



NSA  
Careers

POLICY SERIES

# YOUR POLYGRAPH EXAMINATION

## PRIOR TO YOUR APPOINTMENT

- Get a good night's sleep
- Follow your usual routine
- Take your regular medications
- Don't skip any meals
- Come with an open mind
- Allow enough time in your schedule

## TEST REQUIREMENTS

- Questions are directly related to counterintelligence and suitability topics
- Test is voluntary and can be terminated at any time
- Examinee must sign an interview consent form
- All questions are reviewed prior to testing

## EXAMINER TRAINING

- Graduates of National Center for Credibility Assessment
- Federally certified examiners
- Bachelor's degree (minimum)
- 80 hours of continuing education biennially

## HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS

The polygraph components are not invasive. The polygraph instrument uses sensors placed on an individual to monitor and record their physiology during the testing phase. It is highly unusual for any medical condition, past or present, to interfere with the polygraph test or polygraph results. In the event an individual does have a concern in this regard, it is recommended that they consult their physician before their examination is scheduled.

## QUESTION AREAS

### **Counterintelligence:**

- Espionage and terrorist activity
- Deliberate damage of U.S. government information systems
- Intentional compromise of U.S. government classified information or material
- Secret contact with a foreign national or representative of a foreign power

### **Suitability:**

- Involvement in a serious crime
- Involvement with illegal drugs during the last two years
- Deliberate falsification of the security forms

### **Confidentiality:**

Your polygraph is held in the strictest confidentiality. Information discussed during your polygraph interview is protected by the Privacy Act.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Will nervousness affect my test?**

Nervousness is expected and accounted for during the test.

### **How long will the test take?**

The average test length falls between 2-4 hours.

### **How can I be successful on my polygraph examination?**

Speak candidly about your life experiences, ask questions and follow your examiner's instructions.

### **What about information I learn from the internet and co-workers?**

There is a great deal of inaccurate information on the internet about the polygraph, and everyone's polygraph experience is different. Talk to your examiner if you have questions about what you learned.

### **What should I do if I don't understand something?**

Don't be afraid to ask questions. Your examiner has in-depth knowledge about the testing process. It is vital to your success that you understand the process and the questions.