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Background Verifications Law Enforcement Inquiries Out-of-Country Verifications

**Personnel Security Unit
Internal Integrity and Security Directorate
Integrity Services Branch**

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Background Verifications

Background verifications ensure that all subsequent security activities are conducted in relation to the actual individual and to verify the accuracy of the individual's background.

Background Verifications

Accuracy of the individual's background is verified for the period of time required by the type of screening (5 years for a reliability status and 10 years for a secret/top secret clearance).

When the individual has spent time outside of Canada, the personal history and background must be demonstrated with supporting documents and the individual's trustworthiness must be verified with a [Law enforcement inquiry](#) from each country in which the person has resided.

To determine if a law enforcement inquiry and supporting documents are required, please visit the [Out-of-Country Verifications](#) section.

Law Enforcement Inquiries

Law enforcement inquiries (or Police clearance certificates) include, at a minimum for all types of security screening, verification of a criminal record against the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's (RCMP) National Repository of Criminal Records.

When an individual has lived outside of Canada or was born outside of Canada, a law enforcement inquiry may also include an inquiry in other national or local police databases. Law enforcement inquiries are different in each country and may also be known by other names (ex: good conduct certificates, criminal record checks and judicial record extracts). The certificates should provide a summary of an individual's criminal record or a declaration of the absence of any criminal record.

It is the applicant's responsibility to take the necessary steps to obtain the law enforcement inquiry from the appropriate foreign authorities. Information on how to obtain a law enforcement inquiry can be found on the [Citizenship and Immigration Canada's web site](#).

If the law enforcement inquiry is not available in English or French, the individual must make the necessary arrangements to have the document translated by a certified translator. The original document and the official translation must be submitted.

To determine if a law enforcement inquiry is required, please visit the [Out-of-Country Verifications](#) section.

Out-of-Country Verifications

For security screening to be meaningful and accurate, individuals must have lived in Canada for a sufficient period of time to enable appropriate [law enforcement inquiries](#), [background verifications](#) and assessments to be conducted. Although a lack of sufficient Canadian residency in and of itself is not necessarily a barrier to the granting of a security status/clearance, checks must be carried out and supporting documents must be provided for a decision to be made.

Individuals who have **lived outside of Canada** for 6 consecutive months or longer within the last 5 years for a Reliability Status and 10 years for a Secret/Top Secret (TS) clearance will be required to account for their activities during that time.*

The following information and documents are required:

1. Proof of residence abroad (Ex: bill with name and address, driver's license issued abroad, letter from employer or school, tenancy agreement)
2. Reason for staying abroad
3. [Law enforcement inquiry](#) from the other country

Individuals who have **entered Canada** less than 5 years ago for a Reliability Status and less than 10 years ago for Secret/TS clearance must provide the following:

1. Copy of valid Passport
2. Copy of Canadian Visa, Work/Education permit OR copy of Canadian Citizenship Certificate/Card
3. [Law enforcement inquiry](#) from the country of birth

If a document is not available in English or French, the individual must make the necessary arrangements to have the document translated by a certified translator. The original document and the official translation must be submitted.

Note: If one of the documents cannot be obtained, please contact the [Regional Security Office](#). When a reasonable justification is provided, the Personnel Security Manager will be consulted to evaluate the file and indicate what other documents may be acceptable. A determination must be made that such alternative measures cannot mitigate the risk associated with granting the individual the required security status/clearance and may require the approval from the Chief Security Officer (CSO).

*Does not apply if time spent abroad was related to employment or assignment with a Government of Canada Department/Agency or with the Canadian Armed Forces.