


A recommended guide for pre-employment inquiries

INFORMATION SHEET

Common Questions	Recommended	Not Recommended
Gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, family status	Availability for shift work, travel, etc.	Plans for marriage, family, childcare. Any inquiries specific to gender, gender identity, gender expression, marital status (including common-law relationships) or family status. Asking job applicants to specify Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms. on forms.
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 modeling and entertainment.	Requesting photographs (these can reveal race, gender, gender identity, gender expression, 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 Questions	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, Worker's 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.	Inquiries about whether the applicant smokes or has asthmatic or permanent respiratory conditions.
Source of income	Job-related information such as former employment.	Inquiries about an applicant's income 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 unless related to a job requirement. 

Contact us

The Alberta Human Rights Commission is 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.

**Hours of operation: 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Monday to Friday (holidays excluded)**

Northern Regional Office (Edmonton)
800 – 10405 Jasper Avenue NW
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4R7
780-427-7661 Confidential Inquiry Line
780-427-6013 Fax

Southern Regional Office (Calgary)
200 J.J. Bowlen Building
620 – 7 Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0Y8
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.

TTY service for persons who are deaf or hard of hearing
1-800-232-7215 Toll-free within Alberta

Email: humanrights@gov.ab.ca
Website: albertahumanrights.ab.ca

Please note: The Commission must receive your completed complaint form or letter within one year after the alleged contravention of the *Alberta Human Rights Act*. The one-year period starts the day after the date on which the alleged contravention of the *Act* occurred. For help calculating the one-year period, contact the Commission.

The Commission will make this publication available in accessible formats upon request for people with disabilities who do not read conventional print.