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INFORMATION PAPER

DACH-SPR
16 September 2021

SUBJECT: Chaplain Reminders Regarding Religious Accommodation Requests

1. Purpose: To provide reminders on the chaplain's role in immunization religious accommodation requests.

2. Recommendations:

a. According to AR 600-20, Appendix P, "Religious Accommodation" the chaplain's role is as follows: "The chaplain must provide a memorandum that summarizes this interview and addresses the religious basis and sincerity of the Soldier's request. The chaplain is not required to recommend approval or disapproval, but may do so."

b. The chaplain has two questions to answer in the religious accommodation request interview:

(1) Is the request religious in nature? (AR 600-20, Appendix P-1, *d.* (2))

(2) Is this a "sincerely held belief" (DoDI 1300.17) and thus a sincere request? (AR 600-20, Appendix P-1, *d.* (2))

c. OCCH recommends that the interviewing chaplain is not the unit chaplain, but one from outside the unit and "determined by the senior chaplain" per AR 600-20, Appendix P-1, *d.* (2).

d. OCCH requests that the chaplain at the GCMCA level forward religious accommodation packets for immunizations to OCCH for situational awareness.

e. Review the Best Practices White Paper and the linked resources in the White Paper on the USACHCS Portal <https://usachcstraining.army.mil/covid-resources>.

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