The Pathway to Success Begins with

SPēD

Security Professional Education Development

Security Fundamentals Professional Certification

Candidate Handbook

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Introduction

This *Candidate Handbook* contains information for individuals pursuing the Security Fundamentals Professional Certification administered by the Defense Security Service (DSS), under the direction of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD(I)).

This *Handbook* provides candidates with the following:

- An overview of the SPēD Certification Program
- An explanation of the benefits of SPēD Certification
- The SPēD Certification Program objectives
- An outline of the SPēD Certification Program registration process

This *Candidate Handbook* contains information regarding Security Fundamentals Professional Certification eligibility, the registration process, and sample questions for the Assessment.

What is the SPēD Certification Program?

SPēD stands for Security Professional Education Development. The SPēD Certification Program is part of the Department of Defense's (DoD) initiative to professionalize the security workforce. The SPēD Certification Program ensures that security practitioners can demonstrate proficiency in a common set of competencies. The purpose of the SPēD Certification Program is to promote interoperability, facilitate professional development and training, and develop a workforce of certified security professionals.

Governance

Content is under development.

SPēD Certification Program Structure

There are four certifications in the SPēD Certification Program.

Certifications	Acronym	Certification Description
Security Fundamentals Professional Certification	SFPC	The individual understands foundational security concepts, principles, and practices.
Security Asset Protection Professional Certification	SAPPC	The individual applies foundational security concepts, principles, and practices.
Security Program Integration Professional Certification	SPIPC	The individual understands and applies risk assessment and security program management based on security concepts, principles, and practices.
Security Enterprise Professional Certification	SEPC	The individual understands and applies concepts, principles, and practices for managing enterprise-wide security.

This *Handbook* addresses the Security Fundamentals Professional Certification.

Benefits of a SPēD Certification

For individuals: Demonstrates mastery of the knowledge, skills, and abilities as a security professional

For employers: Provides a reference point for determining a candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities

For the profession: Defines standards and drives professional accountability

SPēD Certification Policy Matrix

A certification policy matrix summarizes the essential characteristics and design requirements of an individual certification. In the SPēD Certification Program, a policy matrix will be presented for each certification.

Security Fundamentals Professional Certification		
DoD Security Fundamentals Professional Certification is intended for • DoD personnel who are working toward or have attained full-time security positions for which this certification has been deemed a requirement or a professional development milestone • DoD personnel who will be or are currently performing security functions as an additional duty for a DoD Component		
To obtain the Security Fundamentals Professional Certification, the individual must do the following:		**Waivers**
Requirements:	• Attain a passing score on the SFPC Assessment • Be an employee in good standing • Be conferred by USD(I)	NONE
Certification Renewal Requirements		
To maintain the Security Fundamentals Professional Certification, the certification holder must do the following:		**Waivers**
Requirements:	• Complete approved continuing professional development units • Be an employee in good standing	As specified in DoD Component's Implementation Plan
The certification holder will need to recertify if		**Waivers**
Conditions:	The DoD Security Training Council (DSTC) determines the content addressed in the certification's assessment modules to be significantly out-of-date, or an individual fails to meet the certification maintenance requirements.	NONE

SPēD Credentialing Process

There are four stages in the certification process:

1. **Eligible Applicant -** Individuals become eligible to pursue certification when their positions are identified as requiring certification, or after they move to positions identified as certified positions, or they volunteer to participate in coordination with their DoD Component.
2. **Applicant -** The eligible applicant applies for SPēD Assessment and establishes or updates his or her ENROL account.
3. **Candidate** – The applicant registers to take the SPēD Certification Assessment.
4. **Holder -** The individual meets the requirements and a Certification is conferred.

SPēD Certification Registration Process

The Components or agencies select candidates for SPēD Certification. The list below outlines the steps DoD Security Professionals follow to participate in the SPēD Certification process.

