

EEO INTERVIEWING GUIDELINES

In order to ensure that hiring decisions are not based on an applicant's protected class (i.e. race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information and others), hiring managers and others involved in the hiring process should think carefully about the interview questions they ask. The following are examples of questions you should not ask and examples of questions that are okay to ask:

Questions you should not ask when hiring:

- How old are you?
- When do you plan to retire?
- Are you a U.S. citizen?
- Are you pregnant?
- Do you have any children? Do you plan to have children within the next year?
- Are you married? What is your maiden name?
- Do you have a disability? Do you have a bad back?
- Have you filed any workers' comp claims?
- What medications are you currently taking?
- Have any of your close relatives had a heart attack or been diagnosed with a heart condition?
- Have you had genetic test to determine whether you are at risk for cancer?
- Are you American Indian? Latino? Asian? (or any other race/ethnic group)
- Have you been arrested? Do you have a criminal record?
- Do you have a car?
- How tall are you? How much do you weigh?
- Did you drop out or flunk out of high school?
- What is your credit rating/score?
- What church or civic groups do you belong to?

Questions that are okay to ask when hiring:

- Are you 18 years of age or older?
- Are you authorized to work in the United States?
- Do you need a reasonable accommodation during the application process or on the job?
- Can you perform the essential duties of this position?
- Do you have a high school diploma, GED or something equivalent? (only if required for the position)
- Are you legally able to operate a vehicle/truck in Vermont? (only if required for the position)
- Do you have reliable transportation to get to/from the worksite on time?
- Do you have any special skills or licenses you would like us to know about?
- Are you available to work overtime and/or weekends? (Only if required for the position. If a person states that they are not available, do not automatically disqualify them, because in some cases it may be due to a religious requirement and you may need to provide a reasonable accommodation.)

INTERVIEWING RECOMMENDATIONS

- ✓ Have available a written job description which describes the essential functions of the job, the work conditions and the minimum qualifications.
- ✓ Develop the interview questions and rating sheet ahead of time and base them on the specific requirements of the position you are hiring for.
- ✓ Remove names from resumes before sharing them with the hiring manager/interview panel. Hidden bias is very powerful and very real. Studies show that traditional "Black" sounding names get half the callback than "White" sounding names, even when the resumes are otherwise identical. Removing names also works to mitigate gender bias. Only provide names after candidates are selected for an interview.
- ✓ Use a diverse panel of interviewers and make sure they are well trained. A diverse interview panel helps underrepresented candidates feel at ease and allows for multiple perspectives on hiring decisions.
- ✓ Ask every candidate you are interviewing the same questions. Only add questions if you need to clarify something.
- ✓ Attempt to put each candidate at ease. Avoid small talk which could be construed as soliciting personal/illegal information.
- ✓ Ensure you are ready to respond to complaints. Be prepared to show what screening factors were used in your hiring decisions, how they relate to the job, and how one candidate possessed more of the factor than another. Be prepared to support all hiring decisions with specific facts and maintain a system of thorough documentation.