General HSPD-12 FAQs can be found online at: http://lincpass.usda.gov/faq.html

HSPD-12 Non-Employee LincPass

1. What is a Non-Employee?

A Non-Employee is anyone who supports USDA that is not a Federal employee. Contractors and other USDA cooperators, such as interns, volunteers, fellows and affiliates, are Non-Employees.

2. How long is the process for Non-Employees to obtain a LincPass?

Once enrollment is complete, Non-Employees should receive their LincPass within approximately ten business days. Before enrollment can begin, all required information will need to be entered into NEIS, such as sponsorship and adjudication information. Sponsors should initiate data collection after the Risk Assessment has been applied and a Non-Employee is identified to obtain a LincPass.

3. What are LACS and PACS?

LACS stands for Logical Access Control Systems, or access to federal computer systems. PACS stands for Physical Access Control Systems, which are the systems that regulate access to federal facilities. The LincPass will be used for identification purposes, and in the future grant access to both.

4. How would a cardholder perform their job between the time a credential expires or is lost, and when a new credential is issued and activated?

Until LACS/PACS integration there is no impact. After PACS integration, the Non-Employee will need a temporary site badge issued. The impact upon integration of LACS is unknown.

5. Are LincPass credentials interoperable among different agencies? Would a cardholder from another Federal Agency be able to use their card at USDA?

Yes. A policy has not been issued as of yet. Interoperability of credentials between Federal agencies is one of the goals of HSPD-12 and is currently under development. Any background investigations (NACI or higher) that were completed through another agency would be sufficient for the USDA requirement, as long as the investigation is still valid.

6. How often would individuals need to go through the enrollment process and/or the BI process?

Once. However, if a LincPass is lost, damaged, stolen, or broken, the Non-Employee will need to go through the Enrollment process again.

7. **How does the LincPass expiration date apply to Non-Employees? Which would affect a Non-Employee, the five-year credential expiration or the contract termination date in NEIS?**

   Both dates affect the LincPass expiration. The printed date on the LincPass is five years from the date of enrollment. If a contract expiration date is reached in NEIS, any associated LincPasses will be automatically de-activated and access to electronic systems or facilities. If a Non-Employee is assigned to multiple contracts in NEIS, the credential will be active as long as the Non-Employee is active on at least one contract.

Risk Assessment

1. **What is the Risk Assessment?**

   The Risk Assessment provides guidelines for determining LincPass applicability, and can be found in the Departmental Manual (DM) 4620-002 on the USDA HSPD-12 website at http://lincpass.usda.gov/.

2. **How do I use the Risk Assessment?**

   The Risk Assessment is a flowchart with a series of questions to help determine who needs a LincPass based on access and the kind of work someone performs. Start at the top left diamond on the Risk Assessment and work your way through. If you can answer "Yes" to any question in the Risk Assessment, the Non-Employee requires a LincPass.

3. **Who decides who needs a LincPass?**

   Agencies must determine who is responsible for applying the Risk Assessment and deciding who needs a LincPass. Typically this falls under the Sponsor role.
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4. **Do all Non-Employees need a LincPass?**

   No. You should use the Risk Assessment to determine LincPass applicability.

5. **If a Non-Employee doesn't need a LincPass, what type of ID are they issued?**

   If a Non-Employee doesn't need a LincPass per the Risk Assessment, they should be issued a site badge or other visitor pass.

6. **What about temporary employees?**

   This is based on the Risk Assessment per Agency decision. There is currently no policy addressing short-term PIV issuance. However, a PIV-A Card is under development to address short-term access in these types of situations, and should be available summer of 2010.

7. **Should I keep records of Risk Assessments?**

   It is strongly recommended that you keep a record of Risk Assessments, especially in cases where it is determined that a Non-Employee does not require a LincPass.

8. **What about short-term contracts (e.g. 1 week or 6 months)? Do those people need a LincPass?**

   This is an agency decision that should be based on the Risk Assessment (see DM 4620-002). There is currently no policy addressing short-term PIV issuance. However, a PIV-A Card is under development to address short-term access in these types of situations, and should be available summer of 2010.