- Request SPēD Certification participation via SPēD@dss.mil
- Create or update ENROL account through Defense Security Service Academy (DSSA) Web site: http://dss.mil/seta/enrol/enrol.html

Once Candidate's status is confirmed with the Registrar's Office, the Candidate will be notified by e-mail of registration for Training Resource documents. Candidate can elect to review the training resource documents or register for the SPēD Certification Assessment.

Assessment Security and Confidentiality

The questions and answers of the Certification Assessment for the Security Fundamentals Professional Certificate are the exclusive property of DoD for official use only and protected by DoD's intellectual property rights policies.

The SPēD Certification Assessment will be administered in a proctored environment. This proctoring requirement brings the SPēD Certification Program in line with standards for comparable certification programs.

The SPēD Certification Assessment is password-protected and hosted on a secure server. The Assessment cannot be accessed, copied, printed, or distributed without approval from the SPēD Program Management Office (PMO).

These security practices provide assurance that the integrity of the Assessment is maintained.

Candidates' individual information and results will be kept confidential. Studies and reports will be aggregated and individual performance will not be distributed without the permission of the Candidate. However, the pass/fail information will be provided to the Primary Office of Responsibility for the Candidate's Component. Each Component has a responsibility to report its progress towards implementation of the SPēD Certification Program as required by DoD 3305.13-M, DoD Security Accreditation and Certification Manual.

SPēD User Agreement

Prior to taking the Certification Assessment, candidates will be asked to accept the SPēD User Agreement.

SPēD Certification Program Notice
Security Fundamentals Professional Certification Terms and Conditions

Your participation in the Certification Program is subject to the following terms.

The Security Fundamentals Professional Certification Assessment (including, without limitation, questions, answers, datasets, files, designs, or content in or related to the certification assessment) is the property of the U.S. Department of Defense and access is reserved to authorized users only.

The assessment is for internal U.S. Government use only and is not publicly releasable. However, the pass/fail information will be provided to the Primary Office of Responsibility for your Component.

By accessing and participating in this assessment, you accept the responsibility to protect the integrity of this assessment by not disclosing, disseminating, copying, publishing, or transmitting any parts of the assessment in any form to any person.

You may be disqualified from participating in the assessment or the certification program as a whole and your certification may be revoked if you:

1. Participate in the assessment under false identity.
2. Circumvent or violate the program's procedures or security mechanisms.

o Accept

o Not Accept

Topic Areas of Expertise

The Security Fundamentals Professional Certification (SFPC) Assessment measures the breadth of knowledge across the security landscape in DoD. Although a security professional's current work may primarily be in one of these areas, DoD has determined it important to have awareness and fundamental knowledge across the disciplines. The SFPC is not only valuable to security professionals as their careers advance, but it also strengthens DoD's confidence in their security professionals' general knowledge across the security landscape.

Following is a summary of the weighting for the SFPC Assessment:

Area of Expertise (AOE)	
Information Security	**Exam Weighting (28%)**
Classification Considerations for Critical Program Information (CPI)	1%
Classification Levels and Types	2%
Classification Markings	2%
Disposition and Destruction Procedures	1%
Duration	1%
Handling Incidents of Potential and Actual Compromise	3%
Information Assurance Concepts	2%
Information Protection Concepts	3%
Procedures for Handling Special Types of Information	1%
Procedures in a Classified Workplace	6%
Safeguarding	1%
Transmission and Transportation Procedures	2%

Note: Sum of sub-topic area percentages may not be equal to AOE exam weighting due to rounding.

