

## **TEACHING PLAN**

### **ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES WITHIN THE MILITARY SERVICES**

**FOR TRAINING PURPOSES ONLY**

**DO NOT USE ON THE JOB**

*The references cited in this lesson are used for training purposes only and support the training objectives. Trainers must refrain from using non-federal government sources and references, which express opinions or information that do not meet the learning objectives.*

**TABLE OF CHANGES**

CURRICULUM REVISION	COMMNETS
New teaching plan	

## **PART I: SYNOPSIS**

### **OVERVIEW**

In the Armed Forces, it is important to understand and recognize Religious Practices within the Military Services. This lesson will inform personnel on *Human Relations* matters critical to an effective workforce and mission readiness. Specifically, this lesson will enlighten students on DoD Policy for Accommodation of Religious Practices; and Religious Accommodation Procedures. This teaching plan is used in conjunction with the standardized DoD Human Relations training template called, *Accommodation of Religious Practices within the Military Services*. Governing regulation is Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17, Change 1.

### **TEACHING STRATEGY**

One of the most effective strategies for teaching about *Human Relations* issues is Socratic instruction. This strategy is commonly used when teaching about social issues and mainly involves structured *questioning* by the presenter or facilitator. The presentation of this lesson should foster critical thinking, evaluation, and knowledge application in your audience. Socratic questioning should be used as much as possible during the lesson presentation to ensure students understand the content. As you present the material in this lesson consider the following strategies:

1. Provide time for student reflection and thinking. During the presentation, allow students time to consider questions, as well as, their response before requesting them to answer.
2. Avoid yes-no questions (e.g. “Does this make sense to you?”). These types of questions (Polar questions) lead nowhere and do not promote thinking or discussion.
3. Ensure students have a basic understanding of the learning material, as well as, the resources to respond to the questions posed. For the audience to make progress it is important for you (Trainer/Presenter/Facilitator) to understand their levels of knowledge and experience.
4. Employ open-ended and closed questions. Open-ended questions promote critical thinking, while closed questions can focus attention. Always try to ask open-ended questions that encourage your audience to express their thoughts. Questions that begin with “How” and “Why” will give the audience an opportunity to relate themselves to the question.
5. Include clarifying questions, such as, “How does the environment an individual grew up in affect their perspectives on these types of activities?” Be prepared to offer the audience guidance as they reflect on possible answers.
6. Use questions from all levels of thinking. The goal is to help the audience develop higher levels of critical thinking, not just to expand their knowledge and comprehension of the training material.

**Guidance for Instructors:**

- The information presented herein is intended for education and training purposes only and applies solely to the accommodation of religious practices in the Military Services and in no other context.
- Instructors using this Teaching Plan can personalize the training to meet Service needs. However, any changes to the content of the training must be coordinated through the local Military Equal Opportunity office or DEOMI-trained Equal Opportunity Advisor, as well as, the local Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, and approved at the appropriate level in the chain of command. Please refer any questions regarding the template or its contents to your respective Component or Military Service Military Equal Opportunity Office.

**INSTRUCTIONAL METHOD**

Method	Time
• Informal Lecture	
• Socratic Questioning	
<b>Total Time:</b>	
<b>Note:</b> Break times are at the discretion of the Instructor/Facilitator.	

**REFERENCES**

1. Department of Defense Instruction. (2009). *Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services* (DoDI 1300.17). Washington, D.C. (Incorporating Change 1, January 22, 2014)

**INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL**

Locally Developed

**AUDIOVISUAL AIDS AND EQUIPMENT**

Power Point Slide Presentation, computer, Screen, and Audio Speakers

## **TEACHING SYLLABUS**

### **Learning Objective**

The objective of this training is to ensure Service Members understand the policy and procedures regarding the accommodation of religious practices within the military Services. Specifically, students must know:

1. DoD Policy for Accommodation of Religious Practices
2. Religious Accommodation Procedures

## PART II: LESSON

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
<p><i>The references cited in this lesson are used for training purposes only and support the training objective. Referenced material from non-federal government sources may not be used for any purpose other than training.</i></p> <p><i>Unless specifically identified as a Department of Defense or other U.S. government source, DEOMI does not endorse the content of any specific reference material, or the organization that is the source of the material</i></p> <p><i>Reference materials from non-federal sources are included in this material solely to expose students to varying points of view and to generate discussion.</i></p> <p><i>The content of this lesson is designed to increase student knowledge while generating academic discussions and debate. The content of this lesson should not be taken out of context.</i></p>	<p><b>Note: Instructors must refrain from providing their personal opinions throughout this training, and avoid presenting specific solutions as the preferred or recommended way to resolve issues. Instead, instructors should demonstrate how to apply statutory/regulatory guidance, use case-by-case analysis, and evaluate the record of each case as a whole (totality of the circumstances) in presenting the material and answering students' questions.</b></p> <p><b>This training is structured to prepare them to identify individual or organizational behaviors which are contrary to DoD policy and that could be detrimental to mission readiness.</b></p> <p><b>Emphasize to the student that any training, consultation, or advice they give to their command or organization must align to DoD policy and guidance.</b></p> <p><b>Slide #1: Accommodating of Religious Practices Within the Military Services</b></p> <p><b>Attention:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Motivation:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p>

