MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Religious Accommodation

1. REFERENCES:


3. POLICY: This policy provides guidance on approval authority for Religious Accommodation for all organizations within the Maneuver Center of Excellence (MCoE) and Fort Benning, Georgia. There are five categories related to religious accommodation, as listed below:

   a. Category 1: Category 1 requires no request/approval for accommodation. This category is not specifically an accommodation as there are no changes to appearance, uniform, meals, schedule, etc., and is specifically permitted by AR 670-1. An example would be the temple garments worn by Army Service Members belonging to the Latter Day Saints religion. The temple garments aren't seen in uniform, therefore no request/approval is required.

   b. Category 2: Category 2 is a request for meals or alternate Physical Training (PT) accommodations. The Immediate Commander may approve requests if no AR 670-1 waiver is required. An example of this would be a request for halal or kosher meals, or an alternate PT schedule during Ramadan.

   c. Category 3: Category 3 requires the General Court-Martial Convening Authority (GCMCA) approval to exception from AR 670-1 standards. This is for specified waivers for hijabs, beards, and turbans with uncut beard/hair. After approval by the GCMCA, the packet will be returned to the unit, where the S-1 is responsible for ensuring the approved Exception to Policy is uploaded into the Soldier's Army Military Human Resource Record.
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d. Category 4: Category 4 requires Secretary of the Army approval. This category is for all other waivers of Army-wide policies/regulations IAW Army Directive 2018-19 and AR 600-20.

e. Category 5: Category 5 is for medical practices accommodation. This encompasses immunizations and other medical treatment, and requires approval by The Army Surgeon General IAW AR 600-20.

4. SUPERSESSION: This policy memorandum supersedes Policy Memorandum 600-20-4, 19 March 2020, same subject.

5. PROPOSENT: The MCoE Installation EO Office Senior EOA, MSG Brian D Baumgartner, at 706-545-6665.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

5 Encls
1. Template-Soldier Request
2. Template-Chaplain Memo
3. Template-Immediate Commander Recommendation
4. Template-GCMCA Approval/Disapproval
5. Template-Elevation to HQ DA

DISTRIBUTION:
ADMIN-L, MCoE BN CDR, MCoE CSM/SGM, and MCoE DCO Lists
MEMORANDUM FOR Immediate Commander

SUBJECT: Request for Religious Accommodation – Rank, Name, Unit

[Para 1 for Brigade-level request pursuant to AD 2018-19]

1. I request a religious accommodation to wear [a beard] [a beard, turban, and uncut hair] [a hijab] in accordance with the standards provide in Army Directive 2018-19 (Approval, Disapproval, and Elevation of Requests for Religious Accommodation), 8 Nov 2018

Or

[Para 1 for requesting requiring a waiver of AR 670-1]

1. I request a religious accommodation for a waiver of Army Regulation 670-1 standards to (describe the uniform and/or grooming accommodation requested).

2. This request is based on (describe the religious basis for the request).

[Para 3 for Soldier currently serving]

2. or 3. I understand I must continue to comply with the uniform and grooming standards of AR 670-1 for non-accommodated Soldiers unless I am notified that my request is approved. If my request is disapproved, I understand I may continue to serve without an accommodation or I may request administrative separation. I also understand that an approved accommodation continues throughout my Army career, but may be suspended, modified, or revoke by the appropriate authorities when required by military necessity.

3. or 4. The point of contact for this request is the undersigned at (phone and e-mail).

SM’s SIGNATURE BLOCK
MEMORANDUM FOR General Court-Martial Convening Authority (GCMCA)

SUBJECT: Religious Accommodation Chaplain Interview – Requestors Rank, Name, Unit

1. On (Date) I conducted an interview with (requestor) regarding their request for religious accommodation.

   [Use this para 2 for a GCMA-level request pursuant to AD 2018-19]

2. (Requestor’s name) requests a religious accommodation to wear [a board] [a beard, turban, and uncut hair] [a hijab] in accordance with the standards provided in Army Directive 2018-19 (Approval, Disapproval, and Elevation of Requests for Religious Accommodation), 8 Nov 18.

Or

   [Use this para 2 for requesting requiring a waiver of AR 670-1]

2. (Requestor’s name) request a religious accommodation to wear (describe the uniform and/or grooming accommodation requested). This request requires a waiver of Army Regulation 670-1 standards.