Area of Expertise	
Personnel Security	**Exam Weighting (31%)**
Adjudicative Guidelines	3%
Civilian Employment Investigative Requirements	2%
Designation of Position Sensitivity Types	1%
Military Appointment, Enlistment, and Induction Investigative Requirements	1%
Personnel Security Clearances	3%
Personnel Security Investigation Requests	1%
Personnel Security Investigations, Limitations, and Restrictions	2%
Safeguarding Personnel Records	3%
Security Systems	5%
Special Personnel Security Clearance Requirements	1%
Standards – Access to Classified Information/Sensitive Duty Assignment	2%
Types of Personnel Security Investigations	2%
Unfavorable Administrative Actions	1%
Waivers of Investigative Requirements	4%

Area of Expertise	
Physical Security	**Exam Weighting (10%)**
Facility Access Control Procedures	2%
Lock and Key Systems	1%
Physical Security Concepts	2%
Protective Barriers	2%
Secure Rooms, Containers, and Vaults	1%
Security Systems and Devices	1%
Site Lighting	1%
Area of Expertise	
Industrial Security	**Exam Weighting (13%)**
Contracting Process	1%
Facility Security Clearance	1%
FOCI	1%
Industrial Security Basics	5%
Visits and Meetings	1%

Area of Expertise	
General Security	**Exam Weighting (18%)**
Basic Security Forms	2%
Counterintelligence Concepts	2%
OPSEC Concepts	1%
Research and Technology Protection Concepts	2%
Risk Assessment and Management	2%
SAP Basics	2%
Security Briefings	1%
Security Education and Training	2%
Security Policy Landscape	4%

Assessment Administration

Scheduling a SPēD Certification Assessment

Prior to registration, candidates must contact their supervisor and adhere to local operating procedures regarding participation. SPēD Candidates who have created or updated their ENROL account will be added to the SPēD Certification Audience. This will enable them to register for the Certification Assessment.

After registering for the Certification Assessment, candidates will receive e-mails from the Registrar's Office informing them their registration is pending approval. Candidates will also receive e-mail notifications from ENROL with links listing available test site centers.

Approval to take the test is granted from the Registrar's Office after candidates:

1. Contact the Test Education Center of their choice to schedule the test date and time.
2. Contact the Registrar's Office via e-mail at SPeDCert.Registration@dss.mil with the scheduled test site location, date and time

After receiving an e-mail approval from ENROL, candidates will receive further instructions from the Registrar's Office with a list of policies and guidelines from their preferred test location to take the SPēD Certification Assessment.

Procedures

Once the Candidate has registered as a SFPC Candidate in ENROL, the SPēD PMO will send an e-mail to the Candidate which includes the testing site address, reporting date and time, the registered exam, Candidate ID, and items the Candidate needs to bring to the testing site, including the following:

- Registrar e-mail
- Government issued photo identification (Common Access Card (CAC), passport, or driver's license)

Items Provided at the Assessment Location

- Blank paper or worksheets, as applicable
- Computer and workstation (if online)
- Assessment(s) to be taken

See Appendix A for Accommodations for Disabilities.

Estimated Time to Complete the Assessment

For the Security Fundamentals Professional Certification:

- 45 minutes to complete the Asset Protection Principles Assessment
- 45 minutes to complete the Security Countermeasures Assessment
- 30 minutes to complete the Security Methods and Tools Assessment

Assessment completion times will be determined during the Beta Testing Period. An assessment comment form will be available with each assessment to provide feedback.

Rescheduling a SPēD Certification Assessment

If a Candidate does not obtain a passing score on the SPēD Certification Assessment or does not complete the Assessment, he or she can retake it after a 90-day waiting period. This waiting period is applied after each sitting, regardless of whether or not the Assessment was completed. Sitting for the Assessment occurs when the Candidate has entered the proctor-provided user ID and password.

Scoring the SFPC Assessment

The candidate must earn a score that is equivalent to or exceeds the passing score. Candidates will be notified of results by their DoD Component after formal review of their results by their DoD Component and Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence.

Determination of Passing Scores

The passing score, also known as a cut-score, represents a standard of passing performance established by experts in the security field using professionally-recognized psychometric methodology for standard-setting.

Appeal Policy

There are two distinct categories for which a SPēD Certification appeal can be filed.

