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InnerLoop

Job security for those with government clearances remains high, but salaries are falling slightly.

D.C.-area workers with security clearances have seen a 10 percent decline in average salary over the past six months to \$76,116, according to a recent survey, even as salaries elsewhere continue to rise.

But don't cry for your close-by friends with top-secret passes. They still make \$8,700 more on average than counterparts in the rest of the country.

Security cleared professionals earned an average of \$67,429 overall, a 2 percent increase over the figure compiled for the first quarter by ClearanceJobs.com.

The online recruiting site surveyed 2,175 job seekers between Jan. 21 and Sept. 30, and 1,000 site visitors in a similar period in the first quarter.

The decline locally is a result of a cooling off of a frenzied market that delivered \$10,000 checks and new cars to candidates, among other "outrageous" signing bonuses, says ClearanceJobs.com Director **Evan Lesser**.

Companies aren't trying to outdo each other as much.

"I don't think the battles have gone away, but employers are getting a little back from job seekers in terms of who's in control," he says.

Not to worry though. Lesser expects salaries to increase over the next six months as employers look to fill more positions.

"On the contractor side, a lot of year-end budgets for recruiting need to be spent," he says. "So use it or lose it comes into play."

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