Background Investigations

1. **What kind of Background Investigation (BI) does a Non-Employee need to get a LincPass?**

   The minimum requirement for HSPD-12 is a NACI, which is a National Agency Check with (Written) Inquiries.

2. **How does the fingerprint check for HSPD-12 differ and/or replace the current Non-Employee fingerprint check?**

   The fingerprint check must be a Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) National Criminal History Check (NCHC). It does not replace any other fingerprint checks, but is the only one accepted for LincPass issuance.

3. **If a Non-Employee needs to start work immediately but does not have a BI, can I expedite the process to issue the Non-Employee a LincPass?**

   Yes. Non-Employees may enroll after a positively adjudicated fingerprint check is returned, and a BI is initiated.

4. **Certain agencies process the fingerprints and BI together, which requires a waiting period until everything is returned to determine suitability. Does this mean waiting until both the fingerprints and BI are returned before the Non-Employee can get their LincPass?**

   Not necessarily. You have the option of requesting an advanced fingerprint check, which allows Non-Employees to enroll after a positively adjudicated fingerprint check. You can also request to expedite the credential in USAccess at an added cost.

5. **What is a provisional LincPass vs. a permanent LincPass?**

   A provisional LincPass can be issued after a Non-Employee's fingerprints have been submitted and favorable results returned. The credential's expiration date is set for six months while the Non-Employee's BI is conducted. A permanent Lincpass can be issued once the BI is successfully completed, then the expiration date on the credential will be set and create the permanent LincPass.

6. **What happens if the Non-Employee's BI is unfavorably adjudicated?**

   If a BI is unfavorably adjudicated, the Non-Employee's provisional LincPass will be revoked and confiscated. The Non-Employee will not be able to work, access any federally-controlled information systems or federally-controlled facilities if their LincPass is revoked.

7. **What is the time limit by which a Non-Employee must be removed from the facility if their BI is negatively adjudicated?**

   The Non-Employee must be removed from the facility as soon as possible. The maximum amount of time allotted is 72 hours.

8. **What is the payment policy for Non-Employee BIs?**

   USDA has not issued a policy on payment for Non-Employee BIs. At this point, it is seen as the cost of doing business, and the Program Office is absorbing the cost.

9. **If a Non-Employee holds an existing and active BI, are they required to get a new one?**

   No. If the Non-Employee holds a valid BI recognized by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM), a new investigation will not be necessary. Previous or existing investigations can be verified in PIPS (Personnel Investigations Processing System).

10. **If a Non-Employee BI was processed by a third-party company, is that considered a valid BI?**

    No. OPM must conduct the investigation to be considered valid. Private companies are not able to enter their investigation results into the OPM system.

11. **How is a national security clearance handled?**

    If someone has a national security position that warrants a clearance, e.g. Secret or Top Secret, the BI is processed through the Department of Defense (DOD). DOD processes the investigation and determines suitability. Results can be verified in PIPS.

Role Holders

1. **Should the Agency Role Administrators be involved when identifying Sponsors and Adjudicators for Non-Employees?**

Yes. Agencies should adhere to the existing HSPD-12 role structure.

2. **Do Sponsors and Adjudicators need to be designated in USAccess?**

   Yes. If Sponsors and Adjudicators are not designated in USAccess by the agency Role Administrator, records in NEIS will not process successfully to USAccess.

3. **Are Sponsors and Adjudicators for Non-Employees required to be Federal Employees?**

   Yes. All Sponsors and Adjudicators are required to be Federal Employees.

4. **Who acts as the Sponsor?**

   Each agency must determine who will act as Sponsors for Non-Employees and ensure they are designated by the Role Administrator in USAccess. The Sponsor is a program point of contact, usually a COR/COTR or grants/agreement specialist who is familiar with the work being performed and the logical/physical access involved.

5. **Who acts as the Adjudicator?**

   Each agency must determine who will act as Adjudicators for Non-Employees and ensure they are designated by the Role Administrator in USAccess. Agencies should follow their existing adjudication procedures for Non-Employees.

6. **Are Sponsors required to do all the data collection/data entry?**

   No. While data collection/data entry falls under sponsorship, Sponsors can delegate portions of the process to data entry personnel or support staff. However, the official act of sponsorship in NEIS must be performed by the Sponsor.

