

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### SEGMENT I: For The Record

Today's date is \_\_\_\_\_ and the place of this interview is \_\_\_\_\_.

The name of the person being interviewed is Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, who was born \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_'s current address is \_\_\_\_\_.

My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

and I will be conducting the interview as a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Chapter of the Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society, Inc. This interview is part of the Veteran's History Project sponsored by the Library of Congress, American Folklife Center.

### SEGEMENT II: Jogging Memory

What were some of your strongest memories of your parents? What did they do?

What did you dream of becoming when you grew up?

Were you drafted or did you enlist into the military?

If you enlisted why? Why did you pick the service branch you joined?

What kind of work were you doing at this time?

Do you recall your first days in the service?

What did it feel like?

Tell me about your boot camp/training experiences

What was the ethnic makeup of the camp/base?

Do you remember your instructors? What race were they? What about your officers?

Was your training adequate? Harsh?

How did you get through it?

### **SEGMENT III: Experiences**

Which war did you service in (WWI, WWII, Korean, Vietnam, Persian Gulf)?

Where exactly did you serve?

Do you remember arriving and what it was like?

What was your job assignment?

Were certain ethnic groups assigned certain jobs?

Did you see combat?

Were there many casualties in your unit? Were you injured?

Tell me about a couple of your most memorable experiences.

Were you a prisoner of war?

Tell me about your experiences in captivity and when freed.

Were you awarded any medals or citations?

How were they awarded?

### **SEGMENT IV: Life**

How did you stay in touch with your family?

What was the food like?

Did you have enough supplies and equipment?

Did you feel pressure or stress?

Was there something special you did for “good luck”?

How did troops entertain themselves?

Were there outside entertainers? How often did you have them?

How was the seating arranged during these performances?

What did you do when you were on leave?

Where did you travel while in the service?

Do you recall any particularly humorous or unusual events?

What were some of the pranks that you or others would pull?

Do you have photographs? Who are the people in the photographs?

What did you think of officers or fellow soldiers/sailors?

Did you keep a personal diary? Would you make it or portions available for this project?

### **SEGMENT V: After Service**

Do you recall the day your service ended?

Where were you?

What did you do in the days and weeks afterward?

Did you work or go back to school?

Did the G.I. Bill support your education?

Did you make any close friendships while in the service?

Did you continue any of those relationships? For how long?

### **SEGMENT VI: Later Years and Closing**

What did you go on to do as a career after the war?

Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or military in general?

Did you join a veteran's organization? What kinds of activities does your post or association have?

Do you attend military service reunions?

How did your service and experiences affect your life?

Is there anything else I should ask you?

Is there anything you would like to add that we have not covered in this interview?

**Thank the veteran for sharing his or her recollections.**

Can you be contacted if clarification is needed to questions asked?

### **Tips for a Successful Interview**

Interviews should contain several segments – Dividing interviews into segments allows for gathering important details while nurturing memory.

It is important to **let the veteran tell his or her own story** – Don't feel obliged to ask all the questions or limit yourself to just these questions.

In advance of the interview have the participant completed the **Biographical Data Sheet** – Review it before the interview – It will help you ask the most relevant questions.

Feel free to **share questions with the participant beforehand** – Often interviewees are more comfortable if they know what kinds of questions you might ask.

Interviewers are encouraged to prepare themselves for the interview by reading about the war(s) the veteran served in and by reviewing maps and atlases if possible.

**Last but not least** – Make sure that the following release forms are included in the completed package:

(Minimum)	(As required)
Interviewer Release Form	Photographer (if any) Release Form
Veteran Release Form	Photograph Log (if photographs are submitted)
Biographical Data Sheet	Manuscript Data Sheet (if letters, diaries, other printed and handwritten are being donating)
Audio & Video Recording Log*	
	Tape or Video Jacket/Label

Interviewee's Name – Interviewer's Name – Date of Interview – Subject

\* Please summarize the topics discussed in the interview in their order of appearance on the recording.