

## WORKPLACE MODEL POLICY

# Religious Accommodation Policy

A model policy that combines the elements employees and managers need to request, evaluate, and respond to religious accommodations.

### MODEL POLICY

The language below combines the elements employees and managers need in one place.

## MODEL RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION POLICY

### 1. Commitment

[Company] respects the sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, and affiliations of applicants and employees. We provide reasonable religious accommodations unless doing so would impose an undue hardship.

### 2. Undue hardship

An undue hardship exists when a proposed accommodation would impose substantial increased costs in relation to the conduct of [Company]'s particular business. The determination will consider all relevant factors in the particular circumstances, including the nature and cost of the accommodation and the employer's operations.

### 3. Individual assessment

Requests are considered case by case. Relevant factors may include substantial cost, safety, operational requirements, effects on other employees' rights, and available alternative accommodations. Before denying a request, [Company] will ordinarily discuss the request with the employee and consider whether another reasonable accommodation could resolve the conflict without imposing an undue hardship.

### 4. Examples

Accommodations may include schedule adjustments, leave, shift swaps, prayer time or space, dress or grooming exceptions, dietary adjustments, or other reasonable changes related to a sincerely held religious belief.

### 5. Request and review process

Employees may submit a request to [Human Resources, manager, or designated office] verbally or in writing. The company will discuss the request with the employee, seek only information reasonably needed to evaluate it, consider effective alternatives, and prohibit retaliation for requesting an accommodation. The company will communicate its decision in a timely manner and, where appropriate, in writing.

## A Five-Step Policy Review

- 1. Confirm the policy is written and accessible.** Employees and managers should be able to locate the policy without relying on informal knowledge or discretionary practice.
- 2. Update the legal standard.** Replace outdated undue-hardship language and ensure decision-makers understand the current substantial-burden standard.
- 3. Make the process concrete.** Identify who receives requests, how they may be submitted, what information may be requested, and when employees should expect a response.
- 4. Train managers and reviewers.** Front-line managers should know how to recognize a possible request, avoid dismissing it prematurely, and refer it to the appropriate decision-maker.
- 5. Review outcomes for consistency.** Track requests and decisions to identify unnecessary delays, inconsistent treatment, or recurring barriers that could be resolved through better policy design.

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