

FILMING PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS

CHECKLIST: TO PUSH RECORD OR NOT?

The decision to record an interview on camera is generally not an easy one. This is a decision you will need to make based on the information you have at the time. Ideally, you want to be able to answer “yes” to each of the above questions before choosing to press record.

YES	NO	
		<i>Are there any advocacy reasons to record this testimony in addition to evidentiary reasons?</i>
		<i>Is it logistically easier to film the testimony rather than write it down?</i>
		<i>Is it safe to record a person's identity (name, face, and voice)?</i>
		<i>Is it probable that the person can provide relevant information?</i>
		<i>Is this likely to be the only opportunity for someone to speak with this person?</i>
		<i>Does this person strike you as a credible and reliable witness?</i>
		<i>Is an on-camera interview likely to empower (rather than re-victimize) the person giving the testimony?</i>
		<i>Is the likelihood that contradictory testimony will later be given low?</i>
		<i>Is it possible to secure informed consent? (See details below.)</i>
		<i>Do I have the means to securely preserve this video footage?</i>

CHECKLIST: KEY QUESTIONS FOR

PRELIMINARY FIELD INTERVIEWS

Here's a checklist of key questions to ask during a preliminary field interview:

	<i>What, if any, security concerns do you have? Are there any actions you would like us to take while filming you or afterward to minimize your risks and/or the risks to your community?</i>
	<i>What is your name? Please spell it.</i>
	<i>Could you tell me the date, time, and location of the interview?</i>
	<i>Please state the date, time, and location of the event we will be speaking about.</i>
	<i>Can you describe what happened? How do you know?</i>
	<i>How do you think it happened? Why do you think this?</i>
	<i>Can you tell me to whom it happened? How do you know?</i>
	<i>If you have an opinion about why this happened, could you share your thoughts with us? What is your opinion based on?</i>
	<i>If it's safe to do so, could you share the names and contact information of anyone else at the scene or with information about the event?</i>
	<i>Are there any witnesses you believe we should talk with or any physical evidence we should film (such as property damage, injuries, impact areas, bullet holes, or environmental degradation)?</i>
	<i>Can we or someone else get back in touch with you to follow up or complete a more thorough interview? If yes, how can we contact you? What is your address, phone number, email, and any other key contact information?</i>

FILMING PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS V. COMPREHENSIVE INTERVIEWS

A preliminary Field Interview is typically (but not always)...

- collected by a frontline documenter;
- conducted in the field, either during or shortly after an incident;
- captured in a spontaneous manner;
- shorter in length;
- intended to collect basic information; and
- to help identify if there are additional witnesses or physical evidence the witness is aware of.

A comprehensive Interview is typically (but not always)...

- collected by a trained human rights advocate or investigator;
- conducted in a safe, comfortable environment;
- separated in time and space from the incident;
- captured in a planned manner;
- longer in length;
- intended to collect thorough information about everything the person can remember; and
- to learn if there are additional witnesses or physical evidence the witness is aware of.

FILMING PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS V. COMPREHENSIVE INTERVIEWS

PRELIMINARY FIELD INTERVIEW

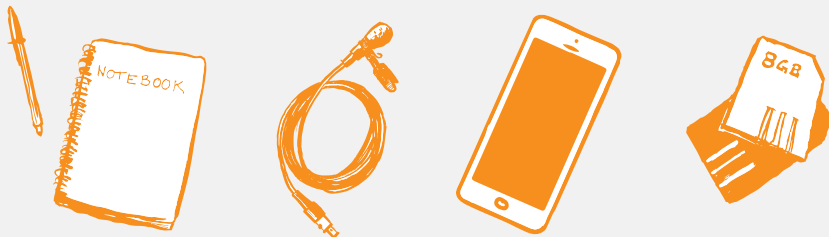


COMPREHENSIVE INTERVIEW



CONDUCTING PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS BEFORE FILMING

- STEP 1** Prepare your equipment
- STEP 2** Identify and minimize the security risks
- STEP 3** Know what you need to collect and why
- STEP 4** Prepare supporting materials in advance
- STEP 5** Select witnesses
- STEP 6** Chose a safe, private, and informative interview location
- STEP 7** Select an interviewer
- STEP 8** Make the interviewee comfortable



CHECKLIST: SECURING INFORMED CONSENT BEFORE FILMING

Begin with an off-camera conversation to establish that your interviewee understands:

