

## 17. Conducting Interviews with Applicants/Employers

Prior to conducting the interview, IPDOs should review and complete the steps set out in the *General Guidelines on Applicant Interviews Policy*. As noted in that Policy, there are multiple reasons that may lead to an interview.

Depending on the objective of the interview, IPDOs may ask the PNP Champion or another OIM colleague to participate in the interview as a notetaker, especially when the concerns to be addressed by the interviewer are related to program integrity, fraud or misrepresentation. The IPDO will inform the interviewee of any additional OIM staff members present during the interview, prior to the interview beginning. If there are serious issues (such as genuineness of job offer, genuineness of documents, and suspicion of fraudulent activity), the Manager of Immigration Programs may choose to participate in the interview. If a problem or a situation (e.g., the applicant refuses to answer questions, becomes agitated or is verbally abusive) arises during the interview, the Manager of Immigration Programs or Director must be advised immediately and the IPDO must be informed of the services offered under the Employee Assistant Program.

### **Interview Questions:**

The IPDO must review the application in full prior to the interview, and should have a predetermined set of questions or topics to be addressed during the conversation. These questions or topics should be formally documented and saved in the portal.

There is no official list of interview questions. IPDOs can request information that is material for their due diligence assessment of the application, but limited to the context of the NLPNP immigration application. For example, requesting information about how the applicant secured the job offer is directly related to the selection criteria of the NLPNP, whereas asking for the level of education completed by a sibling has no direct impact on the decision making of the IPDO. Guidance on the appropriateness of questions or ways to structure questions to help prepare for and design an interview can be sought by the IPDO from the PNP Champion or Manager of Immigration Programs. Questions should be saved in a common location, with non-identifying wording, so that over time, IPDOs have access to a bank of possible questions to inform their interview preparations. The Manager of Immigration Programs will review this bank periodically to provide guidance to IPDOs as part of professional development.

The questions are based on individual circumstances of an application and on the objectives of the interview.

### **Prior to commencing the interview:**

At least three (3) days prior to the commencement of the interview, the IPDO will share the *Authorization to Collect and Disclose Information and Applicant Declaration* with the interviewee. The IPDO will request written consent by the interviewee to the *Declaration*.

Just prior to the interview, the IPDO will ask the interviewee if they have any questions regarding the *Declaration*.

### **During the interview:**

The IPDO will:

- Establish and maintain rapport throughout the interview process;
- Remain respectful, neutral, and free of bias;

- Explain the purpose of the interview, the IPDO's role and authority, and explain how the interview will be conducted, and other relevant details;
- Elicit information by asking pointed questions as per the *General Guidelines on Applicant Interviews Policy*;
- Give the applicant an opportunity to explain, clarify, or refute the IPDO's concerns;
- Not advise the applicant of any decisions made regarding their case (this information will only be conveyed after the application has been fully assessed and a specific course of action is determined);
- Pay special attention to the statements made by the interviewee and cross-reference the information provided with that of the file to determine inconsistencies, contradictory declarations, or if the applicant is evading certain questions (if new concerns arise during the interview, applicants should be given the opportunity to address them, as per the *Procedural Fairness Policy*);
- Explain the next steps in the application process, as applicable; and,
- Remind the applicant that they must inform OIM of any future changes to personal and/or employment information through direct contact with their assigned IPDO.

**Additional considerations:**

As mentioned, at no time during the interview process should the IPDO advise the applicant of any decisions made regarding their case. This information will only be conveyed after the application has been fully assessed, and the applicable action has been recommended by the IPDO, and approved by the Manager of Immigration Programs or Director.

After each interview, IPDOs must prepare an Interview Report that is uploaded in the portal. In the Interview Report, IPDOs should include as much information as possible, as these notes may be consulted in the future, and may be used to identify trends or patterns, or for evaluation.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. The IPDO determines that an interview is necessary with the applicant or employer. The IPDO will inform the PNP Champion that they intend to conduct an interview.
2. If the IPDO identifies that an interview is necessary, they will schedule the interview, and may conduct it via Webex or telephone. If the IPDO does not have a private office space, they will contact the PNP Champion, who will arrange for a private office to be cleared for the IPDO to conduct the interview.
3. In certain circumstances, the IPDO may recommend conducting a face-to-face interview (see *General Guidelines on Applicant Interviews Policy*). If the IPDO determines a face-to-face interview is recommended, they will refer the matter to the PNP Champion. The PNP Champion will discuss the need for a face-to-face interview with the IPDO and refer the matter to the Manager of Immigration Programs, if they deem it necessary. During in-person interviews, two (2) OIM staff must be present. Normally this would include the IPDO and Clerk Typist III. If the latter is unavailable, another IPDO can act as the note taker.
4. Once the interview is concluded, the IPDO will:
  - Write an Interview Report which will be saved in the applicant's/employer's NLPNP account;

- Refer the case to PNP Champion if it is determined that:
  - Program integrity concerns still remain, or the interview originated new ones;
  - Fraudulent activity, documentation or misrepresentation has occurred;
  - The applicant or their employer availed of the services of an unauthorized representative; and/or
  - The IPDO still has concerns that the applicant does not meet the criteria of the NLPNP as it relates to federal requirements.
  
- 5. The PNP Champion will refer the matter to the Manager of Immigration Programs, if they determine that any of the conditions outlined in section 4 apply. The Manager of Immigration Programs will inform the Director, if they also determine that the above conditions apply.
  
- 6. If the IPDO determines that a second interview is required, they will refer the matter to the PNP Champion. The PNP Champion will refer this matter to the Manager of Immigration Programs, if they require further direction or guidance. Either the PNP Champion or Manager of Immigration Programs may approve undertaking a second interview.