



# U.S. MERIT SYSTEMS PROTECTION BOARD

Office of Equal Employment Opportunity  
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## REQUEST FOR A RELIGIOUS EXCEPTION TO THE COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENT

Government-wide policy requires all Federal employees as defined in 5 U.S.C. § 2105 to be vaccinated against COVID-19, with exceptions only as required by law. In certain circumstances, Federal law may entitle a Federal employee who has a religious objection to the COVID-19 vaccination requirement to an exception from that requirement, in which case the employee would instead comply with alternative health and safety protocols. The Federal Government is committed to respecting the important legal protections for religious liberty.

In order to request a religious exception, please fill out this form and attach a separate document with your responses to the questions below. The purpose of this form is to start the accommodation process and help the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) determine whether you may be eligible for a religious exception. You do not need to answer every question on the form to be considered for a religious exception, but we encourage you to provide as much information as possible to enable MSPB to evaluate your request. Where there is an objective basis to do so, MSPB may ask you for additional information as needed to determine if you are legally entitled to an exception. Objections to COVID-19 vaccinations that are based on non-religious reasons, including personal preferences or non-religious concerns about the vaccine, do not qualify for a religious exception.

Agencies may consider several factors in assessing whether a request for an exception is based on a sincerely held religious belief, including whether the employee has acted in a manner inconsistent with their professed belief. But no one factor is determinative. An individual's beliefs—or degree of adherence—may change over time and, therefore, an employee's newly adopted or inconsistently observed practices may nevertheless be based on a sincerely held religious belief. All requests for a religious exception will be evaluated on an individual basis.

Signing this form constitutes a declaration that the information you provide is, to the best of your knowledge and ability, true and correct. Any intentional misrepresentation to the Federal Government may result in legal consequences, including termination or removal from Federal service.

### QUESTIONS:

1. Please describe the nature of your objection to the COVID-19 vaccination requirement.
2. Would complying with the COVID-19 vaccination requirement substantially burden your religious exercise or conflict with your sincerely held religious beliefs, practices, or observances? If so, please explain how.
3. Please provide any additional information that you think may be helpful in reviewing your request. For example:
  - How long have you held the religious belief underlying your objection?
  - Whether your religious objection is to the use of all vaccines, COVID-19 vaccines, a specific type of COVID-19 vaccine, or some other subset of vaccines.
  - Whether you have received vaccines as an adult against any other diseases (such as a flu vaccine or a tetanus vaccine).

I declare to the best of my knowledge and ability that the foregoing is true and correct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Privacy Act Statement**

**Authority:** Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. chapters 11 and 79, and in discharging the functions directed under Executive Order 14043, "Requiring Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination for Federal Employees" (Sept. 9, 2021), we are authorized to collect this information. The authority for the system of records notice (SORN) associated with this collection of information, [MSPB-3 Reasonable Accommodations SORN, 86 Fed. Reg. 73001 \(Dec. 23, 2021\)](#), also includes 5 U.S.C. chapters 33 and 63. The authority for this form is also derived from Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000e; 29 C.F.R. 1605 (Guidelines on Discrimination Because of Religion).

**Purpose:** The purpose of this system of records is to allow the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB) to collect and maintain records on applicants for employment and employees who request or receive reasonable accommodations or other appropriate modifications from MSPB for religious reasons; to process, evaluate, and make decisions on individual requests; to track and report the processing of such requests to comply with applicable requirements in law, regulation, and policy; and to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided in support of the accommodation. This information is being collected and maintained to promote the safety of Federal workplaces and the Federal workforce consistent with the above-referenced authorities, Executive Order 13991, "Protecting the Federal Workforce and Requiring Mask-Wearing" (Jan. 20, 2021), and guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.

**Routine Uses:** While the information requested is intended to be used primarily for internal purposes, in certain circumstances it may be necessary to disclose this information externally, for example to disclose information to: a Federal, State, or local agency to the extent necessary to comply with laws governing reporting of communicable disease or other laws concerning health and safety in the work environment; to adjudicative bodies, arbitrators, and hearing examiners to the extent necessary to carry out their authorized duties regarding Federal employment; to contractors, grantees, or volunteers as necessary to perform their duties for the Federal Government; to other agencies, courts, and persons as necessary and relevant in the course of litigation, and as necessary and in accordance with requirements for law enforcement; or to a person authorized to act on your behalf. A complete list of the routine uses can be found in the SORN associated with this collection of information.

**Consequence of Failure to Provide Information:** Providing this information is voluntary. Failure to provide this information may delay or impede the processing of this reasonable accommodation request. Moreover, without an approved reasonable accommodation request, failure to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination may result in disciplinary measures, up to and including removal from Federal service, based on the requirements of Executive Order 14043, "Requiring Coronavirus Disease 2019 Vaccination for Federal Employees" (Sept. 9, 2021).

## **Burden Statement**

Public reporting burden for this data collection is estimated to vary from 10 minutes to 1 hour, with an average of 60 minutes per response. The burden estimate includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and submitting this form. You are not required to respond to this collection of information unless a valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number is displayed on this form. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of the collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Office of the Clerk of the Board, Merit Systems Protection Board, 1615 M Street, NW, Washington, DC 20419; by fax to 202-653-7130; or by e-mail to [mspb@mspb.gov](mailto:mspb@mspb.gov).