

**Suggestions for Obtaining a Religious Exemption
From Employer Mandated COVID-19 Vaccinations**
(www.centerformedicalfreedom.org)
(draft @ October 6, 2021)

Disclaimer

The following observations are not intended to provide legal advice to any particular person in any particular situation, but are general principles that may be helpful to some. If you have a legal problem, consult a lawyer practicing in your jurisdiction.

Timing

1. Wait until the mandate is announced before claiming a Religious Exemption (“RE”). A premature claim could put a target on your back unnecessarily, as many companies, policies are changing. Also, if you wait until the policy is announced, you will have additional information about what the standard will be to approve REs.
2. Check if there is a RE form provided by your employer or college, and determine how it is to be submitted, and the deadline for submission.
3. Before filing, ask to find out how others seeking a RE are doing. If all other RE's previously submitted were approved, or if some have been denied, that is useful information.

Form of RE

1. If a form is provided, use that form. Otherwise, the following can guide the development of a letter RE. Some employers may require an affidavit signed before a notary. (If a notarized signature is required, certainly get your signature notarized.)
2. Keep a copy of your application, and record when you submitted it, as well as keeping copies of any response received.

Contents of RE

1. Simply asserting that you have a "sincerely held" (using the language of Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act) religious conviction for refusing a vaccine may be enough for some employers. There, the less said, the better. For most employers, however, an explanation of the theological basis for the exemption may be preferable, or even required.
2. Use only arguments grounded in religious beliefs and the Holy Bible. Adding legal or policy arguments dilutes the RE. It gives the employer the opportunity to deny the exemption as being based on something other than religious grounds. They may be relied on at a later time. The fact that the vaccine is neither safe nor effective should NOT be the basis of a RE.

3. You should state that you have a "sincerely held religious belief" against the vaccine. That is the language set out in Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and the various guidance issued by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission ("EEOC"), and employers are familiar with that phrase.
4. For theological reasons for your RE, you can draw from [A Theology of the COVID-19 Vaccine](#).
5. Some have asked about having a lawyer write a letter to support a RE claim, but it would seem better to wait until the employer asks for more information or denies the RE.
6. It is better NOT to request "an accommodation," which uses the language of Title VII. you are seeking an exemption.
<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/section-12-religious-discrimination>

Testing, Masking and Distancing

Although you may have reasons to seek a RE from burdens imposed on those obtaining RE's — such as testing, masking, and distancing — it is probably best to defer such assertions until the RE from the vaccine is granted.

Church Support for your Views

Some employers may ask for a letter from your church, or try to contradict your claim with a published statement from your church. A RE need not be supported by the view of a church you attend. It could be in opposition to the view of that church. If you need some associational support, you can refer to America's Black Robe Regiment and the pastors that signed their doctrinal statement – [A Theology of the COVID-19 Vaccine](#).

And as to questions about what your church teaches, you can use this language.

Whether or not other believers or pastors adhere to this belief, or the Church I often attend does or does not adhere to this core teaching, is not relevant as the law only requires that I have such a sincerely held belief, not whether others or my church share or do not share that belief. EEOC guidelines support this position.

Prior Vaccinations

Objections could be made to those claiming a RE to the COVID-19 vaccine, based on the person having previously received other vaccinations. There are several ways to anticipate and address this claim.

- a. The COVID-19 injection is not a real vaccine, as prior vaccines. Previously, vaccines used an attenuated or dead pathogen; but the COVID-19 vaccine uses experimental gene therapy. Previously, vaccines were designed to prevent infection, but the COVID-19 vaccine is designed to protect against infection. However, both Mariah Webster and the CDC have changed the definition of vaccine to try to cover over this issue.
- b. All three vaccines were developed, tested or manufactured using aborted fetal tissue. Many, but not all other vaccinations were also, but if this is new information to the person, it can provide the basis for a RE.
- c. Unlike all other vaccinations, this injection appears to be a precursor to the Mark of the Beast, reducing the inhibitions of persons to take that mark when we get to that point.

