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Headline: Do Government Security Agency Acronyms Make Your Head Spin? Us too.

Sub-headline: What exactly is DFARS, CJIS and NIST and why are they so important to data security?

The National Institute of Standards and Technology, (NIST), is a non-regulatory organization created to promote innovation and competitiveness in the United States by advancing measurement science, standards, and technology. They develop, use, and promote information security standards for the US federal government. In addition, they maintain a series of publications which documents and outlines security controls for all federal information systems and organizations, except those pertaining to national security.

The Defense Federal Acquisition Regulation Supplement (DFARS) is a supplement to the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR). It is based on the NIST's publications concerning security controls for federal information systems. DFARS specifically pertains to contractors who work for the Department of Defense (DoD). DoD contractors must comply with DFARS which outlines requirements for safeguarding controls, such as IAM systems, when used in government contractor systems.

Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS) is an FBI run division that provides tools and services to national security teams, intelligence community partners, law enforcement, and the general public of the United States. They develop, offer, and maintain a multitude of programs from their campus in West Virginia including the Uniform Crime Reporting Program (UCR), the National Instant Background Check System (NICS), the Next Generation Identification System (NGI), and the Law Enforcement Enterprise Portal (LEEP), in addition to many other programs. They are responsible for many advances in the world of cybersecurity.