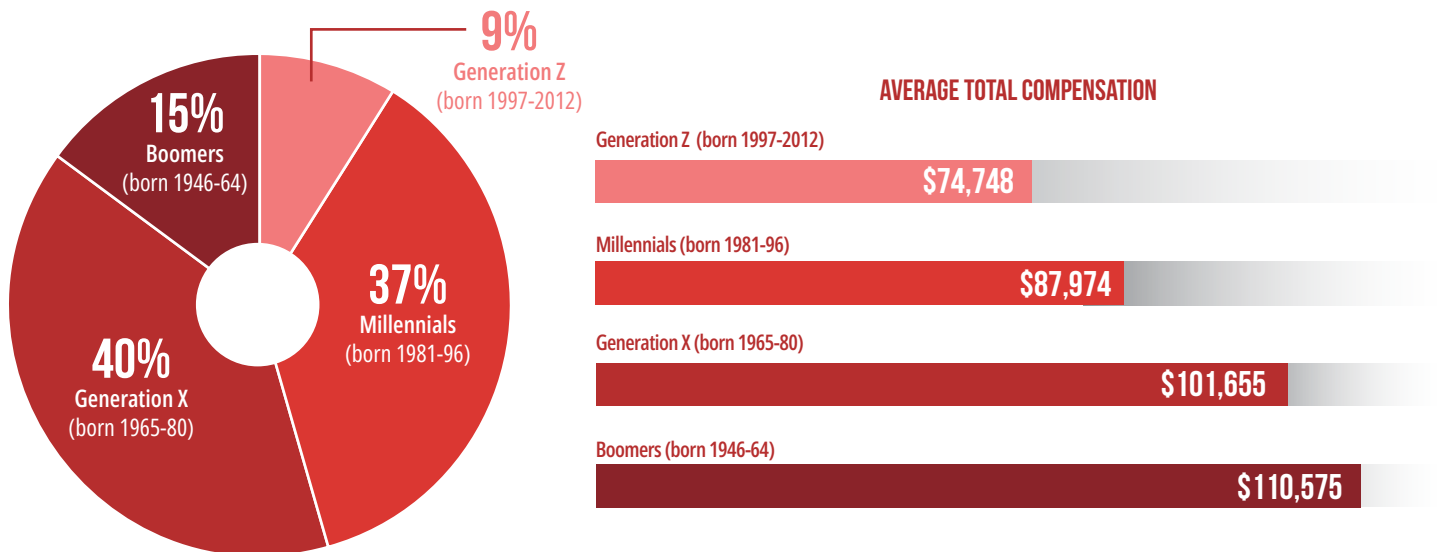
Location impacts compensation. Security professionals in D.C., Maryland, and Virginia report the highest averages—with D.C. at \$111,430, Maryland at \$93,450, and Virginia at \$99,333. These regions are dense with federal agencies and contractors, making the demand—and compensation—more competitive.

While states like Georgia and Alabama trend lower, they also offer lower costs of living and fewer commutes. For many, they strike the right balance between pay and quality of life.

