

C. Guidelines for Interviewing Candidates

Please review these guidelines with members of search committees in your department/hiring unit (and provide copies to members) prior to scheduling interviews with candidates. Both federal and state laws restrict the type of questions, which may be asked of candidates in pre-employment application forms and interviews. Questions, which directly or indirectly elicit information on certain topics, may be regarded as evidence of discrimination as defined in Title VII. The following describes categories of questions, which should NOT be asked of candidates:

- 1) Questions about race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, age or ancestry.
- 2) Questions about marital status, number of children and provisions for childcare.
- 3) Questions about height and weight (unless there is a documentable job-related reason for asking such questions).
- 4) Questions about health status or disabilities (unless such information is necessary to determine the applicant's ability to substantially perform a specific job without significant hazard).
- 5) Certain inquiries regarding citizenship status: whether candidate is native born or naturalized; requirement of proof of citizenship prior to hiring; whether candidate's parents are native-born or naturalized. **(The following inquiries about citizenship status are permissible: whether candidate is a U.S. citizen; if not, whether candidate intends to become one; if U.S. Residence is legal; if spouse is a citizen; requirement of proof if citizenship after being hired; any other requirement mandated by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, as amended.)**
- 6) Questions about what one's mother tongue is or how one's foreign language ability has been acquired. (It is permissible to inquire into foreign language skills when the position in question requires such an ability.)
- 7) Inquiries into military service in the armed services of any country but the U.S.; requests for military service records; inquiries into type of discharge. (Some inquiries into military service are permissible if they directly involve qualifications for the position being sought.)
- 8) Inquiries into organizational memberships which could reveal information on the race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, or national origin of the applicant; it is also not permissible to inquire into every club or organization where membership is held.
- 9) Inquiries about willingness to work on any particular religious holidays. (It is acceptable to inquire whether candidate is willing and able to work a required work schedule.)

- 10) Questions which would reveal arrests without convictions. (It is permissible to inquire into convictions for specific crimes, which are related to the qualifications for a specific job.)
- 11) Questions about credit ratings or any other requests for personal financial data.
- 12) Questions about place of birth of candidate or members of candidate's family; questions about a foreign address which might be used to infer national origin. (It is acceptable to ask present address and length of time at that residence.)

13) OTHER GUIDELINES FOR INTERVIEWING CANDIDATES:

- Issues which are not job-related should also not be any part of the evaluation of a candidate's credentials.
- You should not ask if a candidate has ever filed or threatened to file discrimination charges.
- You may not ask questions about relatives, which would be unlawful if asked of the candidate.
- You should not ask candidates belonging to any particular social group questions which will not be asked of members of other groups (e.g. asking women whether they have other commitments which may preclude fulfilling job schedules and not asking men the same question).
- Avoid employing double standards in the questioning of applicants or in the consideration of applicants' credentials. Identifying a common set of questions ahead of time and holding applicants to the same standards should result in fair and consistent results.
- Avoid conversations which would compel candidates to reveal their opinions on issues related to the above categories of questions or to other sensitive matters (e.g. asking minority candidates questions like: "What is your position on affirmative action hiring efforts?").
- Information related to some of the above categories of questions which is sought under the auspices of Denison's Affirmative Action Plan or for other legitimate, business-related purposes may be requested under certain circumstances.