

Guide for [First Name, Last Name] Interview

Name, Location

Interviewee ID: ANON###

Background

- *Add anything that you think may be interesting to know about this person or the program*

Interview agenda

Details about the interviews

- No group interviews; individual only
- Duration: One hour or less
- Recorded if possible
- We have already interviewed members of leadership, and are now interviewing DOL customers.

Main points to cover

1. How did you find out about the service
2. What has your experience been applying
3. Have you had any points that you felt lost or confused
4. What has your experience been with the folks in [agency] helping with your case
5. Where do you go to get questions answered

How to use this guide

Use the “main points to cover” above as a checklist. Make sure you cover the main points. Beyond that, don’t worry about asking every question. More important questions are in bold to help you prioritize, but it’s no big deal if you miss a bold question.

The interview guide is not a script to follow. The questions are there to fall back on if the participant is not forthcoming with information. Let the conversation flow. It's a good idea to familiarize the questions in this guide ahead of time so you're ready with the questions that are most relevant to what the interviewee is saying without having to refer back to the guide as much.

Good general follow up moves to keep the conversation flowing and get more information:

- Can you tell me more about that?
- Can you give me an example of that?
- How did you feel when that happened?
- So you're saying ... Am I understanding that correctly?
- Why/why not?
- Can you share your screen and show me what you mean?
- Can you walk me through that?

Remember to reassure participants throughout that they are providing helpful information.

Introduction

Thank you for your time today. My name is [name]. I am a UX researcher. This is _____, another researcher, who will be helping me capture notes from our conversation. _____ may chime in with a question from time to time, but mostly it will be you and I talking. You may see in your meeting window that we are "live streaming." Don't worry - we are not broadcasting this conversation publicly. All that means is that there are a handful of other people who are working on this project internally who are listening in. Everything we talk about will stay in our internal circle.

The Department of Labor has asked us to suggest ways that the Energy Program might improve the experiences of their customers. We are interviewing claimants, authorized representatives, and survivors who have filed claims to better understand how things are currently working. We are interviewing a mix of people whose claims have been accepted and denied, and also people in different phases of the claims process (for example, people with newly accepted claims versus those who have been receiving benefits for at least a year.

_____ and I are independent researchers, so nothing you say today will hurt our feelings. We want you to be honest so we can learn what's working and what's not working in order to improve the Energy Program's customer experience. **I just want to reiterate that your**

participation in this conversation will not impact your benefits or the outcome of any outstanding benefits claims.

[If they haven't signed the consent form yet, have them do that now.]

We will be anonymizing our notes. Nothing you say will be attributed to you and no one outside of the CoE project team will be allowed to see the recording if you give your consent for us to record this. We are doing that to help make the people being interviewed be as comfortable as possible. The purpose of recording is so we don't have to take detailed notes and can focus on our conversation. So, is it okay with you if we record this?

If yes- start recording here.

We expect this conversation to take less than an hour. We can take breaks at any time, if you feel the need. If there are any questions you feel uncomfortable answering, just let us know and we'll skip them.

Before we begin, do you have any questions I can answer about the project or our approach?

Questions

[Questions in bold are main questions. Questions not in bold are recommended probing questions.]

Warmup/Establish Rapport

1. Where are you calling from today?
2. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?

(Depending on how they answer, this could just be a warm up question, or it could lead into talking about their experience with DOL. Follow their lead, see if it's possible to ask more about their story (work experience, experience with medical issues). If they're not offering that info up front, don't worry about it yet. Build some trust before delving into that.)

Study Questions

- 1. How did you hear about the Office of Worker's Compensation Energy Workers Program?**
- 2. What did you expect going in to the process?**
 - a. How long did you expect it to take?
 - b. Did you think it would be easy or difficult overall? Why?
 - c. Did you think your claim would be approved? Why or why not?
- 3. Can you take me through the process you went through to file a claim?**
 - a. When did you first decide to file a claim?
 - b. How did you get started with finding and filling out the needed forms?**
 - c. Did you go online at all to learn about the process? (OWCP website?)
 - d. Where did you go to get any questions you had answered?**
 - e. Did anyone help you with filing the claim?**
 - i. Who helped?
 1. If it was someone from Resource Center/DOL:
 - a. Can you tell me more about that?
 - b. What was your experience with that employee like?
 - c. How did you contact them (phone? In person?)
 2. If it was a family member, attorney, or other:
 - a. What was their role in the process? What did they help you with?
 - b. Did they make any comments about their experience?
 - c. Do you think they would be comfortable talking to us about their experience? (if we need more people to interview)
- 4. Can you please talk about your experience after filing a claim? What happened next?**
 - a. Was it pretty clear what you were supposed to do next, or was anything confusing?
 - b. Did you need to provide additional evidence for your claim? What was that like?** Who contacted you for more evidence? How did you gather and submit it? Who helped you?
 - c. How did you check or stay up to date on your claim status?**

- i. Who followed up with you from the program(Resource Center staff, CEs, MBEs)? How? How often?
 - ii. Did you use the online portal to check up on your claim (EDP)?
 - i. If no- Why not?
 - ii. If yes- Ask if they remember the last time they used the portal and ask how it was. After that say we'll discuss that in more detail later (see Usability portion of this guide)
- 5. I understand that the next step is that a recommended decision is issued and claimants have the chance to agree or disagree with it. If they disagree, they can request a review of the claim/record or they can request a hearing. There are several chances to appeal a decision. **Can you please talk about your experience - did you agree or disagree with the recommended decision?**
 - a. **If disagree - Did you request a hearing or a review of the record? What was that like? How long did it take?**
 - b. **If agree - How long did you expect it to take to get to a final decision?**
- 6. **So when did you hear back about the final decision? How did you feel about it?**
 - a. Did you know what to do next after your claim was approved?
- 7. **Can you talk about what your experience has been getting compensation and/or medical benefits since your claim was approved?**
 - a. Have you had any issues with receiving compensation and/or benefits?
 - b. When you get medical care, what's the process like?
 - c. How often would you say you speak with people in the Energy program?
- 8. **When you think back on your overall experience with the Energy program, can you tell me:**
 - a. **What was the most difficult part of the whole process?**
 - b. **What was the easiest part of the process?**
 - c. **If we had a magic wand, what could we do to improve this process for you?**
- 9. If you had to rate your experience with the DOL's Energy program on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being very dissatisfied and 5 being very satisfied, what rating would you give?
5) Very satisfied 4)Moderately satisfied 3)Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied 2) Moderately dissatisfied 1)Very dissatisfied. Follow up

with why wasn't it lower?/ What could have been done differently to make the score higher?

Wrap up Questions

- 1. Is there anything else you think I should have asked you about?**
- 2. Do you have any questions for me?**
3. Do you know anyone who also has experience filing a claim with the Energy program who we should talk to?
- 4. Is it okay if we contact you if we have any additional questions? What's the best way to reach you?**

Great, and if you have any additional questions for me, you can ...

Tell them what their compensation will be and how they will be receiving it.

Thank you for your time today, we really appreciate you sharing your experience with us, and we will use this information to improve the Energy Program's services.

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