Here is some sample language you could use:

You might also inquire about other vaccinations I may have received in the past. Whether or not I have received past vaccinations is not a relevant factor in evaluating a request for a religious accommodation based on my currently held sincere religious belief. The work of the Holy Spirit in testifying God's truth about my body as His temple is an on-going process. My request for an accommodation exemption is based on my current sincerely held belief, and not on the basis of any past belief or any prior medical practice, or the belief or views of other persons, religious or secular, or that of the employer.

Length of Religious Belief

If an employer asks about how long the belief has existed, you could state:

You might ask about how long my belief has been present. The law renders this an inappropriate inquiry. The employer is obligated to consider my current sincerely held belief, not past belief. Nevertheless over the last several years I have come to understand and believe that God wants us to glorify Him with our bodies so He can use our bodies to serve as a home for His Spirit to specifically guide me in all of life's decisions. Injecting a COVID vaccine into my body is contrary to this core teaching that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is also contrary to the teaching of the Spirit who testifies within me. My study of God's word has now convinced me of the truth of this matter as a sincerely held belief.

Seeking a Religious Accommodation under Title VII

Many believe it is better to **assert** a RE, than to **request** a RE. You are asserting a right, not requesting an accommodation. However, you could request a religious accommodation from an private sector employer governed by the 1964 Civil Rights Act, if you think that approach best, and could stated:

The EEOC has said that an employer should start with the assumption that a request for a religious accommodation is legitimate, and should be accommodated absent an undue hardship. An employer can probe into an employee's requests and ask for supporting information, but only when they "have an objective basis for questioning either the religious nature or the sincerity of a particular belief, practice, or observance." Title VII prohibits discrimination on a protected basis "with respect to ... compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment." Title VII is violated when an employer of 15 or more employees or supervisor explicitly or implicitly coerces an employee to abandon, alter, or adopt a religious practice as a condition of receiving a job benefit or privilege or avoiding an adverse employment action. The statute defines "religion" as including "all aspects of religious observance and practice, as well as belief, unless an employer demonstrates that [it] is unable to reasonably accommodate

<https://www.eeoc.gov/laws/guidance/section-12-religious-discrimination>

Sample Letter Seeking Religious Exemption

Gentlemen:

I hereby respectfully assert my religious objection to the Company's mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policy. Receiving a COVID-19 vaccine would violate my sincerely held religious beliefs grounded in my personal faith in Jesus Christ. My sincerely held religious beliefs condemns the use of an aborted fetal cell line harvesting for the testing or manufacture of COVID-19 vaccines and condemns the use of biological materials from an individual without their informed consent. Since all COVID-19 vaccines were developed, tested, or reduced using biological material and were tested or manufactured with fetal cells, it is my sincerely held religious belief that this is wrong and for me, it is an act of glaring immorality.

I sincerely believe that if I were to receive a COVID-19 vaccination, I would be violating my conscience and religious beliefs because I would be committing an immoral act and grave sin.

Anticipating that you might ask whether there are other vaccinations I may have received in the past, please understand that this is not a relevant factor to my assertion of a religious exemption to COVID-19 vaccination based on my currently held sincere religious belief. The work of the Holy Spirit in testifying God's truth about my body as His temple is an on-going process. The COVID-19 vaccine is a novel and unproven genetic therapy which wholly unlike prior vaccines that use weakened or dead pathogens. My assertion of a religious exemption is based on my current sincerely held belief, and not on the basis of any past belief or any prior medical practice, or the belief or views of other persons, religious or secular, or that of my employer.

I have come to understand and believe that God wants me to glorify Him with my body so He can use my body to serve as a temple of the Holy Spirit and to specifically guide me in all of life's decisions. Injecting a COVID vaccine into my body is contrary to this core belief that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. It is also contrary to the teaching of the Holy Spirit who testifies within me. My study of God's word has now convinced me of the truth of this matter as a sincerely held religious belief.

Whether or not others adhere to this belief, and whether or not the church I often attend does or does not adhere to this core belief, is not relevant to my sincerely held religious belief. Likewise, my beliefs are not contingent on whether others or my church share or do not share my beliefs.

Sincerely,
Signed,
Employee Name
Address
Phone
Email