



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
MANUAL OF SECURITY
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

Chapter 24 - Storage

2401 Protecting Classified Information

Classified information must be stored under conditions that will provide adequate protection against access by unauthorized persons. Whenever classified information is not under the personal control and observation of a cleared person, it must be guarded by personnel with the appropriate security clearance or stored in a locked General Services Administration (GSA) approved security container. The head of an operating unit or the Office of Security may determine that more stringent requirements are needed based on the volume, nature, and sensitivity of the information to be protected in relation to other factors such as types of containers, presence of guards, vault-type space, or intrusion alarms.

2402 Storage Standards

The GSA establishes and publishes minimum standards, specifications, and supply schedules for containers, vaults, alarm systems, and associated security devices suitable for the storage and protection of classified information. The Office of Security may establish additional supplementary controls to prevent unauthorized access. Safe-type filing cabinets conforming to Federal specifications bear a Test Certification Label on the locking drawer attesting to the security capabilities of the container and lock. On some early safes, this label was located on the wall inside the locking drawer. Safes manufactured after February 1962 will also be marked "General Services Administration Approved Security Container" on the outside of the top drawer. GSA has conditionally approved several computerized electronic locking devices for safes. To verify which devices are approved, contact the Office of Security.

2403 Storage of Top Secret Information

A. Cabinets and Vaults. When not in use, Top Secret information must be stored in a GSA-approved security container with an approved, built-in, three-position, dial-type changeable combination lock; in a vault protected by an alarm system and response force; or in other types of storage facilities that meet minimum GSA standards. For more information, refer to Section IV, Physical Security.

B. Supplemental Controls. Admittance to a Top Secret storage area shall be limited to authorized personnel. Persons not authorized access but whose presence in the area is temporarily required must be escorted and kept under constant observation. All classified information must be covered or otherwise



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protected from observation, disclosure, or removal.

2404 Storage of Secret and Confidential Information

Secret and Confidential information shall be stored in a container, vault, or alarmed area that meets minimum GSA standards, or one of the following exceptions to the standards.

A. Secret and Confidential Information. Secret and Confidential information shall be stored in a safe-type filing cabinet with a built-in, three-position, dial-type changeable combination lock. File cabinets with security lock bars are not approved for storage of classified information, except as follows: material up to the Secret level may be stored in a lock-bar container until the year 2012. However, the Office of Security strongly recommends that if a GSA-approved security container with an approved, built-in, three-position, dial-type combination lock is available, it should be used in place of a lock-bar container. Secret information must be stored in a facility that has 24-hour guard service or response. For more information, refer to Section IV, Physical Security.

B. Bulky Secret and Confidential Information. Bulky Secret and Confidential information may be stored in vaults or other closed areas that have been approved and accredited for this purpose by the servicing security office. No area shall be used for classified open storage without prior accreditation and written approval by the servicing security officer.

2405 Classified Combinations

A. Protecting Classified Combinations. The combination of a lock used for the storage of classified information shall be afforded protection equal to that given to the highest level of classified information stored in the container. The combinations are classified and shall be recorded only on the SF-700, Security Container Information Form. The SF-700, Attachment 2, shall be stored in an appropriate level security container other than the container for which the combination is intended. Combinations are not to be recorded on calendars, on rolodex lists, in desk drawers, in key-locked filing cabinets, in wallets, or stored at home, etc. Classified combinations that are recorded on anything other than the required SF-700, Attachment 2, are in violation of this policy. Security contacts shall establish programs for the secure maintenance of combinations within their respective organizations and shall remind custodians and alternates that have access to security containers to memorize, record, and safeguard the classified combination at all times.

B. Changing Classified Combinations. Combinations to security containers shall be changed by the



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security contact, an appropriately cleared government representative, a representative of the Office of Security, or a bonded, appropriately cleared contractor of the Department employed for this purpose. A contractor must not change combinations on security containers that are used to store Top Secret information. This must be done by the security contact, the Office of Security, or an appropriately cleared government representative of the Department. The requirement to change classified combinations on an annual basis no longer exists, except for containers with NATO information. Combinations shall be changed:

1. When a container is placed in use;
2. When an individual knowing the combination no longer requires access to the container;
3. When the combination is subject to possible compromise; or
4. When a container is taken out of service. Built-in combination locks shall be reset to the standard combination 50-25-50 (10-20-30 for padlocks) prior to removal from office space.

