

CMMC Explained: What Every Business Must Know Before Bidding on U.S. Department of Defense Contracts

What is CMMC & Why It Exists

The Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) Program was established by the U.S. Department of Defense to ensure defense contractors and subcontractors implement prescribed cybersecurity standards. It replaces the DFARS self-attestation model with a tiered assessment system—self, third-party, or government-led—based on data sensitivity [1].

CMMC aims to protect Federal Contract Information (FCI) and Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) by enforcing standards from NIST SP 800-171/172 and requiring annual affirmations [2].

References

[1] About CMMC - U.S. Department of Defense

[2] Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification Program Final Rule Published

Why CMMC Was Created

Cyberattacks targeting the U.S. Supply Chain including the defense industrial base, where DFAR self-attestation proved insufficient, as the GAO noted, “the self-attestation approach under DFARS was not sufficient,” and malicious actors have long targeted sensitive defense data [1]

In response, the DoD launched CMMC an enforcement program to verify the implementation of cybersecurity practices across defense contractors' systems.

The DoD prioritized a rigorous assessment methodology to safeguard sensitive information and ensure readiness.



References

[1] GAO-22-104679 – U.S. Government Accountability Office

[2] NIST Guidance on Government Contractor Requirements

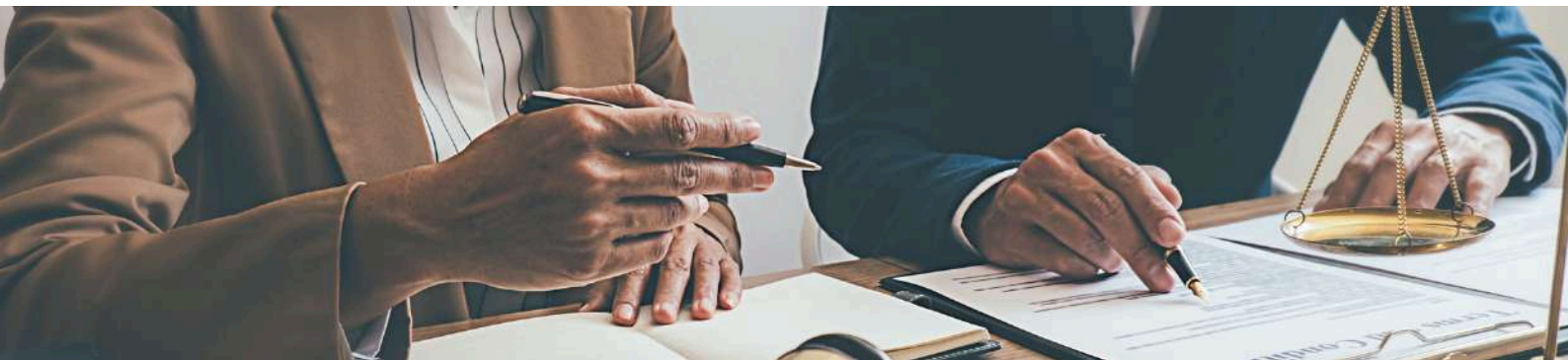
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Meet CMMC 2.0

The Three Levels

CMMC 2.0 (finalized December 2023, effective December 16, 2024) streamlines the model into three distinct levels:

Level	Scope	Requirements & Assessment
1 Foundational	Only FCI Systems	Foundational 17 controls from FAR 52.204-21 Annual self-assessment reported to SPRS Advanced
2 Advanced	CUI Information Systems	110 controls from NIST SP 800-171 Triennial assessment (self-assessment for select programs; otherwise by C3PAO) Annual affirmation required Expert
3 Expert	High-risk CUI & APT defense	Additional controls from NIST SP 800-172 Triennial government-led assessment (by DIBCAC) Annual affirmation required



Contract & Legal Implications



CMMC certification is mandatory for any new DoD contract involving CUI.



If you aren't certified at the required level at the time of award, you will be ineligible to win or to renew contracts.



The Final Rule is now codified in 32 CFR Part 170, and compliance begins rolling out in 2025.

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Risks of Non Compliance

Failing to achieve the required CMMC level can lead to:

How to Get CMMC Ready

Your journey to compliance includes:



Ineligibility
Disqualification or loss of DoD contracts



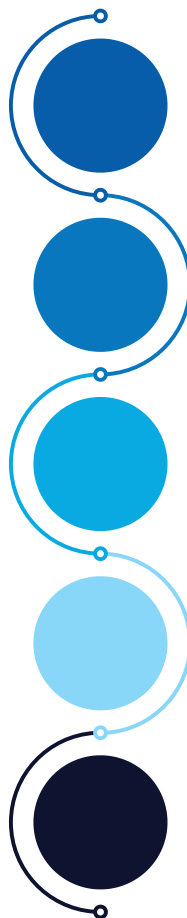
Revenue Losses
Significant financial losses and missed opportunities



Contractual Breach
May lead to contract termination



Legal Penalties
Potential Fals Claim Act, legal or contractual penalties



Scoping
Identify which systems handle FCI or CUI

Gap Analysis
Benchmark your setup against required controls

Remediation
Implement policies, tech, and documentation

Assessment
Depending on the level, perform a self or third-party-led evaluation

Certification
Report to SPRS and affirm compliance annually or every three years

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How Kompleye Supports You

Kompleye supports you with:

- Experienced Auditors
- Extense knowledge base of the requirements
- Flexibility in performing the audit
- An online tool specifically designed to help you get ready for the audit and understand the auditor's point of view

Conclusion & Next Steps

CMMC compliance isn't just a DoD requirement it's a differentiator.



- Begin building your cybersecurity resilience today.
- Early adopters gain first-mover advantages and opens the door to valuable contracts and partnership opportunities.

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Ready to Take Action?

CMMC compliance isn't just a requirement—it's your competitive edge.

Get ahead of the 2025 deadline with expert guidance tailored to your systems, goals, and current readiness level.



**Talk to a CMMC
Expert *It's Free!***



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About Kompleye

Trusted partner in compliance, risk, and security
Tailored support for SMB manufacturers
Tools + expertise to simplify CMMC and drive success

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