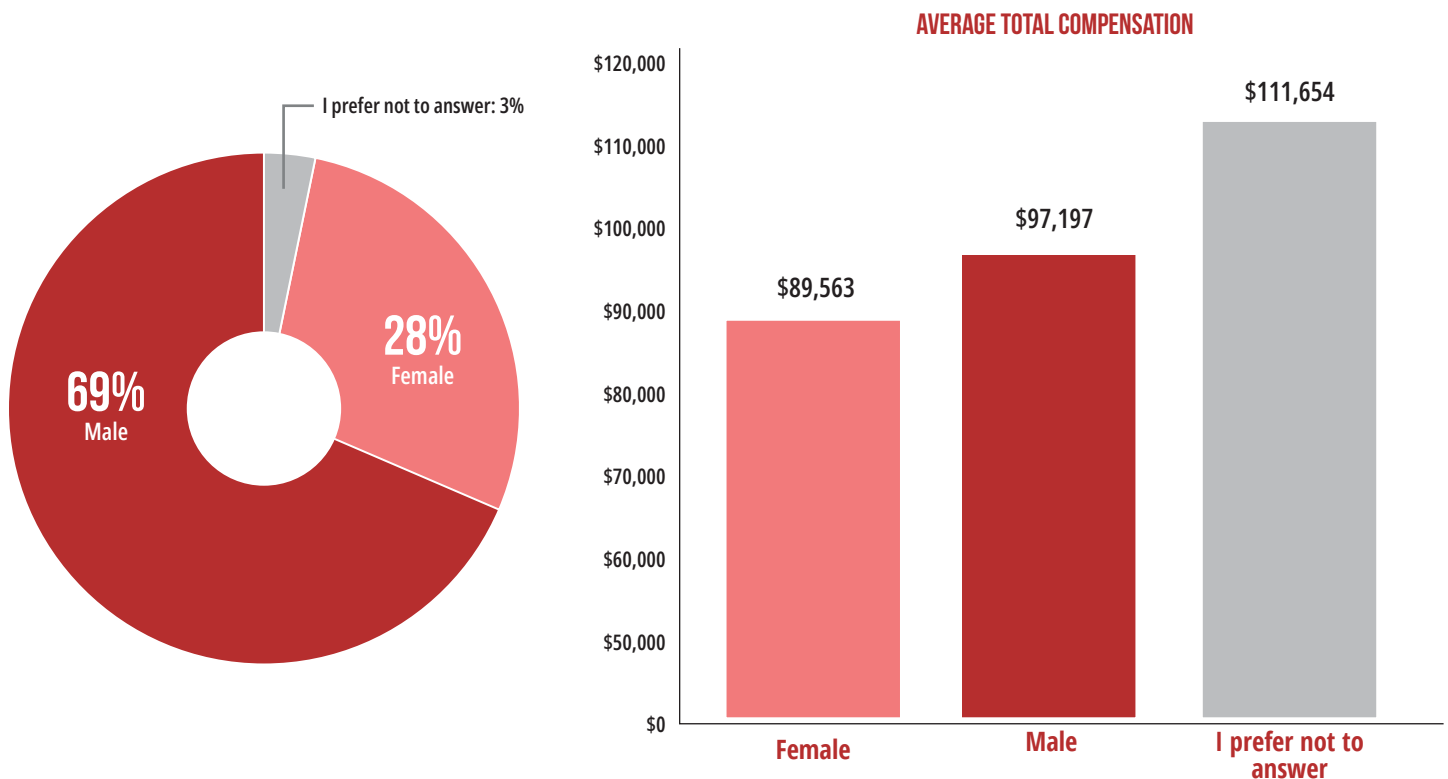


Demographics

Security professionals span generations, but Gen X leads the way in compensation at over \$101,655, with Boomers still pulling in strong earnings around \$110,575. Millennials make up a growing percentage of the security workforce—and as they gain experience, their compensation will likely climb in step.



Women make up 28% of cleared security respondents, reporting average compensation of \$89,563—still trailing male counterparts, but making clear strides. The path is opening wider for diverse leadership in cleared security, and continued growth in representation is critical for the field's future.



Cleared Security Job Market

Cleared security professionals are the gatekeepers of national security—protecting facilities, people, and classified information every day. Their compensation reflects the critical nature of their work, with average earnings steadily increasing alongside clearance level, experience, and specialized certifications.

While this field often operates behind the scenes, it's foundational to mission success. From FSOs managing compliance to access control specialists maintaining secure perimeters, these roles demand integrity, precision, and deep trust. For those willing to invest in training, gain experience, and step into leadership when called, cleared security offers a stable, rewarding, and high-impact career path.

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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- Search, directly engage, and easily work cleared candidates through a pipeline.
- Convert passives to active potential hires.



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