

Religious Accommodation Process for Employees

Frequently Asked Questions

Office of Human Resources

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What is a religious accommodation?

A religious accommodation in the employment setting is an adjustment in the work environment, or in the way tasks or assignments are customarily done, made to enable an employee to observe or to practice his or her sincerely held religious beliefs, while meeting the essential functions of the job and without causing undue hardship to university operations or activities. (For more information, visit http://www.eeoc.gov/policy/docs/qanda_religion.html.)

Why do we do this?

The University of Wyoming is committed to diversity and inclusion in all facets of the university's operations. The university will not discriminate based on religion in employment actions including, but not limited to, application procedures, hiring, tenure, promotion, advancement, termination, training, compensation, and or within the learning environment. The university prohibits retaliation for making a request for any religious accommodation. This process is part of that commitment.

What factors are considered in determining a religious accommodation?

Requests are considered on a case-by-case basis. Factors considered in determining religious accommodations include business needs; academic requirements; considerations of cost, safety, efficiency, and the rights of others; and the ability of the individual to perform the essential functions of the position or standards of the academic program. The university is not required by law or policy to accommodate religious beliefs when such accommodation would violate other laws or interfere with the safety and security of our campus. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) provides guidance at www.eeoc.gov/laws/types/religion.cfm

What are some examples of religious accommodations?

Examples of a religious accommodation in the employment environment may often include, but are not limited to flexible scheduling, voluntary reassignments or shift exchanges, lateral transfers, apparel, or some modification to other policies. However, a request based on personal preferences such as social or political beliefs is not an example of, nor does it constitute, a religious accommodation.

What is the process for employees to request a religious accommodation at the University of Wyoming?

- This process applies to faculty, staff and student employees in the employment setting. Students who seek religious accommodations *in the academic setting* should contact the Dean of Students office.
- Faculty, staff, or student employees may initiate a request for any desired religious-related workplace by contact with either (1) their Supervisor; or (2) the office of Human Resources.
- The individual must then complete the university's [Religious Accommodation Request Form](#), identifying the type of accommodation, how it will fulfill the religious obligation or other belief-based practice, and submit the form to the office of Human Resources.
- Human Resources staff may ask the employee to provide additional information about the basis of the religious obligation or other belief-based practice. They will then contact the supervisor to engage in an interactive dialogue involving the employee, and other university officials as needed to determine what religious accommodations, if any, are appropriate.
- The final decision will be made by the individual's appointing authority.

What are the responsibilities of the supervisor once a religious accommodation has been granted?

Supervisors should provide the religious accommodation in a manner that is consistent with the final decision resulting from the initial request.

What are the employee's responsibilities after a religious accommodation request has been granted?

The employee is still required to meet the essential functions of the job. Additionally, if the employee needs any modifications or additions to the request as originally granted, that individual should advise the supervisor accordingly and within a timely manner. Without such communication, it may not be possible for the supervisor to make a timely response on the modified or additional request.

What if after the religious accommodation request is granted, the supervisor does not provide the requested accommodation?

The individual should contact the office of Human Resources to discuss concerns related to the provision of the request.

For additional questions or concerns, please contact Eric Goldenstein at the office of Human Resources at 766-2437 or by email, epgold@uwyo.edu