

A Template for the “Request for a Religious Exemption to the COVID-19 Vaccination” DD Form 3177 for Military Personnel



Below is a guide with suggestions and sample answers to help you complete your COVID vaccine religious exemption request using the Department of Defense “[DD 3177 Religious Exemption Form](#)” – along with notes to help you avoid the obvious “pitfalls” weaved into this document to undermine your ability to obtain a religious exemption.

Questions #1-7: Basic Information

Questions 1 – 7 require that you fill in your basic information. Once you’ve done so, proceed to question 8.

Question #8: Please describe the religious belief, practice or observance that is the basis of your request for a religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement.

State the religious belief, practice or observance that forms the basis of your request. Does your objection to COVID vaccines stem from your beliefs as a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or participant of another religion? If so, you'll provide that information here.

Do not list your denomination, get political, talk about your philosophical objections or discuss medical reasons for wanting to avoid the COVID vaccine. These things are irrelevant and leave your argument open to religious interpretation – as there will always be someone higher within your denomination the evaluator could point to in an effort to undermine your position. If your objection is based on anything philosophical, you will be denied. If your argument is based on a medical objection, then you should request a medical exemption.

Here's a sample answer:

“Complying with the COVID-19 vaccination requirement would violate my sincerely held religious beliefs as a Christian [or insert other religion] and my rights affirmed by the [Religious Freedom Restoration Act \(RFRA\) of 1993](#) and First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.”

Question #9: Please describe when and how you came to hold the religious belief or observe the religious practice.

Write a few sentences about how you came to your faith (i.e. religious belief or practice underlying your request), and when you adopted your religious objections to COVID vaccines. You may be asked to provide clarification in a later question if you have been vaccinated since coming to your faith.

If this happens, here's a sample response:

"I became a Christian [insert length of time] years ago and have been vaccinated since, but that's because I did not realize aborted fetal ingredients were used in the research, development and manufacturing of COVID vaccines. Once I realized this, I had a biblical obligation to abstain from putting any substance in my body that supports such a practice."

(If you're a Christian, include references to Bible verses that talk about the obligation to abstain from evil, such as 1 Thessalonians 5:22 or James 4:17.)

Question #10: Please describe how you have demonstrated the religious belief or observed the religious practice in the past.

Answers to this question will vary for each individual. In your answer, you may state that you've always held the beliefs that underly your religious objection to vaccines, or you became Christian in [insert year here] and have adhered to a

biblical worldview since.

Maybe you've always been of a particular faith, but weren't aware of how vaccines are researched, manufactured and developed using [aborted fetal cell lines](#) – and now that you are, you have an obligation to abstain from such practice (see question #9).

Perhaps you've always requested religious exemptions for vaccines, in which case you would say your request for a religious exemption to COVID vaccines is consistent with the sincerely held religious beliefs underlying your past religious exemption requests for other vaccines.

Question #11: Please explain how the COVID-19 vaccines conflict with your religious belief, practice, or observance.

There are several ways you could answer this question. Your objections could center around aborted fetal cell lines and your pro-life position, mRNA/adenovirus vector technology, contamination issues surrounding vaccines, effects on human DNA or the Bible verse that says the body is a temple to the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

If you've received vaccines in the past while in the military, you will have to differentiate the COVID vaccine from other vaccines you received in the past. The best way to do this is to focus the exemption around the mRNA and adenovirus technologies that are used with COVID vaccines (but not other vaccines required by the military); and/or the argument that you weren't aware of the role aborted babies played in vaccine research, development or manufacturing. (Include more than one conflict if you can.)

For example:

“COVID vaccines subject to [insert name of entity mandating vaccine]’s vaccine mandate, as well as the existence of the fetal tissue industry, are contrary to my religious tenets and practices. Each of the currently available vaccines in question used [multiple cell lines from aborted fetuses](#), including HEK-293, PER.C6, and/or MRC-5 fetal cell lines in the research, manufacturing and/or development of their vaccines. In addition, numerous aborted fetuses were used in the process of obtaining the established cell lines.”

