

---

## Religious Discrimination In The Workplace

In 1620, a vessel known as the Mayflower departed England and reached the shores of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. The passengers aboard the Mayflower, everyday people, took part in the 66 day voyage in hopes of reaching a land free of religious persecution. Their goal was ultimately achieved and their legacy has become a monumental part of American History, even cementing itself into the first amendment of the American Constitution. Today, nearly 400 years later it has appeared that those fundamental rules established by our founding fathers have been becoming increasingly blurred over time. This can be in part credited to changing social climates due to past events that have been carried out in the name of religion. There are countless religions across the globe which carry a unique culture with them. Many times these cultures greatly differ the norms of American Culture, this in turn, creates a bigger gap between those of different beliefs. Unfortunately this gap can pave the way for discrimination in many aspects of life, but most importantly, in the workplace.

Religion is a particular system of faith and worship. It is our belief system that helps us in making any decisions in our everyday whether they are insignificant ones or the life changing ones. It is what we base our morals and ethics upon. How we gather what is right from wrong. With that being said no employee should be negatively impacted because of their religion or spiritual practices. No two humans are the same, so the expectation that everyone must have the same belief system is very absurd. Diversity exists in many aspects of life. It's been shown to improve retention and reduce the costs associated with employee turnover. Employees are more likely to remain loyal when they feel respected and valued for their unique contribution.

Unfortunately we do not live in a perfect world, religious discrimination will inevitably occur in the workplace at some extent. When this issue arises it is up to management to confront the problem head on. Of course the most effective method of prevention is to stop it before it happens. According to the U.S Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, it is paramount for employers to have an anti-harassment policy that is "well-publicized and consistently applied" and goes in depth into what is considered harassment or discrimination also outlines the steps that should be taken when to make management aware of the issue. If the correct steps are taken by a company's management team to make their harassment and discrimination policies clear to their employees, the amount of incidents that would occur would most likely become reduced due to awareness of what is actually considered discrimination as well as highlighting how to bring said discrimination to light. The EEOC also outlines best practices for employers to accommodate different for religions. These include practices that should be mandatory in all institutions such as "training managers and supervisors on how to recognize religious accommodation requests from employees" and "individually assess each request and avoid assumptions or stereotypes about what constitutes a religious belief or practice or what type of accommodation is appropriate". Better accommodation would lead to less discrimination due to better acceptance.

Free agencies are required to provide workplace accommodations unless it would create an undue hardship. An individual who needs an accommodation for religious purposes, must make it clear to the employer and the employer must accommodate as long as it does not create an undue hardship. There are a few religions that require an individual to pray multiple times a day.

---

For someone who has a job that their only break is lunch, it could be very difficult for them to practice their religion and have it not interfere with their job. A reasonable accommodation would be to let your employee take a few minutes (whenever needed) to practice their faith. Title VII holds an employer to a lawful standard for religious accommodations. An employer also does have some rights at hand also. For example, if you need to pray at noon every single day, but your job requires you to hold a press conference at noon everyday, an employer is not required to make an accommodation if it interferes with your ability to do the job you applied to do.

In conclusion, religious diversity in the workplace is very important as accepting and respecting the different beliefs of others.

eduzaurus.com