

Dealing with Religious Objections to Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination Requirements: The EEOC Issues Clarifying Technical Assistance for Employers

Working Together

10.26.2021

By Andrés Jiménez-Franck



On October 25, 2021, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) issued long-awaited technical assistance concerning employees' religious objections to vaccine requirements in the workplace. (The new guidance is Section L of the EEOC's Q&A document entitled "What You Should Know About COVID-19 and the ADA, the Rehabilitation Act, and Other EEO Laws," which can be found [here](#).) Though several state governments, and the federal government, have already issued COVID-19 vaccine mandates for employers, the EEOC's guidance is quite timely as employers continue to face the often-thorny process of assessing religious

accommodation requests from their employees. In case you missed it, we covered the mandate for federal contractors in an [earlier article](#).

The guidance reminds employers that it is the employee's burden to tell their employer if they are requesting an exception to a vaccination requirement (a "religious accommodation") because of a conflict with a sincerely held religious belief, practice or observance ("religious beliefs"). Employers should note that employees do not have to recite any specific "magic words" or reference specific laws in order to put the employer on notice that they are seeking a religious accommodation, so long as they notify the employer that a vaccination requirement conflicts with a sincerely held religious belief. The EEOC advises that these principles also apply if an employee expresses a religious conflict with a particular vaccine and wishes to wait until another version or brand of vaccine is available.

[Read the full alert here.](#)

Posted in COVID-19, Vaccine

Tags: Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)

pullcom.com  [@pullmancomley](https://twitter.com/pullmancomley)

BRIDGEPORT
203.330.2000

HARTFORD
860.424.4300

SPRINGFIELD
413.314.6160

WAKEFIELD
401-360-1533

WATERBURY
203.573.9700

WESTPORT
203.254.5000

WHITE PLAINS
914.705.5355