

Interview Questions – Do’s and Don’ts

As a farmer or agricultural employer, hiring the right help is essential to keeping your operation running smoothly. But it’s just as important to make sure the questions you ask during interviews follow BC’s Human Rights Code. Some questions - especially about family, background, or health- might seem like casual conversation but can be against the law. Use this quick guide to stay on track on what you **can** and **can’t** ask, to ensure you stay compliant, respectful, and fair while finding the right fit for your team.

Subject	DON'T ASK (Illegal Questions)	DO ASK (Legal Questions)
National Origin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where are you from originally? • What’s your nationality or first language? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you legally allowed to work in Canada? If hired, are you able to prove eligibility to work legally in Canada?
Race/Colour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is your race? 	None
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How old are you or what year were you born? • What year did you graduate from high school or post-secondary? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you over the legal age to do this job safely (e.g., use tools or equipment)?
Marital & Family Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have or plan to have children • Are you married? • What are your child-care arrangements? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you available to work the required schedule, including peak times like harvest or calving season? • Are you able to meet the travel or weekend work requirements of this job?
Gender & Sexual Orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you male or female? • What is your sexual orientation? 	None
Disabilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have any medical conditions, injuries, or physical or mental disabilities? • Do you have health issues related to being outdoors? • Have you taken sick leave? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job such as lifting XX lbs, standing, or working outside in all weather conditions?
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you go to church? • What holidays do you celebrate? • What religion are you? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are you available to work weekends or holidays if the job requires it?

Residence & Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you own or rent? Do you have a vehicle? Have you ever had your licence suspended? (unless required for the job) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you able to get to work on time everyday knowing our farm location? Do you have a valid driver's licence for this role?
Political Views	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are your political beliefs? Are you part of a union or political group? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (Only ask about political or union views if it's a legal job requirement – very rare)
Arrests and Convictions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you ever been arrested or charged with a crime? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you been convicted of a crime for which a pardon has not been granted? Are you willing to complete a criminal record check if required for the job?
Indigenous Identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit? / Do you live on a reserve? / Are you a status Indian? / Are you a band member? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. Indigenous identity is a protected ground under the BC Human Rights Code and cannot be used as a basis for hiring decisions.
Source of Income	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you on social assistance or EI? / Do you receive disability benefits? / What is your household income? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None. Source of income is a protected ground under the BC Human Rights Code. Questions about financial situation are not permitted in a hiring context.

References

AgSafe BC. (n.d.). <https://agsafebc.ca/>



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