3. Address the religious basis for the request.

4. Address sincerity of the request.

5. Recommendation is optional.

6. The point of contact for this request is the undersigned at (phone number and e-mail).

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MEMORANDUM FOR
Intermediate Commander as necessary

FOR GCMA

SUBJECT: Request for Religious Accommodation – Requestors’ Rank, Name, Unit

1. On (Date) I received (requestor’s name) request for a religious accommodation. I provided initial notification to the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1 Command Policy Division on (Date). A copy of the request and supporting documents is enclosed.

[Para 2 for Brigade-level request pursuant to AD 2018-19]

2. (Requestor name) is seeking accommodation to wear [a beard] [a beard, turban, and uncut hair] [a hijab] in accordance with the standards provide in Army Directive 2018-19 (Approval, Disapproval, and Elevation of Requests for Religious Accommodation), 8 Nov 2018.

Or

[Para 2 for requesting requiring a waiver of AR 670-1]

2. (Requestor) is seeking a religious accommodation to wear (describe the uniform and/or grooming accommodation request), this request requires a waiver of Army Regulation 670-1 standards.

3. Chaplain (Name) interviewed (requestor) on (date). A copy of the interview memorandum is attached.

4. I recommend [approval/ disapproval] of the request. [Provide explanation if recommending disapproval. Recommendations for disapproval of GCMCA-level request pursuant AD 2018-19 may only be based on (1) a determination that the request is not based on a sincerely held religious belief or (2) identification of a specific, concrete hazard not otherwise addressing in Army policy that cannot be mitigated by reasonable measures after coordinating with the branch or MOS proponent.

5. The point of contact for this request the undersigned at
MEMORANDUM FOR (Soldier’s Name)

SUBJECT: Decision Regarding Request for Religious Accommodation – (Soldier’s Name)

1. References:

2. I have considered your request for a religious accommodation and the recommendations of your chain of command. I grant your accommodation to wear a beard, wear a turban with or without uncut hair, or wear a hijab, subject to the standards and limitations described below. A copy of this accommodation will be filed in your Army Military Human Resource Record (AMHRR).

3. In observance of your (xxxxx) faith, you may wear a beard, wear a turban with or without uncut hair, or wear a hijab in accordance with Army uniform and grooming standards for Soldiers with approved religious accommodations provided in Army Regulation (AR) 670-1 (Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia).

4. All provision of references 1.a. and 1.b. apply to this accommodation, including that your accommodation continues for your career and may only be suspended, modified or revoked as required by military necessity. References 1.a. and 1.b. will be incorporated into a revision of AR 600-20 (Army Command Policy). Once incorporated, the provisions of AR 600-20 will apply to your accommodation.

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See next page for disapproval template
MEMORANDUM FOR (Soldier's Name)

SUBJECT: Decision Regarding Request for Religious Accommodation – (Soldier’s Name)

1. References:

2. I have considered your request for a religious accommodation and the recommendations of your chain of command. I deny your request for an exception to Army personal appearance and grooming standards, accommodation to wear a beard, wear a turban with or without uncut hair, or wear a hijab, subject to the standards and limitations described below.

3. Because of the Army’s compelling government interest in the Soldier’s health, safety, military readiness, and the good order and discipline of the unit, your request is denied because (identifies a specific hazard that cannot be mitigated by reasonable measures) (may impair the ability to wear protective equipment or impede the ability to operate your assigned weapon, military equipment or machinery) OR Your request is denied because I have determined that you have not demonstrated a sincerely held religious belief.

4. The point of contact is

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MEMORANDUM THRU Commander Name (BDE, BN, or Company?)

FOR Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff (DCS), G-1 Command Policy and Programs Division (DAPE-MPC)

SUBJECT: Elevation of Request for Religious Accommodation – (Soldier's name)

1. I am elevating (Soldier’s name) request to wear [a beard] [a beard, turban, and uncut hair] [a hijab] [other accommodations] in observance of their faith along with the recommendation of the chain of command.

2. The command team recommends [approving/disapproving] (Soldier’s name) request based on [identifies a specific hazard that cannot be mitigated by reasonable measures] [may impair the ability to wear protective equipment or impede the ability to operate your assigned weapon, military equipment, or machinery] OR because it has been determined that (they have or he/she has not) demonstrated a sincerely held religious belief.

3. The point of contact is the undersigned at (phone and e-mail).

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