

IMMIGRATION JUSTICE CAMPAIGN

Sample Questions Asked During an Affirmative Asylum Interview

**Please Note:* The questions below are a sample of questions asked by an asylum officer during an affirmative asylum interview, which was for a client from Afghanistan based on their political opinion. However, the general flow of questions in an affirmative asylum interview usually follows the same process: Confirmation of the information in the Form I-589 application for asylum, questions regarding the client's story and why they are applying for asylum, and admissibility questions to identify whether client has any immigration or criminal bars to asylum.

1. How are you feeling today?
2. Do you feel physically and mentally able to talk to me today about your asylum application?
3. Did anyone help you prepare your asylum application?
4. Was your lawyer [●]?
5. Were you able to review your application once complete?
6. Is the information in your application true and correct?
7. You provided a written statement about your life with your application. Do you know what I am referring to?
8. Did anyone help you prepare that written statement?
9. Did you review your written statement or was it read back to you in your native language?
10. Is the information in your written statement true and correct?
11. You also submitted supporting documents with your application. Did you review those before they were submitted?
12. Is the information contained in those documents true and correct?
13. Are there any additional documents that you would like to submit today?
14. Are there any documents that you have not yet submitted that you would like to provide now?
15. Is your A number [●]?
16. Is your US social security correct?
17. Are your first complete and last names [●]?
18. Have you used any other names or aliases?
19. Please confirm your home address.
20. Please tell me your phone number.

21. Do you identify as female?
22. What is your date of birth?
23. What is the city and country of your birth?
24. Your nationality is [●]?
25. Your race is [●]?
26. Your religion is [●]?
27. Have you ever been in immigration court proceedings?
28. When did you last leave your country?
29. You arrived in the US on [date]?
30. You first entered the US in DC, correct?
31. Do you have your passport in front of you?
32. Your native language is [●]?
33. You do not speak English fluently?
34. Do you speak any languages fluently?
35. You do not have any children, correct?
36. We will now discuss your background in this part of the asylum application. Is that OK with you?
37. So, what was the last address you lived in before you came to the US? When did you live there?
38. It says you are going to an interactive college, is this correct? Since when have you been going?
39. Do you currently work? If so, where? What do you do there?
40. What was your job before that?
41. What is the name of your mother?
42. What is the name of your father?
43. You have [●] brothers and sisters, correct?
44. Was everyone born in [●] besides your father?
45. Do you know the location of your family members?
46. Have you ever applied for a visa to come to the US?
47. Now we are going to talk about why you decided to apply for asylum. Please remember to use short statements and to pause often. And please let me know at any time when you would like to take a break, ok? Please note that I am asking specific questions to make a decision as to your case.

48. Can you briefly explain to me why you are applying for asylum?
49. In Afghanistan, have you ever been threatened? How many times?
50. Let's go back to the threats you received. Who threatened you?
51. How many times would you say you received paper threats?
52. When did you receive those paper threats?
53. And how did you receive those threats?
54. What did those paper threats say?
55. What else did those threats say?
56. And when did you last receive that threat?
57. How did you know the Taliban had sent that to you?
58. In those letters, did they state that they were the Taliban?
59. Earlier you said that the Taliban is against [●]? How do you know that the Taliban believes that or is against that?
60. Did you ever receive the paper threats you received to the police? And I am specifically talking about the paper threats, what did they say to you when they reported it? And did you follow up with them? What did they say when you asked them what was going on? What did you say to them when you reported it?
61. You also stated that you received threats because you look Hazara. Is that a bad thing?
62. What did the Taliban want you to do because you are Hazara? Are you Hazara?
63. Okay, so now we will move on to the three attacks. When was the first attack?
64. Who attacked you at that time?
65. How did you know they wanted to kill you specifically?
66. Can you describe why they targeted you at that specific time?
67. Could these people be there for any other reason, like for other famous people who might have been there?
68. [Attorney interjection]: Is it true that this is a restaurant the Taliban knew that you and your team would go to everyday?
69. You stated that it was unknown people, how did you know it was the Taliban?
70. How many unknown men were there?
71. When they went there, did they say anything to anyone?
72. [Attorney interjection]: Do you remember anything about the clothes that could have indicated they were Taliban?
73. How did you escape?

