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## Question of the Week

January 24, 2024

### Question

We've had a request for a religious accommodation, but I think the employee wants to get out of following the policy for other reasons. How do I determine whether a religious belief is legitimate and sincerely held?

### ANSWER

Ordinarily, you should assume that an employee's request for a religious accommodation is based on a sincerely held religious belief, observance, or practice. The definition of religion is broad and protects beliefs, observances, and practices you may not be familiar with. That said, if you have an objective basis for doubting either the religious nature of the belief or that it's sincerely held, you can request additional supporting information. We have a [Request for Religious Accommodation](#) form you can use.

If you decide to ask for supporting documentation, don't require that it come from a specific source, such as a clergy member or fellow congregant. A belief can be both religious and sincerely held by the employee without being shared by the leaders of the religion or all adherents to that religion.

If you intend to deny accommodation on the basis that the belief, observance, or practice is not religious or sincerely held, we recommend that you work with legal counsel. Such a challenge can become complicated quickly.

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