

Religious Accommodations in the Workplace

I. PURPOSE

Goucher College is committed to supporting equality of opportunity for all employees, student employees, and applicants for employment by affirming the inclusiveness of our community. This commitment includes embracing religious diversity. As part of this commitment, the college will make good faith efforts to provide reasonable accommodation of an employee's or applicant's sincerely held religious belief.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees of the College, including staff, faculty, and student workers. It also applies to applicants for employment.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

A reasonable religious accommodation is a change in the work environment or in the way tasks or responsibilities are customarily performed that enables an applicant for employment or employee to participate in their religious practice or belief without undue hardship to the conduct of Goucher College's business or operations. Goucher intends to adhere to all applicable federal and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable religious accommodations in the workplace.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Applicants for Employment

The Office of Human Resources will work with applicants for employment who may need a religious accommodation in order to participate in the selection process. Applicants will need to specify the accommodation request; describe their religious practice or belief and state how this accommodation enables them to participate in the application process; and identify if there are other accommodation options that might address their needs. Any information that applicants provide will be treated confidentially and maintained separately from application materials.

B. Employees

1. Submission of request for accommodation

An employee whose sincerely held religious beliefs or practices conflict with their work schedule, college policy or practice, or with other aspects of employment, and who seeks a religious accommodation, must complete and submit a [Religious Accommodation Request Form](#) to the Office of Human Resources.

2. Consideration of request

Upon receipt of the employee's request for a religious accommodation, the Office of Human Resources will engage in an interactive process with the employee in order to determine a reasonable accommodation. The Office of Human Resources will consult with the department supervisor and may consult with other offices, such as the Office of the Chaplain, as necessary. What constitutes a reasonable religious accommodation will be determined on a case-by-case basis, utilizing input from the employee and the supervisor. The Office of Human Resources is responsible for documenting all religious accommodation requests, as well as proposed alternative accommodations and implemented accommodations.

The College is not required to provide a reasonable accommodation if providing the accommodation would impose undue hardship to the College. An accommodation would create an undue hardship to the College if the accommodation diminishes efficiency in other jobs, infringes on other employees' or students' rights or benefits, impairs workplace safety, or causes co-workers to carry the accommodated employee's share of potentially hazardous or burdensome work. Factors that will be considered in making this determination include the nature of the accommodation requested, the duration of the request, alternative accommodations, the financial impact of granting the accommodations, the impact on the operation of the department or unit, and the ability of the individual to perform essential functions of the position if the accommodation is granted. The Office of Human Resources will consult with outside the Legal Counsel before denying a request for a religious accommodation.

3. Supervisor responsibilities.

Supervisors are responsible for notifying the Office of Human Resources of any request for a religious accommodation brought to their attention. If the employee has not requested an accommodation and the supervisor believes that the employee may need an accommodation, the supervisor should share this information with the Office of Human Resources.

Supervisors are not authorized to grant or deny accommodation requests, but will be included in conversations about the reasonableness of granting the requested accommodation.

Once a reasonable religious accommodation has been agreed upon as noted above, supervisors are responsible for implementing the accommodation. Supervisors are also responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of the accommodation, in consultation with the employee and the Office of Human Resources.

4. Denial of requested accommodation

An individual dissatisfied with the resolution of a reasonable accommodation request can ask the Associate Vice President of Human Resources to reconsider that decision. An individual must request reconsideration within ten (10) business days of receiving the final decision on the employee's accommodation request.

If the employee or applicant believes they may have a claim under the College's [Nondiscrimination Policy](#) they should contact the College's [Title IX Coordinator](#).

5. No Retaliation

No person who has requested a religious accommodation shall be subject to intimidation, threats, coercion, or discrimination for requesting such accommodation. Complaints of such retaliation or interference may be filed and processed under the College's [Nondiscrimination Policy](#).

V. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE

Questions about this policy should be addressed to the [Office of Human Resources](#).

VI. HISTORY

Adopted April 2016.

Updated October 2019; June 2024.