

NMFS NORTHEAST FISHERIES OBSERVER PROGRAM – NEFOP  
**II. BACKGROUND SECURITY PACKET INSTRUCTIONS**



Contact Person: Katherine McArdle (508) 495-2377

Please read and follow all instructions carefully.

ITEM/TASK	SOURCE OF INFORMATION/ CONTACT INFORMATION	COMPLETION DATE
<b>Security Clearance Paperwork</b>		
1. Optional Form 306-Declaration for Federal Employment	Included in package or available online. <b><u>DON'T SIGN ANY FORMS UNTIL DAY OF CLASS.</u></b>	Completed and ready to turn in on <i>first day of training</i>
2. Security Coversheet	Included in package or available online	Completed and ready to turn in on <i>first day of training</i>
3. Fingerprints	Conducted at Fisheries Sampling Branch Training Center (Falmouth, MA)	Fingerprints will be taken during training.
4. 2 Forms of ID	Collected at Fisheries Sampling Branch Training Center (Falmouth, MA)	Collected during training
5. e-QIP (online form) • 5 year history Residence, employment, and schooling history	<b>e-QIP email address</b> <a href="http://www.opm.gov/e-QIP">www.opm.gov/e-QIP</a>  <b>NOTE: You will not be invited to complete e-QIP until after 1-4 have been submitted to security office.</b>	Completed and ready to turn in after the completion of training. Copy of form and 2 original signature pages due after training.
6. Common Access Card (CAC)	Trusted Agent	Will not be issued until several months after training.
<b>Procedure for Foreign Nationals</b>		
1. Notification of Foreign National	Inform service provider Service provider to inform NMFS	<b>MUST</b> be reported no later than 30 days prior to training start date. No exceptions!!!
2. Identifying Information	<b>Contact Katherine McArdle (508) 495-2377</b> Have the following information available: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Name</li> <li>• Gender</li> <li>• Country of Permanent Residence</li> <li>• Country of Birth</li> <li>• Date of Birth</li> <li>• Country of Citizenship</li> </ul>	Prior to training start date



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Passport Number</li> <li>• Country of Passport</li> </ul>	
3. Complete the <b>SF85</b> form	Included in package or available online	Completed and ready to turn in on <i>first day of training</i>
4. Security Coversheet	Included in package or available online	Completed and ready to turn in on <i>first day of training</i>
5. Certification of Conditions and Responsibilities for a Foreign National Guest	Included in package or available online	Completed and ready to turn in on <i>first day of training</i>
6. Fingerprinting	Conducted at Fisheries Sampling Branch Training Center (Falmouth, MA) <b>Contact Katherine McArdle (508) 495-2377</b>	Fingerprints will be taken during training.
7. Common Access Card (CAC)	Katherine McArdle	Issued AFTER training

**Security Clearance Paperwork Procedure**

1. **DAY 1 OF TRAINING** - the following forms/information should be brought to the Observer Training Facility at Falmouth Technology Park the first day of training.
  - a. OF306 (Declaration of Federal Employment) form fully filled in
  - b. Security Coversheet – fully filled in
  - c. 2 forms of identification – for fingerprints which will be completed day 1 of training. Examples of acceptable IDs are provided in the welcome packet.
  - d. Fingerprints – will be collected during training.

Forms a (OF-306) and b (Security Coversheet) are provided in the observer’s security welcome packet that is sent out prior to the start of training. They can also be found on our website: <http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/fsb/security/>.

If training candidates prefer, they can fax the information ahead of time to Katherine McArdle at (508) 495-2123, however, that is not required.

A time slot as been reserved on the first day of training for the Trusted Agent, Katherine McArdle, to collect the forms from all individuals. If there are questions prior to the first day of training, please contact Katherine directly at (508) 495-2377. If Katherine McArdle is unavailable please contact Katherine Abney (508) 495-2338. Fingerprints will be collected and copies of each candidate’s identification will be made for each observer’s security file.

Once completed and received, this information will be used to create a user account to EQIP (Electronic Questionnaire for Investigations Processing), which is an online form used to check the observer’s



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history. You will be receiving an email from our NOAA Security Officer, with additional instructions once he/she creates the account for you. Please note that once the user account is created, you will only have 14 days to complete before it is locked out for security purposes. If you need your account unlocked please contact the security official that originally invited you to e-QIP directly and carbon copy Katherine McArdle (Katherine.McArdle@noaa.gov).

### 2. **COMPLETE ONLINE EQIP RECORD** – This portion will be completed after the observer successfully completes the initial training session.

Once an e-mail is received from the NOAA Security Officer, the applicant only has 14 days to complete the EQIP application online. This will after training ends. It is helpful to have necessary records available when completing this as it requires a history of employment, residency, and schooling for the past five years. It is very important to read and follow the instructions provided exactly.

All the forms will be reviewed, and if needed, you will be contacted to make the necessary corrections.

*Please note that the completion of this application should be treated as a priority and if necessary the observer may be withheld from deploying on any trips. Missing information on the forms will deem the package incomplete.*

The most common mistakes are:

- a. Missing information such as zip codes, phone numbers, and full name of supervisors (i.e., not just "TONY"...but need Tony Smith).
- b. Missing periods of time in employment and/or residence history (entire 5 year period must be reported with no breaks in time. Unemployment is reported)
- c. Street address not complete (i.e., "Main Street"...should have a house #..."100 Main Street)
- d. Selective Service registration information missing - this may be found online at [www.sss.gov](http://www.sss.gov) with just the SSN and birth date.
- e. For schools/colleges...when asked for a street address, please use the Administration Building's address.
- f. Blank answers. Do not leave any answer blank, rather state "N/A" or "None".
- g. The OF306 will require you to report your history for sensitive information (i.e., arrest record, parole, convictions). It is important to disclose this information. If in doubt, it is better to report the incident.
- h. **Do not select "I do not know" on the EQIP record.** You MUST answer every question or provide a VERY STRONG explanation as to why the information cannot be provided. With the internet, and a few phones calls, very little cannot be found out without a little bit of time.

Upon completion of your online EQIP (SF85 - Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions) please PRINT and sign the two signature pages and fax directly to the fax number provided in your e-QIP invitation e-

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mail. If you need a fax please feel free to contact us to schedule a time to come in to use our fax. After the signature pages are printed, signed and sent the observer may then release (i.e., submit) the online EQIP application. ***NOTE THAT THE SIGNATURE PAGES MUST BE PRINTED BEFORE THE EQIP APPLICATION IS RELEASED OR ELSE YOU CANNOT PRINT THE SIGNATURE PAGES.*** If corrections are needed, you will need to go back into EQIP and enter the corrections in your record.

It is recommended that observers make copies of your security documents for their own records. The copy machines at the Training Center may be used for this purpose or copies can be mailed back to the observer as long as the Trusted Agent is notified.

Once the EQIP record is released, the Trusted Agent, Katherine will either receive an e-mail stating that the observers fingerprints have been cleared of the NOAA Security Officer will be in touch with the observer stating additional information is needed. If the fingerprints have been cleared, the Trusted Agent will create a record in a database called the Trusted Agent Sponsorship System (TASS). A username/password will be generated and the Trusted Agent will securely e-mail the observer with instructions to log onto TASS with the assigned username and password and confirm the information entered in the record is correct. Once that is completed the observer will be approved (via e-mail) to proceed to the nearest RAPIDS station to obtain their Common Access Card. This entire process can take several weeks depending on when the fingerprint results come in. Until an observer receives their CAC, they should always have on them a personal identifier such as their license and their Letter of Introduction signed by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center Director.