You can choose to include support for your beliefs in response to this question. For example, if you’re a Christian and are using an aborted fetal ingredient argument, you could cite the following verses:

Thou shalt not murder (Exodus 20:13 and Deuteronomy 5:13). Children are recognized from God at the point of conception (Genesis 4:1, Genesis 17, and Jeremiah 1:5), are knit together by God in the womb (Psalm 139:13-16, Psalm 22:10-11, and Galatians 1:15), are blessings from God (Genesis 1:28, Genesis 4:1, Psalms 127:3, and Psalms 113:7-9), are valued and loved (Matthew 18:1-14 and 19:13-15), are created in His image (Genesis 1:27), and their killing is condemned (Psalm 106:35 and Psalm 37-38). The prophet Amos condemns the Ammonites because they “ripped open expectant mothers in Gilead” (Amos 1:13), child-killing was one of the major reasons that God’s anger burned against the Kingdom of Israel bringing about their destruction and exile (2 Kings 17:17-18), Christians are to abstain from every form of evil (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

Question #12: Have you previously

raised an objection to vaccination, medical treatment or medicine based on a religious belief or practice?

Check “yes” if you’ve previously requested a vaccine exemption in the past. Check “no” if you haven’t.

Question #12a: If yes, please provide a description of the circumstances, timing and resolution of the matter.

The goal of this question is to determine whether you’ve had a religious exemption denied in the past and whether your beliefs are sincerely held. If you’ve previously requested a vaccine exemption or accommodation in the past, simply list the dates/years you requested exemptions and that they were previously approved.

If you’ve requested vaccine exemptions in the past that were denied, state so honestly, but explain any discrepancy, for example:

“I did request a religious exemption in the past and it was subsequently denied for reasons that were not given to me (or for the following reasons...); however, I have since adopted beliefs which are clarified in this document, that I believe afford me the legal right to an exemption.”

Question #12b: If no, please provide an explanation as to why

your objection is limited to the particular COVID-19 vaccines.

If you've received vaccines in the past while in the military, you will have to differentiate the COVID vaccine from other vaccines you received in the past and explain this discrepancy. The best way to do this is to focus the exemption around the mRNA and adenovirus technologies that are used with COVID vaccines (but not other vaccines utilized by the military); or the argument that you weren't aware of the role aborted babies played in vaccine research, development or manufacturing. However, there could be other viable arguments one could use here.

Here are a few examples of how to navigate this question:

"COVID vaccines subject to the DoD's vaccine mandate, as well as the existence of the fetal tissue industry, are contrary to my religious tenets and practices. Each of the currently available COVID vaccines in question used [multiple cell lines from aborted fetuses](#), including HEK-293, PER.C6, and/or MRC-5 fetal cell lines in the research, manufacturing and/or development of their vaccines. In addition, numerous aborted fetuses were used in the process of obtaining the established cell lines. As such, I cannot morally or biblically receive a COVID vaccine."

"I was not aware that aborted fetal ingredients were used in the development of other vaccines, and as such, I have a sincerely held belief that prevents me from receiving further doses of those vaccines as well."

"I haven't requested a religious exemption in the past because I haven't needed to in order to maintain my position and/or was not aware of my rights."

"I have only requested a religious exemption in the past for vaccines that, to my knowledge, utilize aborted fetal

ingredients in their research, manufacturing or development.”

Question #13: Please provide any additional information that may be helpful in resolving your request for a religious exemption from the COVID-19 vaccine requirement. You may submit additional documentation in support of this request to your supervisor along with this form.

Submitting additional documentation isn't required, but if you have a chaplain or pastor who's willing to sign a letter attesting to your sincerely held religious beliefs and/or underlying objections to COVID vaccines, you would include it here. For a sample letter your religious leader can sign, please visit The Vault Project [here](#).

Note: This post is for informational purposes only. The Vault Project makes no promises your religious exemption will be approved. If your exemption is not approved, we encourage you to speak with your commanding officer and utilize any methods for appeal.