1. Decisions on certification requirements, such as criteria for obtaining a passing score on the SFPC Assessment or adherence to the candidate registration and test-taking protocols
2. Decisions on certification renewal requirements, such as completion of approved Professional Development Units (PDUs) or timeliness of completing and reporting PDUs

Appeals other than the above are not within the purview of the SPēD Certification Program, including the following:

- Decisions about DoD Component employment policy
- Decisions about DoD Component eligibility criteria for identifying billets or individuals for SPēD Certification conferral
- Decisions about good standing within a DoD Component

Appeal and Review Process

The individual initiates an appeal request within 30 calendar days of a precipitating event.

To initiate the process, the individual prepares a letter which includes (1) a description of the precipitating event, (2) evidence why the precipitating event should be overturned, (3) the individual's signature, and (4) a supervisory signature.

The appellant can send the letter to SPED@dss.mil or to the following address:

Defense Security Service
SPēD Project Management Office
938 Elkridge Landing Road
Linthicum, MD 21090

Appeal Policy and Procedures

Appeals, reviews, and decisions will be made by two authorities: the SPēD PMO and the DSTC - SPēD Appeals Board (DSAB). The DSAB will consist of four people: three elected members serving a two-year term, and a fourth selected by the DSTC to represent the Candidate's employing organization.

First Decision

The SPēD PMO has first review of the appeal request. They first determine if the event is eligible for review. If it is not, the Office will send a letter to the individual explaining the decision of ineligibility.

If the appeal request is eligible for review, the Office will review the evidence and respond within 30 days of receipt.

If the appeal request is valid, the Office will decide in favor of the individual and send a letter to the candidate. If the appeal is denied, the Office will send a letter of denial of petition. The Office will compile recommendations to be reviewed by the DSAB.

All appellants can appeal the first denial determination. If the first formal decision is not appealed, within 30 days it becomes final.

If the individual appeals, the review must either be (1) supported by findings of fact with relevant evidence, or (2) ruled as conclusions that were arbitrary, capricious, or contrary to law. Individuals will have 30 days to file a second appeal from the date of the first appeal denial. If the second appeal is not forwarded within 30 days, then the initial appeal decision becomes final.

Second Decision

The second appeal of a SPēD PMO decision is made to the DSAB.

