



## SUGGESTIONS FOR COMPILING A RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION LETTER

*The guideline notes were written from a consultation meeting between a group of healthcare workers and an attorney.*

### **A religious exemption letter must be:**

- 1 – RELIGIOUS IN NATURE
- 2 – EXPRESS A SINCERELY HELD BELIEF

Medical beliefs **ARE NOT** religious beliefs. Do not put anything about harm in your letter because that is not a protected belief. The **ONLY** belief that is protected is religious.

In your letter, you are **not required** to list your specific religious affiliation. You can state that you are a Christian, but to go into more detail might be detrimental to getting the approval. It is not recommended to list that you are Catholic as the Pope is now urging people to get the Covid shot “as an act of love.”

The belief in your letter only need be present belief. If you have had the flu vaccine in the past, you can still qualify for a religious exemption for the COVID shot and future vaccines if it is a current belief. It is not recommended that if your religious exemption is granted by your employer for the COVID shot, that you take any further vaccines (ie., flu) as this would send a mixed message to your employer.

### **Any of these beliefs will NOT be exempted:**

- **Medical**
- **Philosophical**
- **Political**
- **Healthy lifestyle**

Suggested bible verses that can be used in your letter to support “deeply held religious belief.”

**Genesis 1:27**

**Genesis 1:31**

**John 14:15**

**1 Corinthians 3:16-17**

**Philippians 4:6**

### **Example excerpt from letter that was approved**

Because I believe in God and His word and the principles laid out by him, I have a deeply held belief that vaccines violate these principles. I believe my body is a temple for the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:16-17: “Don’t you know that you are God’s sanctuary and that the Spirit of God lives in you? If anyone ruins God’s sanctuary, God will ruin him; for God’s sanctuary is holy, and that is what you are.”

***(Do not copy this word for word. If you copy it word for word, it is not your sincerely held belief, your employer will know it has been copied and your letter will most likely not be accepted.)***

### **To sum things up, your letter needs to contain 3 things:**

1. Statement of belief that is religious and sincerely held. (Everyone’s letter must be their own individual thoughts and sincerely held beliefs. If you plagiarize, your letter will most likely be rejected).
2. State how the vaccine goes against that belief
3. Conclusion statement: Therefore, I cannot vaccinate.

## Additional Thoughts

Your employer may interview you. If they do, they will probably ask you about vaccine harm. Do not fall for it. Remember, this is about your sincerely held religious belief. Do not voice anything outside of that scope.

If you are asked to attend an interview about your sincerely held religious beliefs and/or are asked to provide your vaccine history, submit a complaint to the Missouri Human Rights Commission. You may want to comply with the request to attend the interview, so your exemption has a better chance of being approved, but still file the complaint.

If you are not granted an exemption, ask in writing for the reason for the denial and appeal it. File as many appeals as you can until the exemption, ask in writing for the reason for the denial and appeal it. **File a complaint with Missouri human Rights Commission at (573) 751-3325.**

**[www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights/](http://www.labor.mo.gov/mohumanrights/)**

They can file for you with the EEOC

If your religious exemption is not approved, don't quit. Make them fire you. That gives you a better chance of getting unemployment and gives you standing for any potential future lawsuits.

## Other Resources

This website provides various letter templates for different situations: <https://dougbillings.us/karen-kings-ton/#LetterTemplates>

Provides research and information based on publicly available sources that you can use to write a letter or with which to seek the assistance of legal counsel: <https://defendingtherepublicpac.com/covid>

