

Religion and Belief Policy

HR17

Date Written	
Author(s)	
Version	
Date Signed Off	
Reviewed by	

Date: []

Review Data

Initial Production

Name	Role/Department	RACI	Date

R = Responsible for writing the policy; **A** = Accountable; **C** = Consulted; **I** = Informed

Change History

Version	Date	Details of Change	Author

Emergency Contact Details

Name	Email	Mobile

CQC Fundamental Standards

Regulation Number	Regulation Details
Regulation 10: Dignity and respect	People using services must not be discriminated against in any way and the provider must take account of protected characteristics, set out in the Equality Act 2010.
Regulation 13: Safeguarding service users from abuse and improper treatment	Staff must understand their individual responsibilities in preventing discrimination in relation to the protected characteristics set out in s.4 of the Equality Act 2010.

Key Lines of Enquiry

KLOE	How this applies to Religion and Belief
Responsive	Tailoring service delivery to the individual needs of service users, including those in relation to religion and belief, demonstrates that we are responsive.
Well led	Voting equality and diversity as well as old in community links with different faith groups is part of being a well led organization.

Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- HR03 - Bullying and Harassment Policy
- CP02 - Care Planning Policy
- HR10 - Equality and Diversity Policy

Policy Statement



Policy Aim

Many religions and beliefs are represented in our multi-cultural society and Careville Ltd recognises that workers may wish to observe the requirements of their chosen religion or belief system while at work.

Careville Ltd aims to ensure a fair and consistent approach in the management of such requests so that no worker is discriminated against on the basis of his or her religion, belief, or absence of religion or belief. This policy applies in the workplace and at all events that are work related.

General Considerations

While Careville Ltd aims to be sensitive to the needs of its workers, workers also have a responsibility to ensure that their manager is aware, in good time, of their individual needs to meet the requirements of their belief or religion. This will ensure that there is ample opportunity for those needs to be considered and for the appropriate actions to be taken (where practicable).

Although Careville Ltd will take reasonable steps to try to accommodate requests, workers must understand that they have a responsibility to be reasonable when asking for time off or for other work adjustments to facilitate their religious observance so that Careville Ltd and colleagues are not unduly inconvenienced.



Key Question: Do we get time off for Religious Festivals or Worship?

Time off for religious festivals should be taken as a part of the normal annual holiday entitlement or, with management's agreement, as unpaid leave. Requests for time off should be made in writing to the manager, ideally giving at least 4 weeks' notice. Where the date(s) required is (are) known in advance, workers should aim to provide as much notice as is reasonably practicable. Priority will be given to requests on a "first-come, first-served" basis. Requests will be considered individually and where there is a high level of demand for time off in an area of the business, requests will be treated fairly and equitably. In all cases, requests will be balanced with organizational needs to ensure that the operation of the care service remains unaffected.

Any workers requiring a permanent change to their regular pattern of hours as a result of a religious observance requirement should discuss this with their manager, who will assess if it is possible to alter the hours of work while continuing to meet the needs of Careville Ltd.

However, in attempting to meet a worker's request for time off to observe a particular practice or festival of a religion or belief, Careville Ltd will also ensure that it does not disadvantage those employees who do not hold any specific religion or belief.

Fasting, Prayers and Other Religious Obligations

Some religions require their followers to pray at specific times during the day. Should workers request access to an appropriate quiet place to undertake their religious observances, then providing that such a quiet place is available, and allowing its use for prayer does not cause problems for other workers or the business, the manager will consider the request sympathetically.

Workers can request that their rest breaks coincide with their religious obligations to pray at certain times of the day. Careville Ltd will endeavor to accommodate such requests. However, a manager can refuse such a request if, for example, it conflicts with legitimate business needs which cannot be met in any other way.