C. Security Container Information. Each security contact shall maintain a record of each vault, secure room, or container used for storing classified information. This record shall identify the current location of the container or room, the name, home address, and home telephone number of each individual (custodian and/or alternate) responsible for, and having access to, the combination. The Security Container Information form, SF-700, must be used for this purpose. Instructions to complete the form are printed on the form itself. All security equipment, to include security containers utilized for the storage of classified information, shall be controlled by a management information system. The security contact of each operating unit shall be responsible for ensuring that the Classified Control Point (CCP) maintains a record of pertinent container information.

D. Maintaining Classified Combination Records. The Security Container Information form, SF-700, contains two parts or attachments. When a security container is placed into service, Attachment 1 of the SF-700 remains with the security container and shall be attached to the inside of the control drawer (i.e., drawer on safe with combination dial, or top drawer of approved bar-lock filing cabinet). The operating unit shall then forward Attachment 2 of the SF-700 to the security contact or servicing security officer for safeguarding. Attachment 2 is the sealed envelope portion of the SF-700 that holds the classified combination. The security contact may choose to secure this form in their own GSA-approved security container or forward the form to their servicing security officer or to the Office of Security for safeguarding. Custodians or alternates shall not store Attachment 2 of their own SF-700 form in their own security container. SF-700 forms shall be kept



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current at all times in accordance with paragraph 2405B above.

E. Access to Classified Combinations. Only appropriately cleared and authorized employees shall have access to classified combinations. The number of employees with access shall be kept to a minimum (normally two to three) and be clearly identified on the SF-700. Combinations shall not be provided to anyone who is not identified on the SF-700. The custodian or alternate is responsible for properly safeguarding the classified combination and preventing unauthorized access to the security container.

2406 Open-Closed Signs

Reversible **OPEN-CLOSED** signs, or similar signs, should be used as reminders on all classified storage containers each time they are locked or unlocked.

2407 Security Container Check Sheet

A Security Container Check Sheet, SF-702, shall be placed on the exterior of each classified security container to record each time the container is opened, closed, and double-checked. The individual conducting such actions shall include his or her initials in the applicable part of the form. Each opening and closing shall be recorded using the individual's initials and the time of the opening and the closing. The "Checked By" column will be used every day that the office is occupied to conduct work. This is done to ensure that an individual who failed to complete the "Opened By" and "Closed By" blocks did not leave the security container open accidentally. The "Guard Check" column is optional. The individual who conducts the end-of-the-day double-check of the container must ensure that the container is properly locked and secured by pulling on the handles of the drawers and then spinning the combination dial at least four rotations. Although it is not always possible, the person conducting the end-of-the-day double-check of the security containers should not be the same person who opened and closed the security container during the duty day. This procedure provides an additional security measure to ensure that classified information in the office is protected. Supervisors are responsible for establishing procedures to ensure that the requirements in this paragraph are met.

2408 Surplus Security Containers

Security containers no longer used for the storage of classified information may be transferred to other areas where they are needed or surplused. Prior to moving any container, the container shall be thoroughly searched for classified material. All classified information shall be removed. Areas to be searched include: between, behind, and underneath the container and behind, under, and on the sides of all drawers. This search may



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involve removing each drawer for thorough inspection (as materials may have inadvertently fallen behind the drawer and are not visible without removing or lifting the drawer). The security contact must declare the container empty by placing a written statement on the outside front of the container indicating the date of the inspection, the person who conducted the inspection, and the unit and office that last used the container. In addition, prior to moving any security container with a built-in combination dial, the combination shall be reset to the standard combination of 50-25-50. The written statement on the outside of the container shall identify that the combination has been reset. The security contact must remove and destroy Attachment 1 of the SF-700 located inside the control drawer. No security container shall be relocated or taken out of service without first notifying the servicing security officer or security contact, who must ensure the action is annotated in the management information tracking system and reflected on the SF-700. If the combination cannot be changed (due to a mechanical problem with the dial), then the existing combination shall be annotated on the written statement.