**ANNOTATED CLIENT INTERVIEW CHECKLIST**

If the client has received any documents from the INS, USCIS, ICE, or CBP make a copy for the file.

1. **Introduction**

The following questions will help build rapport with your client, begin the flow of the conversation, and ensure you capture important information. You should have introduced yourself (name, pronouns, position) before beginning.

1. How are you doing? How about that weather? (opening up with small talk can help ease a stressful situation)
2. Can you spell your full name for me so I make sure I have it down accurately? (make sure to check they gave you all of their names: first, middle, and last)

At this point, it is good to go over confidentiality agreements and introduce a roadmap for the intake interview. This will build confidence in your client and help ease them into sharing more information. It is also valuable to share why you want certain types of information. For example, you want an emergency contact in case something comes up that you need to speak about urgently and you can’t reach them.

1. Are there any questions you have before I ask you a little bit about what brought you here today?
2. What is the best way to contact you? What is your phone number and email?
3. What is your address?
4. Is there someone else we can contact in the case of an emergency? If yes, what is their contact information?
5. **Current Immigration Status**

The following questions will help you determine the client’s current immigration status. Be sure to examine any immigration documents the client might have.

1. When did you last enter the United States?
2. Did you enter through an immigration check-point or port of entry?
3. Did you enter with a visa stamped in a passport? (If so, make a copy):
   1. What kind of visa was it?
   2. Has the authorized stay on the I-94 expired? When?
   3. Have you, as far as you know, violated the terms of your visa? If so, on what date?

These questions will help you determine if the person is in the United States legally or illegally and when their unlawful status began, which is extremely important for finding out if any bars to immigration relief apply. It will also help you decide if the person is eligible to adjust her status.

1. Have you filed any visa petitions with the USCIS?
2. Did you apply for an amnesty program under IRCA?
3. Are you in removal proceedings now? If so, have you applied for relief from removal such as:
   1. political asylum
   2. cancellation of removal for persons who are not lawful permanent residents (LPR): former suspension of deportation
   3. cancellation of removal for victims of domestic violence
   4. cancellation or suspension under NACARA for Salvadorans, Guatemalans and persons from Eastern bloc countries
   5. registry
   6. adjustment of status [based on relationship to a U.S. citizen or LPR]
   7. cancellation of removal for persons who are LPRs: former 212(c) relief
   8. family unity
4. Have you ever been before an immigration judge in the past? If so, were you:
   1. Ordered deported or excluded (under pre-IIRIRA law), or ordered removed?
      1. If ordered deported, excluded or removed, did you leave the U.S.?
      2. If ordered and left, did you return to the U.S. after that? When? Illegally or legally?
   2. Granted voluntary departure?
   3. Allowed to remain in the U.S.?
   4. Did you apply for some relief?
   5. Did you attend all immigration hearings?
5. Have you ever been ordered summarily removed by an immigration officer (pursuant to IIRIRA)?
6. Have you ever applied for a benefit such as Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) or Temporary Protected Status (TPS)?
7. Are you eligible for citizenship through naturalization? Have you filed an application? On what date?
8. **Family Relationships**
9. Are or were any of your parents or grandparents U.S. citizens? If yes, when did that person live in the U.S.? Based on this information, you may be a U.S. citizen.
10. Do you have a spouse or parent who received amnesty under one of the IRCA programs? Based on this information, you may be eligible for Family Unity status.
11. Are you married or engaged to a U.S. citizen or LPR? Based on this information, you may be able to immigrate through your spouse.
12. Do you have any children who are U.S. citizens? If yes, how old are they? A son or daughter over 21 years old may be able to file a visa petition for the parent.
13. Do you have any brothers or sisters who are U.S. citizens? If yes, how old are they? Your siblings may be able to file a visa petition.
14. Are either of your parents a LPR? The parent might be able to file a visa petition for the child.
15. Are you a child who has been abandoned, abused, or neglected by a parent? Based on this information, you might be eligible for permanent resident status as a “special immigrant juvenile.”
16. Have you been the victim of domestic violence either by a U.S. citizen or LPR parent or spouse, or U.S. citizen child? Based on this information, you might be eligible to “self-petition” for a visa or for cancellation of removal under VAWA.
17. **Work History**
18. Are you currently employed? If yes, describe the job. Proving stable (or any) employment is usually an advantage in immigration cases.
19. Are you working without authorization from a DHS immigration service bureau?
20. Can a labor certification be filed for this type of job? Would the employer be willing to file a labor certification? Labor certifications, especially for workers who do not have a college degree, may be difficult to get.
21. **Other Remedies**
22. How long have you lived in the United States? What was your immigration status during this period? Document dates of all departures from the United States and reasons for absences.
    1. If a person has lived in the United States for a long time, they might be entitled to discretionary relief such as: voluntary departure; cancellation of removal [formerly suspension and 212(c)]; or registry.
23. Are you afraid to return to your home country? If so, why? Based on this information, the person might be eligible to apply for political asylum and restriction of removal.
24. Are you from a country that is currently experiencing political or social unrest? If so, has the government granted TPS to people from that country?
25. Have you suffered torture or does you fear torture upon returning to your country of origin? (relief under the Torture Convention)
26. Have you been a victim of a crime? If so, did you suffer substantial physical or mental harm as a result of the crime and were you helpful in the criminal investigation or prosecution of the crime? Based on this information, you may be eligible to petition for a U visa.
27. Have you been a victim of (a) sex trafficking of persons (if under age 18, could have been consensual), or (b) labor trafficking, including being made to work by force or fraud? Based on this information, you may be eligible for a T visa.
28. Could DACA apply in any way in this case?
29. **Potential Problems**

The questions below all refer to grounds of inadmissibility, which could bar a person from immigrating. Make sure to explain the law to the person before asking this question. Also, make sure to explain why you are asking this question before you ask it.

1. Have you ever been arrested? Have you ever been convicted of a crime? If so, what was the offense and the sentence? (Help the person get all the court records from the conviction.)
2. Have you ever been ordered deported, excluded or removed? If so, when? Did you leave the United States? When did you return?
3. Have you ever committed visa fraud or been accused of committing visa fraud? Did you immigrate through a marriage that has ended?
4. What is your annual income? How many family members do you support? Are you capable of working? (If the person might immigrate through a family petition, what is the petitioner’s income and family size?)
5. Did you use forged, altered, or another person’s documents to gain some immigration benefit or to work? Has the ICE started civil proceedings for document fraud?
6. Have you ever helped another person enter the U.S. illegally? (alien smuggling)
7. Did you ever falsely claim to be a U.S. citizen for any purpose?
8. Have you lived in the United States without “being admitted”—i.e., entered without CBP or INS inspection? If so, for how long?
9. Have you stayed longer than permitted on a nonimmigrant visa, or stayed after violating the terms of a nonimmigrant visa? If so, how, when and for how long?
10. **Closing**

The following questions will help you ensure you didn’t miss anything, the client feels like they understand the next steps, and you complete any final steps.

1. Is there anything else you think is important for me to know right now?
2. Do you have any additional paperwork you’ve ever received from immigration that you didn’t bring today? If so, do you have a way of dropping that off with us so we can make copies or do email it to us?
3. Do you feel like you understand what the next steps are?
4. Is there anything we can help with before we get back to you?

*[This checklist was adapted by SCIJ from a checklist   
adapted by the ILRC from NILC’s Immigrants’ Rights Manual.]*