What is Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI)?

Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) is a category of unclassified information that replaced various categories previously used for sensitive but unclassified information. CUI was created by former President George W. Bush in a memo dated May 2008. In 2010 President Barack Obama signed Executive Order 13566 (CIU EO) to establish a uniform approach across agencies for managing unclassified information.

On September 14, 2016, the National Archives and Record Administration (NARA) issued the "Controlled Unclassified Information Final Rule" (Final Rule), effective November 13, 2016. This Federal Acquisition Regulation established consistent practices and procedures for **safeguarding, disseminating, controlling, destroying, and marking** Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) across Executive departments and agencies.

"Not only are stricter controls being published for contractors to work with government agencies, but also many cybersecurity requirements, such as data encryption, identity management and information assurance, are being incorporated into requests for proposals."

- Shamlan Siddiqi, Chief Technology Officer for NTT DATA

Why Is It Important to Protect CUI?

The Final Rule defines CUI as "information the Government creates or possesses, or that an entity creates or possesses for or on behalf of the Government, that a law, regulation, or Government-wide policy requires or permits an agency to handle using safeguarding or dissemination controls."

The underlying tenet is to assure confidentiality to government information by federal contractors including accountability for their supply chain. The level of accountability is multi-layered and extends through the decision criteria and evaluation of independent contractors and the associated small business programs of larger contractors.

The requirements are based a robust security program, data classification, both legacy and data created after the implementation deadline, and annual risk assessments of the information systems and organizations.

Ramifications of Non-Compliance

The proposed regulation will, however, require adherence to the policies and use of the standards and guidelines in a consistent manner thereby reducing current complexity for federal agencies and their nonfederal partners, including contractors.

If the requirements cannot be met, the federal government cannot and will not enter into binding agreements with nonfederal partners and contractors resulting in the loss of contracts and funds that could potentially lead to their loss of livelihood.

CONTROLLED UNCLASSIFIED INFORMATION

By adopting the framework, organizations will be able to demonstrate their ability to protect regulated data. In doing so, they will also be increasing their ability be compete for new opportunities that store, process or transmit CUI.

How We Can Help

- Provide CUI marking and safeguarding solutions that enable government agencies and contractors to protect sensitive government information to meet CUI handling requirements as specified in the Controlled Unclassified Information Final Rule and NIST SP 800-171.
- Provide Data Protection across the cloud, addressing organizational risk and ensuring appropriate internal controls; and provide management and control of the organizations most critical information.
- Assist organizations in their compliance risk identification, prioritization and remediation activities through the identification and prioritization of risks, with establishment of plans to address those risks.
- Provide independent verification and validation (IV&V) that the requirements of EO CUI have been met by the organization.

Data Security Services by ConnectWise provides a wide-array of data-centric solutions, focused on protecting our customers most valuable assets. Our clients include many Fortune 500 firms across industries such as life-sciences, finance, technology, retail and government.

Please visit our website **Data Security Services by ConnectWise** to find out more about our solutions.