



Eligibility Requirements for Private Investigator and/or Security Guard

Basic Requirements for All Licensees

Regardless of whether you intend to apply for an individual or firm license as a private investigator or security guard, there are nine basic requirements that apply to all applicants pursuant to West Virginia Code sections 30-18-2, 30-18-5, and 30-18-8. For a firm, these basic requirements apply to all officers, members or partners, and all employees who will conduct business.

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Be a citizen of the United States, or an alien who is legally residing within the United States.
3. Have not had a previous private investigator or security guard license revoked or any application for any such licenses or registrations denied in West Virginia or any other state.
4. Have not been declared incompetent by a court because of a mental defect or disease, unless a court has subsequently determined that the applicant's competency has been restored.
5. Do not suffer from habitual drunkenness or narcotics addiction or dependence.
6. Have not been convicted of a felony in this state or any other state or territory.
7. Have not been convicted of any of the following:
 - o Illegally using, carrying or possessing a pistol or other dangerous weapon;
 - o Making or possessing burglar's instruments;
 - o Buying or receiving stolen property;
 - o Entering a building unlawfully;
 - o Aiding an inmate's escape from prison;
 - o Possessing or distributing illicit drugs; or
8. Have never, nor will:
 - o Engage in the private investigation or security guard business without a license;
 - o Transfer your license to, or subcontracted with, an unlicensed person, firm, or agency to conduct private investigation or security guard business;
 - o Knowingly employ anyone to conduct private investigation or security guard business who was in violation of any of the prohibitions or requirements of law;
 - o Falsely represent that you are, or any other person is, licensed as a private investigator or security guard;
 - o Knowingly make a false report with respect to any matter with which you are employed;
 - o Divulge any information acquired from or for a client to persons other than the client or the client's agent without express authorization to do so or unless required by law;
 - o Knowingly accept employment to obtain information intended for illegal purposes; or
 - o Authorize or permit another person to violate the law or any Secretary of State rules adopted for Chapter 30, Article 18 of the West Virginia Code.
9. No person may be employed as a licensed private investigator while serving as magistrate.

See the [Additional Requirements for Licensing](https://sos.wv.gov/business/Pages/PISGAddLicReq.aspx) online via the West Virginia Secretary of State's website at <https://sos.wv.gov/business/Pages/PISGAddLicReq.aspx>.