

Press Statement from OPM Press Secretary, Sam Schumach:

The U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) today began re-enabling user access to e-QIP, the system used to process background information forms.

OPM recently initiated a comprehensive review of the security of its IT systems. During the ongoing review, OPM and its interagency partners identified a vulnerability in the e-QIP system, a web-based platform used to complete and submit background investigation forms. As a result, on June 26, 2015, OPM took the system offline for security enhancements.

This action was not the direct result of malicious activity on this network, and there is no evidence that the vulnerability in question has been exploited. Rather, OPM took this step proactively, as a result of our comprehensive security assessment, to safeguard the ongoing security of the network.

The system has been brought back online less than four weeks after being taken down, and OPM is working closely with agencies to re-enable e-QIP users incrementally in an effort to resume this service in an efficient and orderly way. This action is being taken after extensive testing of the system – both by OPM and its partner agencies – and consultation with key stakeholders.

Anticipating the impact on both users and agencies, on July 2, 2015, OPM and the Office of the Director of National Intelligence announced interim procedures to allow agencies to proceed with the initiation of certain background investigations.

During the time that the system was offline, OPM worked with cybersecurity experts from the Office of Management and Budget's Office of e-Government and Information Technology, the Department of Homeland Security and other interagency partners to implement security enhancements. These improvements further enhanced password protections, secured the transmission of data within the application, and implemented additional protections against external threats. Based on the security enhancements and the extensive testing that has been completed, OPM is re-enabling access to e-QIP with confidence in the security of the system.

OPM remains committed to protecting the safety and security of the information of Federal employees and contractors, and will continue efforts to further enhance the security of our systems.