



Mineral



Question of the Week

JULY 19, 2023

Question

What do I need to know about religious accommodations?

ANSWER

Employers with 15 or more employees are required by federal law to provide reasonable accommodations for an employee's sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, and observances, unless doing so would create an undue hardship on the employer.

The need for a religious accommodation generally arises when an employee's religious beliefs or practices conflict with a specific task or requirement of the position or application process. For instance, an employee might need a change to their schedule to allow for prayer during the workday, to not be scheduled on Sundays, or to wear a head covering or hairstyle that is outside of your dress code.

Undue hardship—as it applies to religious accommodations specifically—has recently been reinterpreted by the Supreme Court to mean “a substantial increased cost in relation to the conduct of [an employer's] particular business.” Most accommodations, particularly those related to scheduling and dress codes, will not cause an undue hardship, so employers should be open to requests and work with employees whenever possible.

When an employee requests a religious accommodation, you can ask them to describe their sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance that requires accommodation. We suggest that you do

this by having the employee complete a [Request for Religious Accommodation Form](#), which is available in the platform. If you require this documentation for one religious accommodation request, you should require it for all—don't get caught in a discrimination claim by being more lenient towards some religions than others.

This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.