Some religions or beliefs require extended periods of fasting, for example during Ramadan it is obligatory for Muslims to refrain from eating and drinking (even water) during the hours between dawn and sunset. Should workers feel that they need support during such a period, they should inform their manager who will then consider how best to provide the necessary support. However, all decisions will take into account the needs of Careville Ltd to ensure that unreasonable extra burdens are not placed on other workers, as this may cause conflict or give rise to claims of discrimination.

Managers should consider how they can best provide support to Muslim workers during periods of fasting such as Ramadan. For example, they should, following consultation with their staff, consider:

- allowing flexibility in start and finish times to accommodate Muslim employees who wish to eat at sunset
- allowing staff to swap shifts or rotas if they wish
- allowing staff to use flexi-time to work shorter hours
- permitting employees who wish it to take a shorter lunch break in return for an earlier finishing time (but not less than 20 minutes as this is the minimum break required by the Working Time Regulations 1998 whenever the working day lasts six hours or more)
- adjusting the timing of breaks so that employees who are fasting can take a break at sunset in order to eat
- refraining from arranging any important events, e.g. training courses or conferences, during Ramadan (as employees who are fasting will lack energy in the afternoons)

Dietary Requirements

Some religions or beliefs have specific dietary requirements. If workers bring food into the workplace, they may need to store and heat food separately from other food. Should such an issue arise, the manager will consult with all staff concerned to try to ensure a solution is found. This may be as simple as using plastic containers for the food in a shared fridge.

Careville Ltd will ensure that, at all work-related social gatherings where alcohol is available, non-alcoholic alternatives are available.

If food is provided by Careville Ltd for the workers as part of a workplace event, it is the responsibility of the worker to inform the manager in good time of any dietary requirements, and to co-operate in suggesting reasonable suitable alternatives.

Personal Appearance and Dress

Should workers feel that the dress code in place in their workplace conflicts with the dress requirements of their religion, they should raise the issue with the manager. The manager and the worker will together investigate possible adjustments in order to accommodate the dress requirements of the worker's religion or belief. However, such adjustments need to be made in a manner that is compatible with the requirements of the business and that ensures the health and safety of workers.

Some religions require their followers to wear particular jewellery, headwear or other apparel. While the manager will consider each request sympathetically, the needs of Careville Ltd must also be considered and the requirements of health and safety legislation will need to take priority.

Harassment and Victimisation

Careville Ltd will not tolerate any form of harassment or victimisation of its workers on the grounds of their religion or belief, the religion or belief of anyone with whom they associate, or the absence of a religion or belief.

Whilst all workers have the right to hold religious and other beliefs, it is not permitted for a worker to seek to impose his or her religious beliefs on other workers (or on service users), or to seek to persuade colleagues (or any other person) to convert to their religion.

Raising Issues Related to this Policy

If workers are dissatisfied about any arrangements made (or denied) to accommodate a request under this policy, and they would like the matter to be investigated further, the matter should be raised using Careville Ltd's grievance procedure.

Workers should also use the grievance procedure if they feel that they have been discriminated against, harassed or victimised in any way.



Key Points

- While Careville Ltd aims to be sensitive to the needs of its workers, workers also have a responsibility to ensure that their manager is aware, in good time, of their individual needs to meet the requirements of their belief or religion.
- Time off for religious festivals should be taken as a part of the normal annual holiday entitlement or, with management's agreement, as unpaid leave.
- Workers can request that their rest breaks coincide with their religious obligations to pray at certain times of the day. Careville Ltd will endeavor to accommodate such requests. However, a manager can refuse such a request if, for example, it conflicts with legitimate business needs which cannot be met in any other way.
- Should workers feel that the dress code in place in their workplace conflicts with the dress requirements of their religion, they should raise the issue with the manager.
- Careville Ltd will not tolerate any form of harassment or victimization of its workers on the grounds of their religion or belief.

Authorisation and Signature

This Policy is the authorised version agreed by the Directors of Careville Ltd. All employees are expected to follow this policy and failure to do so could result in disciplinary action.

Director's Signature

Director