

**FAMILY INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

<b>VITAL RECORD QUESTIONS:</b>
What is your full name – including middle name and maiden name (if applicable)
How did your parents' decide upon your name? What cultural or personal meaning does it have?
When and Where were you born? What did your parents tell you about the day you were born? Do you have your birth certificate?
What is your mother's name (including maiden name)? When and Where was she born?
What is your father's name? When and Where was he born?
When and Where your parents' were married?
When and Where were you married? Do you have your marriage license? Where did you go for a honeymoon?
What is your spouse's full name (including middle and maiden)?
What is your spouse's mother's name (including maiden name)? When and Where was she born?
What is your spouse's father's name? When and Where was he born?
When and Where were your wife's/husband's parents' married?
When and Where was your spouse born?
Were either of you married before this marriage? Specific information about previous marriages?
What are the full names, birthdates, and birth places of your children?
<b>CHILDHOOD QUESTIONS:</b>
Where and with whom, specifically, did you grow up? Describe the neighborhood in which you grew up.
Where and with whom, specifically, did your parents grow up?
Where and with whom, specifically, did your spouse's parents grow up?
What memories do you have of your childhood?
Did you have any childhood pets? What kind of pets and what were their names?
What memories do you have of your parents?
What memories do you have of your grandparents and/or other extended family?
What are the names of your brothers and sisters? What memories do you have of your siblings?
What are the names of your spouse's brothers and sisters?
Where and how did you meet your spouse?
<b>CHILDHOOD SCHOOL MEMORY QUESTIONS:</b>
Where did you go to grade school? High school? College?
Where did your spouse go to grade school? High school? College?
Who were some of your favorite teachers? Why were they a favorite teacher? What did they teach?
What was your favorite subject in school? Explain why.
What memories do you have of your grade school years? High school years? College years?
What types of organizations were you a member of in high school? In College?
What kinds of athletics did you participate in during your high school and/or college years?
If you went to college, what was your major? Explain why you chose this major?
<b>OCCUPATION QUESTIONS:</b>
What do you do for a living? Explain why you chose this specific occupation?
What does your spouse do for a living? Explain why they chose this specific occupation?
What honors, awards, and/or promotions have you received during your professional years?
What life lessons did you learn from your work life?
Did you have to relocate geographically for a job? If so, why and where?
What was your first job?
<b>RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION QUESTIONS:</b>
What church did your family attend and where was it located?
What denomination was the church that you attended?
Which cemetery did your ancestral family use?

<b>MILITARY SERVICE QUESTIONS:</b>
Did you and/or your spouse serve in the military? If so, which branch?
If you did serve in the military, why did you make the decision to serve?
What memories do you have of your service in the military?
What lessons did you learn from your service in the military?
Did either of your parents or your spouse's parents serve in the military? What stories did they tell you about their service?
What do you know about your grandparents' service in the military?
<b>GENERAL LIFE QUESTIONS:</b>
Did you have a nickname growing up? What was it and how did you get the nickname?
If you could do anything now, what would it be? Explain why.
What was the happiest moment in your life?
Who was the most important person in your life? Tell me about him/her.
Who is the person that had the most positive influence on your life? What did she or he do to influence you?
What are you the proudest of in your life?
Who were your best friends? What were they like?
As a child, what did you like to do for fun?
As an adult, what do you like to do for fun?
Who were your favorite relatives? What are some of your favorite stories or memories of them?
What major health issues or injuries do you remember having?
Who is the oldest member in your family you can remember from when you were a child? What do you remember about that person?
What would you consider to be the most important inventions in your lifetime?
How is the world different now from when you were a child?
If you had children, what do you remember that they did as children that really amazed you?
What was the most important place you have visited and what was it like?
What values and beliefs did your parents teach you?

#### **GENERAL POINTERS:**

- Always remember to ask open-ended questions! These are questions that require more information than just a simple "yes/no" answer. When you ask "yes/no" questions, the discussion has a difficult time moving forward and you miss out on vital information and great stories!
- To save interview time, you could create a "fill in the blank" sheet of questions relating to Vital Records Questions. However, if you have time, asking these questions in person often uncovers new information and great stories!
- Remember to relax and take your time to enjoy the experience!
- If the person you are interviewing feels comfortable, consider recording the interview.
- Make it a priority to interview relatives who are aging to avoid missing out on the opportunity.
- Do some homework in advance of the interview. Ask yourself what you already know about the person you are planning to interview. Use this knowledge to select questions to ask.
- Draw up an outline of the questions in advance. Consider creating a document with each question and a blank space in which to record the answer.
- Remember to take any pictures for identification to the interview. You could also use pictures as discussion starters.
- If necessary, enlist help in conducting family interviews, especially with your older relatives.
- Finally, be prepared to explain why you are conducting family history research and what they could do to contribute.
- These questions would be great to ask of yourself! They are a good starting point to collecting current family information and memories.