7. **What are the prerequisites for NEIS Data Entry Personnel?**

   Data Entry Personnel must have a LincPass, complete NEIS Sponsor training and obtain a NEIS Login. Data entry personnel do not need to complete USAccess Sponsor training and designation.

8. **Can Non-Employees perform data entry in NEIS?**

   No. Non-Employees will not be granted access to NEIS. You must be a Federal Employee to obtain access to NEIS.

9. **What is the role of the Agency Security Officer (ASO)?**

   ASOs are responsible for ensuring security access is properly requested and submitted in compliance with the Agency Security policy. ASOs are responsible for coordinating all security access activities between the agency and NFC. A complete list of ASO duties can be found via the following link: http://i2i.nfc.usda.gov/Security/Officer.html. Please note, the ASO should not be confused with the HSPD-12 Security Officer, who is responsible for maintaining credential security and physical building security within USDA.

10. **Can Foreign Nationals be sponsored for a LincPass?**

    Yes. For a foreign national to be sponsored for a LincPass they must meet specific documentation requirements to be eligible.

11. **What are the requirements for Foreign Nationals to be eligible for a LincPass issuance?**

    For Foreign Nationals to be eligible for LincPass issuance, they must present two (2) acceptable forms of Identification, which will be needed during the enrollment appointment. For a detailed list of acceptable forms of identification please access via the following link: http://www.fedidcard.gov/viewdoc.aspx?id=109

    Further details are in progress and updates can be found in the DM 4620-002.

Contracts, Grants and Agreements

1. **What role does the Contracting Officer (CO) have?**

   The CO is responsible for ensuring that the applicable FAR/AGAR clauses are included in the contract. When issuing COR/COTR appointment letters, the CO should ensure all Sponsor duties are included in the letter. The CO may need to provide any pertinent contract information to the COR/COTR for data entry into NEIS, such as PIID/Contract Number and period of performance.

2. **Where can I find AGAR clauses?**

   AGAR Advisory 81 includes PIV clauses for contracts, and is available online on the USDA Procurement website at http://www.dm.usda.gov/procurement/policy/advisories.html.

3. **If a Contracting Officer Representative (COR)/Contracting Officer Technical Representative (COTR) does not complete the Sponsor training, should they be removed from the contract?**

   No. A COR/COTR is not required to be a Sponsor. The Sponsor role is a collateral duty for the COR/COTR. If the COR/COTR cannot perform sponsorship duties, another Sponsor will need to be designated to sponsor applicable Non-Employees on the contract.

4. **Should I include AGAR clauses in old/existing contracts?**

Yes, it is recommended that as long as the period of performance is still valid, AGAR clauses should be included in all contracts.

5. **Do Non-Employees under short-term contracts need a LincPass (e.g. one week or six months)?**

   Each agency will need to determine who will need a LincPass based on the Risk Assessment (see DM 4620-002). There is currently no policy addressing short-term PIV issuance. However, a PIV-A Card is under development to address short-term access in these types of situations, and should be available summer of 2010.

6. **If a Non-Employee is here intermittently (e.g. attends work for one day and does not return for a few weeks), what type of identification do they need?**

   This is an agency decision that should be based on the Risk Assessment (see DM 4620-002). There is currently no policy addressing short-term PIV issuance. However, a PIV-A Card is under development to address short-term access in these types of situations. For these types of contracts/grants/agreements, you may want to consider issuing a site badge and ensuring the Non-Employee is escorted by someone who has a LincPass.

7. **How do Non-Employees start performing when there is a lag between the contract award or start date and getting a fingerprint initiated/returned?**

   Until integration of LACS and PACS, Non-Employees can be issued a site badge and can work as they do today. After LACS integration, Non-Employees will be issued a temporary site badge until they get their LincPass. The impact of lag time upon PACS integration is unknown.

8. **What if Non-Employee flashes a LincPass that has not reached the printed five-year expiration date but the contract, grant or agreement is expired?**

   Until LACS and PACS are fully implemented, there may be cases where this happens. CORs/COTRs should follow exit procedures to ensure that site badges and LincPasses are turned in at the end of the period of performance.

