

CLIENT ALERT

NIST Offers a Two-for-One Special on Cybersecurity Updates

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The government's leading authority on cybersecurity standards has issued two updates relevant to government contractors working with DoD sensitive data. First, the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) updated Special Publication (SP) 800-171, the security standard required by the DFARS Safeguarding Clause 252.204-7012 and also expected to be required under a pending FAR Clause. In addition to nuanced security control revisions, notable changes include the addition of Appendix F, which discusses security requirements derived primarily from the separate standard NIST SP 800-53 in an effort to inform organizations about mechanisms and procedures used to implement required safeguards. Second, NIST finalized its draft of NIST SP 800-171A. This sister document provides guidance in assessing NIST SP 800-171 security controls, including System Security Plans (SSPs) and Plans of Action and Milestones (POAMs). Changes in the finalized guidance include the removal of NIST SP 800-53 guidance in Appendix D and its replacement with three assessment methods – Examine, Interview, and Test – that can be used to assess security requirements under NIST SP 800-171.

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