



**DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE
DEFENSE OFFICE OF HEARINGS AND APPEALS**



In the matter of:)
)
) ISCR Case No. 24-00134
)
)
Applicant for Security Clearance)

Appearances

For Government: Tara R. Karoian, Esq., Department Counsel
For Applicant: *Pro Se*

11/25/2024

Decision

On February 15, 2024, the Department of Defense (DOD) issued a Statement of Reasons (SOR) to Applicant detailing security concerns under Guideline B, foreign influence. The action was taken under Executive Order (EO) 10865, *Safeguarding Classified Information within Industry* (February 20, 1960), as amended; DOD Directive 5220.6, *Defense Industrial Personnel Security Clearance Review Program* (January 2, 1992), as amended (Directive); and the adjudicative guidelines implemented by DOD on June 8, 2017 (AG).

On February 16, 2024, Applicant provided a response to the SOR, and requested a hearing before an administrative judge. The case was assigned to me on September 3, 2024. A hearing was scheduled and held on November 12, 2024. After completely reviewing the pleadings, documentary evidence, and hearing testimony, I informed the parties that I believed this case was appropriate for a Summary Disposition in Applicant's favor. Department Counsel did not object.

This case involves two allegations of foreign influence concerns under Guideline B. I believe a Summary Disposition is appropriate because any foreign influence concerns have been mitigated. Applicant no longer works for a foreign agency. He only worked there as a student doing a research fellowship from 2015 to 2016 for his master's degree, and from 2017 to 2018, for his Ph.D. He has no further work relationship with the entity. Additionally, he has minimal professional and personal contact with his former fellowship advisor who worked for the foreign agency and is a foreign citizen. He fully understands

his responsibilities to protect classified information even when collaborating with foreign scientists on research projects sponsored by his employer. He receives yearly training in this area from his employer. Applicant's testimony was thorough and credible.

The concerns over Applicant's foreign influence no longer create doubts about his current reliability, trustworthiness, good judgment, and ability to protect classified information. He established his deep and longstanding relationships and loyalties in the United States, such that he can be expected to resolve any conflict of interest in favor of the U.S. interest. In reaching these conclusions, I weighed the evidence as a whole and considered if the favorable evidence outweighed the unfavorable evidence. I also gave due consideration to the whole-person concept. Accordingly, I conclude that he met his ultimate burden of persuasion to show that it is clearly consistent with the national interest to grant his eligibility for access to classified information. This case is decided for Applicant. Clearance is granted.

Robert E. Coacher
Administrative Judge