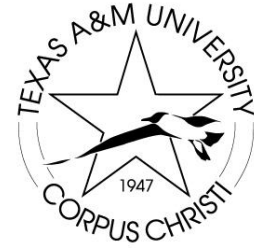


08.01.01.C1.04 Requests for Religious Accommodations



Approved: September 27, 2016
Next Scheduled Review: September 27, 2021

Procedure Statement

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is committed to diversity, nondiscrimination and inclusiveness, and to supporting its community regardless of religious beliefs or practices, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations.

Reason for Procedure

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi recognizes the importance of its employees' individually held religious beliefs and practices. The University will reasonably accommodate an employee's or applicant's sincerely held religious beliefs and practices in the workplace as set forth in this procedure, unless the accommodation creates an undue hardship for the university. Reasonable accommodation applies not only to schedule changes or leave for religious observances, but also to such things as diet, dress/garb or grooming practices that an employee/applicant has for religious reasons.

Procedures and Responsibilities

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), as amended, protects employees and applicants for employment from discrimination based on various protected categories, including religion. This includes disparate treatment, job segregation, and harassment based on religious belief or practices (or lack thereof), as well as retaliation for the exercise of Title VII rights. Further, Title VII requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations of sincerely held religious beliefs, observances, and practices when requested, unless the accommodation would impose an undue hardship on business operations. Examples of undue hardship include the lack of necessary staffing, jeopardizing security or health, or costing more than a minimal amount.

Employees/applicants should confer fully and promptly with the supervisor if a religious accommodation is needed in the workplace.

1. EMPLOYEE/APPLICANT:

1.1 Individuals requesting a religious accommodation should submit their request in

writing to the supervisor or department chair. If the request involves a scheduling change, it should be submitted at least 10 (ten) work days in advance of the event/change. The request should indicate what is being sought and for what religious purpose.

1.2 Employees/applicants have the responsibility to provide sufficient information about the tenets of the religious practice or belief to permit the university to make a reasonable assessment of whether the request is based on a sincerely held religious belief.

2. SUPERVISOR/DEPARTMENT CHAIR:

2.1 Once an accommodation request is received, supervisors and department chairs shall discuss the basis of the request with the employee or applicant and make a reasonable assessment of whether or not the request is based on a sincerely held religious belief, the conflict between that belief and job duties or work environment, and whether granting the accommodation would pose more than a minimal burden on the university's business. The university is not required to provide an employee's or applicant's preferred accommodation if there is more than one effective option.

2.2 The supervisor or department chair may discuss the request with the Director of Employee Development and Compliance Services (EDCS), and, if appropriate, with the Director of Environmental Health & Safety (EHS). No request for an accommodation may be denied by a supervisor or department chair without prior review by the EDCS Director or designee. In some circumstances, the supervisor or department chair may offer a temporary modification of job duties or work environment while a permanent accommodation is under consideration. If the request is denied, the supervisor will explain to the employee or applicant why the proposed accommodation was not approved and what, if any, appeal rights they may have.

2.3 The supervisor or department chair will inform the employee/applicant and the EDCS Director in writing of the request determination within 7 (seven) working days of the request, unless circumstances warrant an extension of time.

2.4 While supervisors are also permitted to engage in certain religious expression, they should avoid situations that, due to their supervisory authority, could reasonably be perceived by subordinates as coercive, even when not so intended.

3. TRAINING/EDUCATION/INFORMATION

Information regarding this procedure will be provided in the Faculty Handbook, on the university website, and during appropriate staff and faculty orientations and department meetings. EDCS will provide managers and supervisors with training on how to recognize religious accommodation requests as part of regular supervisor training & orientations.

4. MONITORING/COMPLIANCE REVIEW

EDCS will document and track information about religious accommodation requests to ensure requests are being treated in a consistent manner, to evaluate the university's performance in responding to requests, and to implement measures to improve performance where necessary.

EDCS will also provide a report of the number and type of religious accommodation requests received and processed, and any systemic issues/concerns identified, to the President's Cabinet no less than once a year.

Related Statutes, Policies or Requirements

[TAMU System Policy, 08.01 Civil Rights Protection and Compliance](#)

[TAMU System Regulation, 08.01.01 Civil Rights Compliance](#)

[TAMUCC University Rule 08.01.01.C1 Civil Rights Compliance](#)

Contact Office

Contact for interpretation and clarification: Employee Development & Compliance Services
Department
(361) 825-5826