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STANDARDS & GUIDANCE BRIEF · UNITED STATES · FEDERAL GUIDANCE (CONTRACTUALLY REQUIRED)

NIST SP 800-171

Protecting Controlled Unclassified Information in Nonfederal Systems and Organizations

DOCUMENT	QES-WP-173, Rev B	DATE	November 7, 2026
ISSUED BY	National Institute of Standards and Technology	PREPARED BY	Conner Davidson
EDITION	Revision 3 (May 2024); Revision 2 (2020) still required by DoD contracts	STATUS CHECKED	October 24, 2026
INDUSTRIES	Government & Defense Suppliers, Aerospace & Defense, Risk & Cybersecurity	ONLINE	qesisbest.com/standard-nist-800-171.html

CURRENT EDITION Revision 3 is current at NIST, but the Department of Defense still requires Revision 2 under DFARS 252.204-7012 and for CMMC Level 2, through a class deviation.

What It Covers

The security requirements for protecting the confidentiality of Controlled Unclassified Information in contractor systems.

Who It Applies To

Contractors and subcontractors that process, store or transmit CUI, most often under DFARS 252.204-7012.

Key Requirements

- Revision 2: 110 requirements in 14 families, the basis of DoD assessments today.
- Revision 3: 97 requirements in 17 families, with organization-defined parameters.
- A System Security Plan and plans of action for unmet requirements.
- Incident reporting within 72 hours under DFARS 252.204-7012.

What an Auditor Asks to See

- The System Security Plan, mapped to the revision your contract names.

Where Systems Fall Short

- Building to Revision 3 when the contract assesses against Revision 2, or the reverse.

How QES helps. Through QES's risk and cybersecurity partner: gap assessments to the revision the contract requires. Meet the risk and cybersecurity partner: qesisbest.com/team.html#partners · +1 (401) 246-3204 · mweeden@qesisbest.com

Sources, checked October 24, 2026. NIST — SP 800-171 Rev. 3 — csrc.nist.gov/pubs/sp/800/171/r3/final; Mondaq — DoD class deviation on NIST SP 800-171 Revision 3 — mondaq.com/unitedstates/government-contracts-procurement-ppp/1464508/department-of-defense-issues-class-deviation-delaying-application-of-nist-sp-800-171-revision-3.

A summary for orientation, prepared by Quality Excellence Services. It does not reproduce or replace the standard or regulation: read the official text, which governs. Not legal advice.