9. **Should I insert AGAR clauses in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or other type of grant or agreement?**

   You can include AGAR clauses in MOUs, grants or agreements, although no revision to the AGAR is planned to include specific reference to MOUs, grants or agreements.

NEIS

1. **What is NEIS?**

NEIS is the Non-Employee Identity System, USDA's secure and authoritative database for Non-Employee information required by HSPD-12. NEIS feeds Non-Employee information to USAccess, the General Services Administration (GSA) credentialing system. Sponsorship and Adjudication information for Non-Employees is entered directly into NEIS.

2. **Can I enter information directly into USAccess?**

   No. Non-Employee information must be entered into NEIS, and that information will flow over to USAccess. This process must be followed to allow the appropriate information to be linked to each card assigned to use their LincPass cards for logical or physical access.

3. **What is the length of record retention in NEIS?**

   Records are maintained in NEIS for an unlimited time. A definitive length of time for records retention has not been determined due to Non-Employee turnover.

4. **Is there a SORN/C&A that covers NEIS?**

   Yes, the EmpowHR SORN and C&A cover NEIS.

5. **Is there a CCB for NEIS?**

   Yes. There is a NEIS CCB that works hand-in-hand with the EmpowHR CCB (NFC).

6. **Can you run reports in NEIS?**

   Yes. NEIS generates several canned reports. For detailed instructions on NEIS Reports, refer to the NEIS Reports and ASR Guide at: http://lincpass.usda.gov/docs/NEISUsingASRGuide_V1.pdf

7. **How do I get access to NEIS?**

   After training completion, NEIS login requests should be sent to one of your Agency Security Officers (ASOs) for submittal to NFC. If you do not know who your ASOs are, please contact the NEIS Help Desk for assistance.

8. **Who do I contact if I forgot my NEIS password?**

   Send a request with your NEIS User ID to your ASO. If your NEIS system profile is current, you may reset your own password. For complete step-by-step instructions, contact your ASO.

9. **The NEIS Login Request asks for my EmplID. What is an EmplID, and how do you I one?**

For agencies that use EmpowHR, all employees are assigned an EmplID, which is a unique number generated by EmpowHR. Contact your HR representative if you do not know your EmplID. Non-EmpowHR Agency users will be assigned a unique NEIS User ID when applying for NEIS access.

10. What role should I request on my NEIS login request?

NEIS roles are based on screen views. You may select multiple roles, but you may not select both Sponsor and Adjudicator. The following is an overview of the NEIS roles and screen views associated with those roles:

- NEIS Sponsor: Contract Assignment only
- NEIS Data Entry: Non-Employee Information, Contract Information, Contract Company Information
- NEIS Adjudicator: NEIS Adjudication only

11. What are the data fields in NEIS?

The NEIS Sponsor and Adjudicator training show screen shots of the required NEIS fields for that role.

12. Why am I not able to enter information in some NEIS fields?

Some fields in NEIS are masked, or “grayed-out,” because they are pre-populated with system data, or they are not captured in USAccess.

13. Does designating someone as an Emergency Response Official change the enrollment process in any way?

No. The enrollment process will not change. If a Non-Employee is identified as an Emergency Response Official, there will be an additional label added to their LincPass. Check with your Agency’s HSPD-12 Security Officer before selecting this option in NEIS.

14. I entered the wrong information in a Non-Employee record. How do I correct it?

Select “Correct History” on the bottom right hand side of the screen. You can update/edit records when you are in Correct History mode.

15. Why would a Non-Employee appear to be “Terminated” on their NEIS record in the Non-Employee Status field? How do I change this?

When a Non-Employee record says “Terminated” in the Non-Employee Status field, it means the Non-Employee is not assigned to an active contract in NEIS. To change their status to Active, you must assign the Non-Employee to an active contract in NEIS.

