


A recommended guide for pre-employment inquiries



Alberta Human Rights
and Citizenship Commission

INFORMATION SHEET

Common Question Areas	Recommended	Not Recommended
Gender, marital status, family status	Availability for shift work, travel, etc.	Plans for marriage, family, childcare. Any inquiries specific to gender or marital status (including common-law relationships) or family status.
Race, colour, ancestry or place of origin	Legally permitted to work in Canada?	Place of birth, citizenship, racial origin, next of kin.
Name	Previous names, only if the information is needed to verify the applicant's past employment or education and to do a reference check.	Maiden name, "Christian" name, reference to origin of name, being related to another person by blood, marriage or adoption.
Languages	Ability to communicate in any language specifically required by a job.	Other languages, when not required in a specific job.
Photographs	In rare situations such as modelling and entertainment.	Requesting photographs (these can reveal race, gender, etc.).
Clubs or organizations	Membership in professional associations, clubs or organizations, hobbies or interests, as long as they are job-related.	Specific inquiries about club and organization memberships that would indicate race, colour, religious beliefs, ancestry or place of origin.

Common Question Areas	Recommended	Not Recommended
Age	Old enough to work legally in Alberta?	Specific age of applicants who are 18 years or older, including retirement information.
Height and weight	Describing job duties that require heavy lifting or other physical job requirements.	Minimum/maximum height and weight requirements/ stipulations.
Disability	Indicating the job offer is contingent upon a satisfactory job-related medical examination to determine capability to perform the duties as outlined.	General disabilities, limitations, present or previous health problems, Workers' Compensation claims or sick leave or absence due to stress or mental or physical illness.
Smoking	Indicating the successful applicant will be required to work in a non-smoking environment.	Asthmatic or permanent respiratory conditions that may be affected by smoke.
Source of income	Job-related information such as former employment.	Inquiries unrelated to the specific job to be performed.
Education	Educational institutions attended; nature and level of education achieved.	Inquiries about religious or racial affiliation of educational institution.
Religious beliefs	Availability for shift work, travel, etc.	Inquiries about specific religious holidays observed by the applicant, customs observed, religious dress, etc.; requiring applicants to provide recommendations from a church or religious leader. 

Contact the Commission

For more information, please contact the **Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission**. We are an independent commission of the Government of Alberta. Our mandate is to foster equality and reduce discrimination. We provide public information and education programs, and help Albertans resolve human rights complaints.

Northern Regional Office

800 Standard Life Centre
10405 Jasper Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4R7

(780) 427-7661 Confidential Inquiry Line

(780) 427-6013 Fax

Southern Regional Office

Suite 310, 525 – 11 Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta T2R 0C9

(403) 297-6571 Confidential Inquiry Line

(403) 297-6567 Fax

To call toll-free within Alberta, dial 310-0000 and then enter the area code and phone number.

For province-wide free access from a cellular phone, enter *310 (for Rogers-AT&T) or #310 (for Telus).

TTY service for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing

(780) 427-1597 Edmonton

(403) 297-5639 Calgary

1-800-232-7215 Toll-free within Alberta

E-mail humanrights@gov.ab.ca

Web site www.albertahumanrights.ab.ca

Please note: A complaint must be made to the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission within one year after the alleged incident.

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