74. Did you report this first attack to the police?
75. When was the second attack?
76. When did you start working at your job?
77. Did you receive those threats during the first year you worked?
78. Would there be a reason you don't remember the specific attack or the year?
79. Can you briefly explain to me what happened this time?
80. And do you know who attacked you this time around?
81. Do you know the reason they attacked this event?
82. During the time you went to this event, did you receive any paper threats?
83. Why do you think the Taliban wanted to attack the event?
84. Was this event advertised in the provinces and in the country? You stated it was a big event. How big of an event was it?
85. Did you host this event?
86. And so when you were there, how did the Taliban attack the event?
87. At the time, did you speak to any Taliban members?
88. Did you suffer any injuries at that event?
89. What was going on through your head at that time?
90. So why did your supervisor tell you to stop working at that time?
91. What is the name of your work supervisor? Do you know the reason why he was captured?
92. We will talk about the third time you were physically harmed or physically attacked. Can you tell me what happened?
93. Who do you think was looking for you?
94. Why do you believe these people were looking for you?
95. And after this, did the Taliban try to contact you?
96. Did you change your life in any way because of these threats?
97. Did you ever report this last attack to the police?
98. And so how would you, being [●], be viewed by the Taliban and Afghan society?
99. How did the Taliban know you worked as a [●]?
100. Were you ever in newspapers or magazines?
101. Do you still have a social media account? If not, how come?

102. I have a quick question about one of the supplements you submitted. There was a translation here from a Facebook post announcing your death. Can you explain what that is?
103. And who posted this?
104. Why would they post that you passed away?
105. What did you think about all that?
106. When was the last time you heard from the Taliban? When is the last time you heard Taliban is looking for you?
107. Besides what you told me, do you fear being harmed or threatened by anyone else in Afghanistan?
108. Are you afraid to return to Afghanistan?
109. Why are you afraid of returning?
110. And so, what are you afraid would happen to you if you were to return to Afghanistan?
111. Why do you believe the Taliban would want to harm you if you were to return?
112. Were you ever threatened or harmed by anyone else because you look Hazara?
113. If you were return to Afghanistan, how would the Taliban find you?
114. Since the Taliban has taken over the country, have any of your family members been physically harmed or threatened by the Taliban?
115. And do you know what have happened to your colleagues who worked with you, do you know what happened to them?
116. Did you get the chance to talk to your supervisor after he was let go by the Taliban?
117. Why do you think the Taliban would want to harm you after all this time has passed?
118. And do you think that the Taliban still remembers you? And why do you think they would remember you?
119. Would you be harmed for any other reason if you were to return?
120. Do you think you could relocate and live in another part of the country?
121. Is there any reason why you can't live in a different part of the country?
122. Do you believe the police or government could protect you if you were to return?
123. Have you ever lived or traveled outside your country other than the USA?
124. Have you ever been offered or received permanent immigration status from any other country?
125. Have you ever served in the military, police or law enforcement?
126. Have you ever harmed or help harm someone else for any reason?

127. Have you ever committed a crime anywhere in the world?
128. Have you ever been accused of, charged of, or arrested for a crime anywhere in the world?
129. Have you ever been convicted of a crime anywhere in the world?
130. Have you ever provided support, even if against your will, to a group providing violent terrorist activity?
131. Have you ever received military type training or weapons training?
132. Have your parents ever been involved in violent terrorist activities?
133. Are you a member of a violent terrorist group or have you been a member of a violent terrorist group?
134. [Attorney redirect:] (1) did you receive death threats other than paper threats? i.e. social media and on your phone? (2) When was the last time you heard from the Taliban via your phone and were the threats continuous? (3) How did you know it was the Taliban and how did the Taliban know your phone number? (5) What did those messages say?
135. [Officer then asked follow-up:] You said they had your information, what kind of information? Did they have your address?
136. [Attorney closing statement].