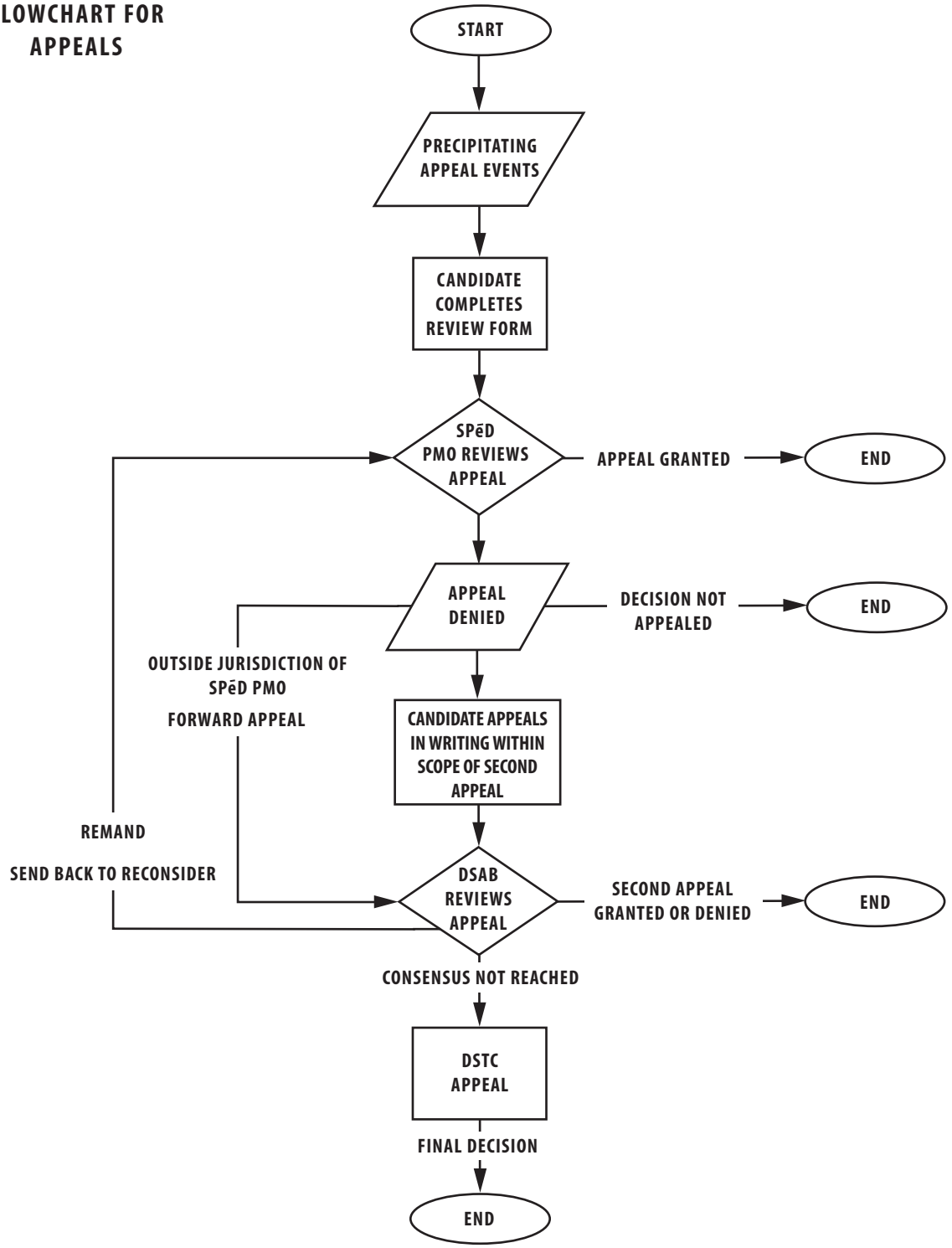
DSAB members receive recommendations from the SPēD PMO once every quarter (December 7, March 7, June 7, and September 7). DSAB members will have one week to accept or not accept recommendations. Accepted recommendations are sent back to the SPēD PMO.

DSAB members will have another week to discuss recommendations not accepted by at least one member. Decision will be made by consensus. If there is no consensus, the appeal goes to the DSTC. The DSTC will have an additional week to discuss issues. Decision will be made by majority vote.

DSTC members will submit their results to the SPēD PMO, and the SPēD PMO will notify appellants of the final decision.

The DSTC is the final decision authority.

FLOWCHART FOR APPEALS



Certification Renewal

Obtaining a SPēD Certification is a significant achievement in an individual's career in the DoD. SPēD Certification indicates the individual has demonstrated mastery of the knowledge, skills, and abilities measured by the Security Certification as defined by the DoD. Although both of these points are critical to the individual and DoD, they are not a terminal point for professionalizing the workforce.

The SPēD Certification Renewal Policy is the long-term strategy for the DoD to meet the professionalization intent by putting in place a systemic strategy that fosters learning and professional growth of the security workforce, DSS and the DSTC enable the DoD to meet National Intelligence Strategy Enterprise Objective 6 and USD(I) Human Capital Goals and Objectives for the security workforce.

In an effort to measure continuing competence, maintenance and recertification must be defined.

Maintenance: The SPēD Certification Program will, when applicable, define, for each certification, requirements that security personnel must meet to maintain their certification status. Certification maintenance requirements will be defined in terms of professional development and continuing education using training hours, units, and/or credits. A point matrix for professional development units is under development.

Recertification: The SPēD Certification Program will define recertification policies and procedures for each certification. This includes the following:

a. Conditions and/or events that will trigger the need for certification holders to go through a recertification process.

b. Elements of the original assessment strategies that certification holders must meet in order to be recertified.

Need More Information?

