



## ELECTRONIC QUESTIONNAIRES FOR INVESTIGATIONS PROCESSING (E-QIP)

Created in 2003 as part of the e-Clearance initiative, the Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) has replaced the hard copy SF-86 (Questionnaire for National Security Positions) and the SF-85P (Questionnaire for Public Trust Positions) for personnel security investigations and clearances. The use of e-QIP is mandated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM). Since March, 2007 FEMA has been 100% compliant with e-QIP submissions to OPM. E-QIP is a secure website designed/created by OPM which will eventually contain all PSI forms in order for FEMA applicants, employees or contractors to complete their personnel security questionnaires online.

### **The e-QIP Initiator**

The e-QIP initiator is an individual who has been selected by their program office and vetted through FEMA Security and OPM to set up and administer the e-QIP profile sheet, send the appropriate notification, and enter the necessary information into e-QIP.

### **The e-QIP Profile Sheet**

The entire e-QIP process (excluding the Periodic Reinvestigation Process) begins with the completion of the e-QIP profile sheet which is provided by a designated program office (i.e. Human Resources, Regions, JFO, Security, etc.) within FEMA who has determined that a background investigation is required for employment suitability and/or national security determination. It is required that either the applicant, contractor or FEMA Employee complete the entire profile sheet in order to ensure that all preliminary entries entered into the e-QIP system are factual and correct information. It is the responsibility of the FEMA **e-QIP initiator** to enter the correct information into the e-QIP system. It is also the responsibility of the e-QIP initiator to ensure the Personal Identification Information (PII) contained within the profile sheet is safeguarded and protected.

The following information is required on the e-QIP Profile Sheet:

- Name
  - Full Social Security Number
  - Date of Birth
  - Place of Birth
  - e-Mail Address
  - Job Title
  - Assigned Office (Example: Response, IT, Region, OCC etc.)
  - Position Type (Example: Core, DAE, Permanent, Contractor etc)
  - If a Contractor (Provide Name and Number of Supervisor or FEMA COTR)
  - Position Sensitivity/Access Level
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- Statement regarding a prior background investigation or security clearance (Agency Name and date)
- Current Mailing Address and Telephone Number

Once the completed profile sheet is received, the information provided will then be used to set up the individual account in e-QIP. It is the responsibility of the e-QIP initiator to set up the account.

### **Letter or email Notification (e-QIP is ready for completion)**

When the e-QIP profile sheet information is entered into the e-QIP system, it is the responsibility of the e-QIP Initiator to forward the appropriate e-mail or letter to the Subject advising them they have been setup in e-QIP. Included within that notification is the following information:

- Detailed instructions on how to set their web browser.
- Link to E-QIP web site
- Reminder – Read all instructions carefully
- Reminder – Residence, Employment and Personal Reference Sections require complete street addresses
- Reminder – Section 10. Education - Must provide type of degree and in what field.
- Type of Fingerprint card to complete (Employee – SF-87 and Contractor – FD 258)
- Content of Returned E-QIP Packet (Federal or Contractor)
- Warning Notification – Per OPM requirements e-QIP packets will be returned if instructions are not followed or returned packets are incomplete
- FEMA Mailing Address
- Letter or e-mail Attachments (Federal Employee or Contractor)

### **Federal Employee (attachments)**

- e-QIP User Guide
- SF 87 Finger Print Cards (2 cards)
- Fair Credit Act Reporting Release
- OF 306, Declaration for Federal Employment
- Additional Household Members Sheet
- OF 612, Optional Application for Federal Employment

### **Federal Contractor (attachments)**

- e-QIP User's Guide
- FD 258 Applicant Finger Print Cards (2 cards)
- Fair Credit Act Reporting Release
- DHS Form 11000-6 (08-04) Non-Disclosure Agreement.

**The FEMA e-QIP User's Guide contains detailed information on how to complete the on-line process via the OPM secure portals. This User guide is provided as an attachment to this fact sheet. The following information is addressed:**

- System Overview
- Web Browser Requirements
- Golden Questions and Answers
- Entering, Displaying, and Certifying Data into the e-QIP system
- Security Packets

## **Problems and Pitfalls**

- Please read all instructions carefully before you begin to complete the e-QIP process. Please refer to the e-QIP User's Guide.
- Ensure that your computer web browser is set up correctly. Please refer to the e-QIP User's Guide.
- When answering e-QIP item #5 (Both SF-85P and SF-86) please include "all other names used" to include NEE and maiden names.
- Please ensure that you complete e-QIP in the time that is allotted. Failure to do so will result in your e-QIP timing out in the system and you will be unable to complete it which will cause a delay in conducting your background investigation.
- In Item #11 (Both SF-85P and SF-86) – In accordance with the investigative requirements of each type of background investigation (SSBI, BI, MBI and NACI with Credit) and timeline indicated, all period of employment should be entered separately to include unemployment dates.
- Please check the appropriate employment code for each entry (examples Active Military duty station, National Guard/Reserve, Other Federal Employment, Self Employment, Unemployment, and Federal Contractor, Other etc).
- Complete Mailing Address to include street, city and state are required for each employment entry. Special note: P.O. Box Numbers are also acceptable.
- Personal References: Item # 13 (SF-85P) and Item #12 (Sf-86) - Complete Names and Mailing Addresses (to include Street, City and State) are required.
- Privacy Act Questions: Items# 16 to 22 (SF-85P) and Items# 16 to 30 (SF-86) - Are questions regarding personal behavior and conduct. An explanation is required for all "YES" answers to include complete and pertinent information.
- Resumes are submitted as part of the e-QIP Packet. When submitting the resume as part of the e-QIP packet, please ensure the following information is listed for all employments: Beginning and Ending Dates (Month and Year) and Complete Mailing Addresses to include all Street, City, State and Zip Code. (Federal Employee and Applicant Packets Only. Resumes are not required for contractor packets). **Special Note – It is recommended that the OPM Form (OF-612) is used versus the resume. The form is easier to complete (Only requires two recent employment activities) and is preferred by OPM. The OF-612 is provided as an attachment with the introductory e-QIP notification letter or e-mail.**
- Fingerprint cards are submitted as part of the e-QIP Packet. When being fingerprinted, please ensure your prints are taken on the correct fingerprint card. Federal Employees/Applicants prints are taken on the SF-87. Contractor's fingerprints are taken on the FD-258. If wrong fingerprints cards are submitted this will cause a delay and possible rejection of the e-QIP packet. **Special Note: Per OPM requirements, two fingerprint cards are needed as part of the background investigative process.**

**The submissions of these cards are totally separate from the two fingerprints cards that are submitted by FEMA Security to the FBI for initial suitability determination.**

- All attachments that are listed as part of the e-QIP packet must be completed, signed and forwarded back to the Case Management Unit. This is the main indicator that e-QIP has been completed and is now ready for processing. Failure to forward the packet will result in e-QIP timing out and the reality of completing the process again.
- If you have previously completed e-QIP (whether an SF 85P or SF-86) the information you submitted automatic saves itself. Only updated information as applicable along with the Privacy Act Questions needs to be answered.

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*"FEMA's mission is to support our citizens and first responders to ensure that as a nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards."*

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