



# Undergoing National Security Clearance - Guidance for the Trans community

Applying for national security clearance can seem like an intrusive process for many individuals - you are required to share personal details about your life via a security questionnaire and in an interview for higher levels of clearance.

We understand through engagement and feedback with the trans community that there may be some concerns when sharing details about your previous name(s) with vetting professionals, and discussing such details could be traumatic. We have created this guidance to provide reassurance about how your data will be handled during all of your interactions with UKSV.



Vetting is a whole life process; in order to perform meaningful checks and a thorough assessment of someone's suitability to hold national security clearance, we have to gather all of the details of an individual's identity, and any changes that have occurred. This includes a change in name. We will always communicate with you using your current/preferred name, as detailed on your security questionnaire.

If you are applying for a higher level of clearance that involves an interview, we will need to discuss things that may have happened before your change in identity. We will never use a previous name to deadname an individual, but we may ask questions about life experiences before your transition. We encourage you to discuss any concerns with your vetting officer, and it is important that you are open and honest throughout the process. Being trans is not a bar to holding security clearance, and we will work with you to provide a safe space for you to have an honest conversation. You will never be morally judged during the process and you can expect to be treated with respect throughout.

For some levels of clearance we will need to gather a security clearance reference from an employer and character referee - these are people you suggest to us. We ask that you make it clear on your security questionnaire how you would like us to refer to you during these interviews. We may need to mention your previous name during the conversation if this is the name the referee knows you as, but only to ensure all parties are clear on which part of your life the conversation is referring to.

If you feel you have been treated unfairly or discriminated against because of your trans status at any point during the process, you can complain to us. For more information on how to complain, and what information we require to investigate your complaint, you can find further details on our [how to make a complaint](#) page. Please be assured that any complaint you may make will not have a bearing on your vetting application, all complaints are handled by an independent team.

Further information on your data and privacy can be found [here](#).