

THE INTERVIEW

Before the interview: Notes to the participant

- Email allegations to participants
- Advice on recording
- Set up a quick trial run if the interview will be conducted via videoconferencing
- Advice on support person/special needs if appropriate
- Interpreter services if needed
- Instruct that there is no such thing as 'off the record'
- What can be expected: i.e., there will be questions, evidence, you can take breaks etc.
- Approximate time frame
- When and where, and who will be in the room
- If any special provisions have been made

Before the interview: What you need to do

- Check your recording devices and make sure everything is working and you have back-up
- If you cannot record the meeting, organise for a notetaker
- Organise an interpreter or special needs person if applicable
- Find a private room for the interview and a break room that are away from the workplace
- Check that your videoconferencing is working
- Organise the evidence you may share. Have copies of everything, as you do not want to hand out originals
- Have a system set up how you will receive evidential documents, so you can file them properly
- Prepare your interview structure
- Prepare questions or topics to cover

Start of interview

- Turn recording device on straight away
- Mention all the people in the room, time, and purpose of interview
- Instruct the interpreter, if using, that they
 - Only translate what is asked and not engage in discussion, except to clarify
 - Remain impartial
 - Treat the interview with utmost confidence
- Communicate the rules of the interview
 - There is no 'off the record'
 - Instruct the support person about when they can and cannot interrupt
 - Inform about the break room and taking breaks
 - If the company has policies re: lying, make participant aware of it
- Tell them they will receive a transcript of the interview
- Make sure they are comfortable, and reassure them, if they do not seem to be
- Tell them about the structure of the interview
- "In this interview, if I say, "I understand" or acknowledge what you have said by saying "Yes", this doesn't mean that I accept or agree with your evidence. I will not be making that assessment until after I have collected all the evidence. Do you understand that?"*
- Ask if they have any questions

During the interview

- Be aware of special needs participants, i.e., traumatised subject, children
- File provided documentation appropriately and mention it, so it is recorded
- Be aware of how you may handle confrontation or a disruptive support person
- Ask every hour or so, if a break is needed, or if they are okay to continue
- Call for a break if you feel it is needed, or you need it
- Use context reinstatement where necessary
- Silence can work in your favour

Some basic questions to get started

- What did you observe happen?
- When did this happen (include the date, time, and duration)?
- Where did it happen?
- Who did or said what? In what order did this occur?
- If you responded, how did you respond?
- Have you reported this to anyone else? If so, to whom? When? Where? What was said? What was their response?
- Do you know of any relevant context?
- Are there any relevant notes, documents, or other evidence that I should have, which are consistent with what you have told me?
- Were there any witnesses? Who was within earshot/nearby?
- Who else may have relevant information?

After the interview

- Ask if there is anything else they wish to add
- Explain about the next steps
- Tell them they will get a copy of the transcript that they can comment, if they feel there is an error, or something may be misunderstood. Instruct them that they cannot 'rewrite' what was said
- Give them an approximate timeframe as to when to respond with comments, usually about three days, depending on length of transcript
- Tell them that there may be a follow-up interview, if anything arises that may be of importance
- Ask if they have any questions
- Thank the participants for their time
- If you are working with a statement. You would give the participant a copy of your notes and the statement as hard copies

- If you want to email the transcript, etc., ask which email it should go to, as you many only have their work email, and participants might want it to be sent to a private one
- Consider that all your interviews and evidence will be part of your final report. Consider writing things up, so you can easily incorporate the parts later, saving you some time