	<i>Who the filmer and crew are and your roles.</i>
	<i>The purpose of the interview.</i>
	<i>Why they will be continually asked explain their responses.</i>
	<i>The implications of speaking out.</i>
	<i>Who may potentially see the video.</i>
	<i>How the video will be used and shared.</i>
	<i>That the interviewee may be asked for a more detailed interview or, in some cases, to testify in court.</i>
	<i>That participation is voluntary.</i>
	<i>That no incentives will be provided.</i>
	<i>That they can cancel their permission during the interview, and the video can be deleted on the spot; if they rescind permission after the interview, logistical and legal realities may make it impossible to delete the testimony.</i>

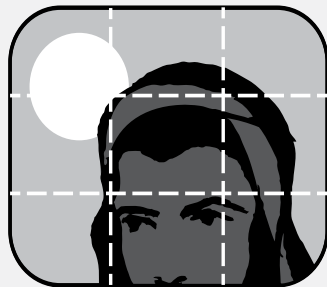
CONDUCTING PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS DURING FILMING

- STEP 1** Secure informed consent on camera
- STEP 2** Consider framing, lighting, and sound
- STEP 3** Add objective on-camera narration
- STEP 4** Ask the interview questions
- STEP 5** Keep Recording
- STEP 6** Interview one person at a time
- STEP 7** Listen closely and adapt your plan as needed
- STEP 8** Film additional information
- STEP 9** Close the interview

GOOD SET-UP



BAD SET-UP



CHECKLIST: SECURING INFORMED CONSENT DURING FILMING

ON CAMERA – Now turn to the camera, and before beginning the questions about the incident, ask the following:

	<i>If the security situation allows, please state your name and the date and location of this interview.</i>
	<i>Please explain what we are doing in your own words.</i>
	<i>Can you tell me who may see the video and how it will be shared?</i>
	<i>Can we show your face and use your real name and voice in this video?</i>
	<i>Are there any other restrictions to using and sharing this interview that we need to be aware of?</i>
	<i>Are you aware that your participation is voluntary and that you can refuse to answer any question and end the filming process at any time in order to ask questions, take a break, or stop completely?</i>
	<i>Were you informed that no incentives will be provided for your testimony and that we cannot assist with any follow-up services?</i>
	<i>Were you informed that you might need to make yourself available for a further, more detailed interview?</i>
	<i>If applicable, were you informed that there is a possibility that you may be called to testify before a court? (As a frontline documenter, it's impossible for you to say with certainty whether a person will be called to testify in court. However, if you think that might be the case, be honest about it.)</i>
	<i>Do you consent to your interview being used in the manner discussed?</i>

CONDUCTING PRELIMINARY INTERVIEWS

AFTER FILMING

STEP 1 Revisit safety and security

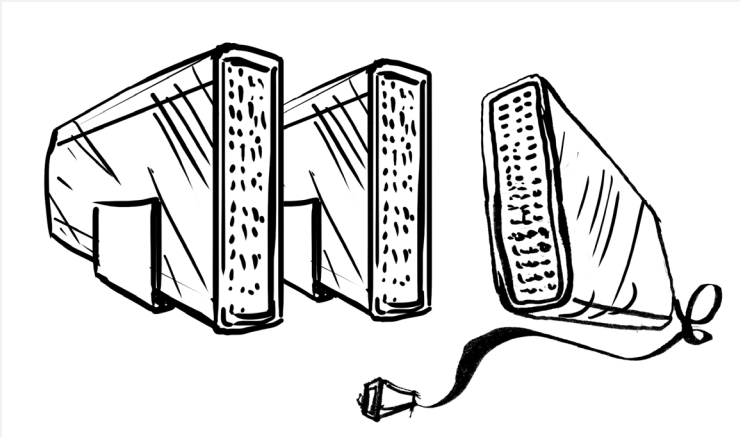
STEP 2 Develop next steps

STEP 3 Provide follow-up support if possible

STEP 4 Summarize it

STEP 5 Archive and protect it

STEP 6 Learn from you experience



Learn more about preserving video at archive.witness.org

VIDEO AS EVIDENCE: **MINIGUIDE V 1.0** VAE.WITNESS.ORG

CHECKLIST:

SECURING INFORMED CONSENT

AFTER FILMING

TOWARDS THE END OF THE INTERVIEW – with the camera still recording, ask the interviewee the following:

	<i>Would you like to make any corrections or add any additional information?</i>
	<i>Have there been any threats, promises, or inducements which influenced your answers?</i>
	<i>Is the statement you gave true to the best of your knowledge and recollection?</i>
	<i>Do you have any additional safety concerns considering what you shared?</i>
	<i>What is the best way to follow up with you if needed?</i>

AFTER THE INTERVIEW – With the camera turned off consider the following:

	<i>Properly document and preserve the footage in a safe and secure location.</i>
	<i>Determine whether you will share the footage, and if so, with whom, when, and how?</i>
	<i>If needed and if you are able to, provide contact information for a counselor or victim-support services.</i>

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