

Appropriate and Inappropriate Interview Questions By Topic

Topic	Appropriate	Inappropriate
Name	<p>Have you worked for St. Thomas under a different name?</p> <p>Is any additional information about a change of name, use of an assumed name or nickname necessary to enable us to check your work and educational record? If yes, please explain.</p>	<p>Questions that inquire into national origin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Johnson – is that a married name?” • “I’ve never heard of the last name _____, is that German?”
Marital Status and Family Status	<p>Whether an applicant can meet specified work schedules or has activities, commitments or responsibilities that may hinder fulfillment of work responsibilities. Inquiries that are directed to all applicants about anticipated length of appointment or absences.</p>	<p>Any inquiries indicating applicant’s marital status, number and age of children, or pregnancy. Any such questions which limits job opportunity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “You mentioned you have two children in school – are you okay with not being home when they get home from school?” • “Do and your husband share responsibilities in picking up the kids from school/day care?” • “Congratulations on your wedding! Are you planning to have children anytime soon?” • “Is that Ms. or Mrs.?” • “Is your family okay with you traveling so much?” • “Do you have childcare?”
Age	<p>Inquiry about the applicant’s meeting the minimum legal age providing proof of age upon hiring. Verification of age may be required after hiring. However, may ask about age of less than 18.</p>	<p>Requirement that an applicant produce proof of age in the form of a birth certificate or baptismal records.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What year did you graduate from high school?”
Disabilities	<p>“Are you able to perform the functions of the positions?”</p>	<p>General inquiries that do not relate reasonably to fitness to perform the job.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Will your physical or mental impairment allow you to do the job?” • “As a person with a disability, what help will you need to do your work?”

Ancestry or national origin	Languages applicant reads, speaks or writes.	Inquires into applicant's lineage, ancestry, national origin, descent, birthplace, or native language. National origin of applicant's parents or spouse. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Do you speak English at home?" • "You have a distinct accent. Where are you from originally?" • "Where were you born?"
Education	Applicant's academic, vocational or professional educations, schools attended.	Asking about the nationality, racial, or religious composition of a school the applicant has attended. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I have never heard of that school, is it a Catholic school?"
Arrest, conviction and court record	Inquiry into actual convictions that relate reasonably to fitness to perform a particular job. A conviction is a court ruling where the party has been found guilty. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Have you ever been convicted of a crime?" 	Any inquiry relating to arrest which is the apprehension or detention of a person for an alleged crime.
Credit Rating	For financially sensitive positions, can inquire about a person's credit history.	Any questions concerning credit rating, charge account or related matters, unless the questions relate to job requirements.
References	Names of persons willing to provide professional and/or character references for applicants.	Requiring a religious reference.
Notification in case of Emergency	None.	
Health		Whether applicant is a drug user or has serious health problems.
Sex	Inquiry about a bona fide occupational qualification (BFOQ).	Any inquiry that would require disclosure of sex. A job involving physical labor does not automatically disqualify women from consideration. Traditional labels of "men's work" or "women's work" cannot be a basis for restricting employment to one sex. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "The department is primarily female, as a male, would you find that difficult?"

Birthplace	“If employed, can you submit a birth certificate or other proof of U.S. citizenship or work permit where required?”	
Photograph	None	Request for a photograph before hiring or requirement that applicant attach a photograph to an application. Such may be requested for identification after hiring.
Citizenship	Statement that if hired, application may be required to submit proof of citizenship. “Are you legally authorized to work in this country?”	Whether applicant, parents, or spouse are naturalized or native-born U.S. citizens. Date when applicant, parents or spouse acquired U.S. citizenship. Requirement that applicant produce naturalization papers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Of what country are you a citizen?”
Race or color	None	Applicant’s race or color of skin, eyes, hair. Other questions that might indicate race or color.