For more information, including listings of test centers and frequently asked questions, visit the SPēD Website at http://dssa.dss.mil/seta/sped/sped.html

If you have questions, e-mail the SPēD Project Management Office at sped@dss.mil

To access ENROL, go to http://dssa.dss.mil/seta/enrol/enrol.html

Sample One: Matching Item Type

Theme: DoD Security Programs and Program Areas

Options:

A. Foreign Disclosure
B. Industrial Security
C. Information Security
D. International Security
E. Personnel Security
F. Physical Security
G. Research and Technology Protection
H. Sensitive Compartmented Information

Item:

1. Practitioners of this program area(s) train Original Classification Authorities in the application of the process for making classification determinations.
2. Practitioners of this program area(s) are involved with processes that monitor employees for new information that could affect their security clearance eligibility status.
3. Practitioners of this program area(s) work with a facility's Antiterrorism Officer to deploy defensive measures that reduce the facility's vulnerability from terrorist attacks.

Sample Two: Convergent True/False Item Type

Two security professionals - Jo and Chris - are discussing procedures for safeguarding classified information in a classified workplace.

Jo says that working papers may contain pieces of classified information and must be handled in the same manner as classified documents.

Chris says that an individual needs to determine if a document has a reproduction control notice prior to reproducing that document.

Who is correct?

A. Jo is correct

B. Chris is correct

C. Jo and Chris are both correct

D. Jo and Chris are both incorrect

Sample Three: Multiple True/False Item Type

Please determine whether the following statements are True or False:

To meet security education requirements, initial briefings must _____.

T/F 1. Discuss basic security responsibilities for protecting classified information

T/F 2. Discuss penalties for unauthorized disclosure

Tips for Success on the SPēD Assessment

Preparing for the Assessment

- Take the Diagnostic Assessment (to be released January 2011 on the SPēD Website). Use the results to create a realistic study schedule tied to the areas of expertise and the weight of the area on the Assessment. Review the areas of expertise, evaluate your knowledge level, and concentrate on improving weak areas.
- Use the SPēD Training Planning Tool, available through your ENROL account after you register for SPēD, to determine areas for improvement.
- Download study guides for Areas of Expertise, available through your ENROL account after you register for SPēD.
- Take online training modules offered by the DSS Academy or other training recognized to meet DoD Security Professional Skill Standards.

Study Suggestions

- Recognize that the material cannot be memorized; use memory techniques only to help recall key points.
- Focus on the application of accepted principles, practices, and theories, not on memorizing facts, dates, and names.
- Consider studying in pairs or starting or joining a virtual study group.
- Review sample test questions.

Test Taking Tips

- Do what is needed to feel comfortable and relaxed before the test: check out the location in advance, get enough rest, eat a good meal, etc.
- Arrive early—at least 20 minutes before the scheduled test time.
- Trust first impressions; do not over-analyze answers.
- If uncertain about a question, return to it later, and if you are still uncertain, make an educated guess.
- Do not look for answer patterns.
- Do not select an answer based on length; it may be a false clue.
- Do not rush. Consider each choice before selecting the best one.
- Use time well. Extra points are not awarded for finishing early.

Each item is worth one point and there is no penalty for guessing, so make every attempt to answer all the questions.

Accommodations for Disabilities

The SPēD Certification Program will provide reasonable accommodation to its testing process in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) for individuals requesting accommodation.

In general, an accommodation is made when a disability is relieved by an auxiliary aid or a procedural change in the administration of an Assessment.

It is the responsibility of the applicant seeking accommodation to provide documentation to the SPēD PMO Certification Test Administrator at least four weeks in advance of the Assessment.

The intent of the ADA is to provide equal access to all individuals to the testing process and to ensure that reasonable accommodations are provided to gain access to the process. When an individual requests an accommodation that is recognized under the ADA and the request has been submitted in a timely and accurate manner, the SPēD Certification Program will grant the accommodation at no cost to the individual requesting the accommodation.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The SPēD Certification Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, gender, disability, religion, or national origin.

The Pathway to Success Begins with

SPED

Security Professional Education Development

Visit http://dssa.dss.mil/seta/sped/sped.html
Send questions to SPED@dss.mil