

SINCERELY HELD RELIGIOUS BELIEFS INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. Traditional organized religions such as Catholic, Methodist, Baptist or Mormon
2. Religions that are uncommon, unreasonable, illogical or lack formal organization
3. Religions that are unrecognized by other organized religions
4. Non-theistic beliefs that address ethics, morality, and what is right and wrong

EMPLOYERS MAY REASONABLY INQUIRE INTO THE NATURE & SINCERITY OF THE RELIGION:

Based on the interactive process, the employer or educational institution may request limited additional information about the facts and circumstances that support the request for an accommodation if they have an objective basis for doubting either the nature or sincerity of your belief, observance or practice (but not its truthfulness or reasonableness):

1. statements and explanations that explain the nature of their beliefs
2. Information about how, when and where the belief is practiced
3. Written materials that describe the religious belief or religious practice
4. Written statements from third parties such as friends, religious leaders
5. When the person first acquired their belief
6. immunization history,

NOTES ON RELIGIOUS BELIEFS:

1. A person who does not agree with all of the tenants of a religion does not mean that their belief is not sincere
2. A person whose religious beliefs have changed does not mean that their belief is not sincere
3. A person who does not practice their belief as often as they would like does not mean that their belief is not sincere
4. A person who is unable to provide a letter from a pastor does not mean that their belief is not sincere
5. Receiving a vaccine in the past (or only certain vaccines) does not mean that the person's religious belief is not sincere
6. Just because you recently converted to a religion does not mean that your religious belief is not sincere
7. A person who does not practice or express their belief publicly or in an organized gathering of similar believers does not mean that their belief is not sincere
8. Consistent past practicing of one's belief tends to strengthen the assertion that the belief is sincere but the lack of consistency does not necessarily mean that the belief is not sincere
9. Belief in God is not necessary. Nontheistic beliefs can also be religious for purposes of the Title VII exemption as long as they "occupy in the life of that individual "a place parallel to that filled by . . . God in traditionally religious persons."
10. The test under Title VII's definition of religion is whether the beliefs are, in the individual's "own scheme of things, religious."

11. Although the employee's religious belief must be sincerely held, courts are extremely reluctant to question the reasonableness of the belief. *Frazee v Illinois Dept of Employment Services*, US Supreme Court 489 US 829 (1989)
12. Some Courts have recognized beliefs that are purely moral or ethical as long as they are held with the strength of religious convictions.
13. The employer or educational institution must exercise consistency in their review process to avoid claims of bias or discrimination.