16. I sponsored a Non-Employee, but he/she has not received a sponsorship or enrollment email. What should I do?

Sponsored Non-Employees should appear in the Applicant Status Reports (ASR) within a few days of sponsorship. If they do not receive an email within a few days of sponsorship, make sure the applicant has a record in NEIS and all required fields (name, DOB, email address, etc.) are entered accurately. Verify that the Non-Employee is assigned to an active contract and that the Card Shipping Information is entered. Check the USAccess Applicant Status Report (ASR) to verify the record has been processed. If they are still not showing up in the ASR, contact the USDA Help Desk to verify the applicant has been processed.

17. How do I re-send an enrollment email to the applicant?

Go to the sponsor portal in USAccess and select Sponsor Utility in the Applicant search, click on the System Notification tab and click Re-send the enrollment email.

18. I have updated the Non-Employee record in NEIS. Why does the record not appear in USAccess?

The record has not been processed and is pending transmittal to USAccess. There are various reasons this may occur. Please allow at least a full day for new and updated NEIS records to process and appear in the USAccess system. If you have verified that their NEIS record is complete and it is still not appearing in the ASR after a few days, contact the USDA Help Desk for further assistance.
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19. What if the Registrar is not able to find an applicant's record at the time of enrollment?

Either the record has not been processed into the USAccess system, or the identification documents that the Non-Employee provided during enrollment does not match their record. Applicants should not enroll until they have received an official sponsorship email instructing the applicant to enroll.

10. What is the process to update a PIID/Contract ID number in NEIS?

If an existing NEIS contract is updated with a new contract number, you have the option to maintain the existing contract, update the existing contract, or enter a new contract. Depending on the method chosen, you may need to re-sponsor the non-employees assigned to the contract.

- <u>Maintain the existing contract</u>: If you choose to maintain the existing PIID/Contract ID in NEIS, be sure to extend the expiration date to the new date. All existing Contract Assignments will be maintained through the new expiration date. No further action is required to update existing sponsorships.

- <u>Update the existing contract</u>: If you choose to update the existing PIID/Contract ID in NEIS, update the existing PIID/Contract ID to the new number and tend the expiration date to the new date. Please note that you will need to reassign all non-employees to the new contract.

- Enter a new contract: If you choose to enter a new PIID/Contract ID in NEIS, follow instructions in the NEIS training to enter a new Contract Information Record and then assign the appropriate Non-Employees from the previous contract to the new contract you have entered. Please note that any non-employees assigned to the original contract will be terminated when the expiration date is reached.

Training

1. What type of training is available for NEIS?

NEIS Sponsor and Adjudicator training modules are available. The NEIS Sponsor training details both NEIS data entry and sponsorship procedures. Data Entry Personnel should complete the NEIS Sponsor training.

2. How is the NEIS training provided?

NEIS training is available on AgLearn. Courses will be added to your learning plan by your Agency Role Administrator. You will receive notification from the Agency Role Administrator when NEIS training has been added to your learning plan. NEIS training is also available on the USDA HSPD-12 website at http://lincpass.usda.gov/training.html.

3. Do I have to take NEIS training?

This is an Agency determination, but it is strongly recommended that anyone using NEIS take the NEIS training.

4. Should COs or HSPD-12 leads take NEIS training?

COs, HSPD-12 leads and others involved in Non-Employee LincPass implementation may take NEIS training if they choose, but it is not required. It may be helpful for non-HSPD-12 role holders to review NEIS training to better understand the systems and processes involved in Non-Employee LincPass implementation.

5. I completed the USAccess training. Is NEIS training the same thing?

No. USAccess training provides instructions on how to perform your designated role, and also provides instructions for using USAccess. NEIS role holder training provides step-by-step instructions and screenshots of NEIS, as well as additional business process information related to Non-Employee LincPass implementation.

6. How do I provide evidence of training completion, and to whom?

For USAccess training, the certificate of completion will be submitted to the Role Administrator electronically or via paper copy. For NEIS training, the results will be recorded in AgLearn upon completion and accessible for your Agency Role Administrator for reporting.

7. I am performing data entry and will not sponsor or adjudicate in NEIS. Should I take NEIS training?

Yes. Anyone using NEIS should take the NEIS training. If you are performing data entry, such as entering Contract Information or Non-Employee Information in support of the Sponsor, you should take the NEIS Sponsor training.