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
<p><b>Objective:</b></p> <p>The objective of this training is to ensure Service Members understand the policy and procedures regarding the accommodation of religious practices within the Military Services.</p>	<p><b>Slide #2: Objective</b></p> <p><b>Guidance for Instructors:</b></p> <p>The information presented herein is intended for education and training purposes only and applies solely to the accommodation of religious practices in the military Services and in no other context.</p>
<p><b>Overview:</b></p> <p>This training will address Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17, <i>Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services</i>, specifically:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DoD Policy for Accommodation of Religious Practices</li> <li>2. Religious Accommodation Procedures</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #3: Overview</b></p>
<p><b>DOD POLICY FOR ACCOMMODATION OF RELIGIOUS PRACTICES</b></p>	<p><b>TIME:</b></p>
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Department of Defense places a high value on the rights of members of the Military Services to observe the tenets of their respective religions, or no religion at all.</li> <li>2. It is DoD policy that requests for accommodation of religious practices should be approved by commanders when accommodation will not have an adverse impact on military necessity to include mission accomplishment, military readiness, unit cohesion, standards, or discipline.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #4: DoD Policy</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b></p> <p>DoDI 1300.17 protects the civil liberties of its personnel and the public to the greatest extent possible, consistent with its military requirements, in accordance with DoD Instruction (DoDI) 1000.29, DoD Civil Liberties Program.</p> <p><b>Lead-off Question (LOQ):</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p>

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
	<b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i>
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Familiarization with religious accommodation policies shall be included in the training curricula for command, judge advocate, chaplain, and other appropriate career fields or assignments</li> <li>2. Applicants for commissioning, enlistment, and reenlistment shall be advised of their Military Department’s specific religious accommodation policies</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #5: DoD Policy (Continued)</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b> These are direct quotes from the Procedures section of DoDI 1300.17.</p>
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The new policy states that military departments <u>will</u> accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs (conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs) of service members unless they have an adverse effect on military readiness, mission accomplishment, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #6: DoD Policy</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b> Unless it could have an adverse impact on military readiness, unit cohesion, and good order and discipline, the <b>Military Departments will accommodate individual expressions of sincerely held beliefs</b> (conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs) of Service members in accordance with the policies and procedures in this instruction.</p> <p>This does not preclude disciplinary or administrative action for conduct by a Service member requesting religious accommodation that is proscribed by Chapter 47 of Title 10, United States Code (the Uniform Code of Military Justice), including actions and speech that threaten good order and discipline.</p>
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Service members submitting requests for accommodation of religious practices will comply with the policy, practice, or duty from which they are requesting accommodation, including refraining from beginning</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #7: DoD Policy</b></p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b> When requests for accommodation are made, the needs of the requesting service member are balanced against the needs of mission accomplishment.</p>



Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
<p>unauthorized grooming and appearance practices, wearing unauthorized apparel, or applying unauthorized body art, unless and until the request is approved.</p>	
<p>2. Because the military is a specialized community within the United States, governed by a discipline separate from that of the rest of society, the importance of uniformity and adhering to standards, of putting unit before self, is more significant and needs to be carefully evaluated when considering each request for accommodation of religious practices. It is particularly important to consider the effect on unit cohesion.</p>	<p><b>Slide #8: DoD Policy (Continued)</b></p> <p>Only if it is determined that the needs of mission accomplishment outweigh the needs of the service member may the request be denied.</p>
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All requests for accommodation of religious practices will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.</li> <li>2. Each request must be considered and based on: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Sincerely held beliefs of the requestor</li> <li>b. its unique facts</li> <li>c. the nature of the requested religious accommodation</li> <li>d. the effect of approval or denial on the service member’s exercise of religion</li> <li>e. and the effect of approval or denial on mission accomplishment, including unit cohesion</li> </ol> </li> </ol> <p><b>Saying, “Yes,” to a request for a religious accommodation can increase individual and family readiness; therefore, supporting mission readiness</b></p>	<p><b>Slide #9: DoD Policy (Continued)</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b> In resolving requests for accommodation of religious practices, careful consideration of the effect, if any, of approval or disapproval on any compelling governmental interest is essential.</p> <p><b>Lead-off Question (LOQ):</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p>

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Immediate commanders may resolve requests for accommodation of religious practices that do not require a waiver of Military Department or Service policies regarding the wearing of military uniforms, the wearing of religious apparel, or grooming, appearance, or body art standards.</li> <li>2. Requests that require a waiver will be forwarded to the respective military department for approval.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #10: DoD Policy</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b> Service members whose requests for accommodation of religious practices are approved will be informed of the specific elements of that approval. Specific elements will include that such approval does not apply for their entire military service commitment and that, at the discretion of the Secretary concerned, new requests for the same accommodation are (may be) necessary upon new assignment, transfer of duty stations, or other significant change in circumstances, including deployment.</p>
<p>➤ <b>DoD Policy: (Continued)</b></p> <p>Service member’s expression of sincerely held beliefs (conscience, moral principles, or religious beliefs) may not be used as the basis of any adverse personnel action, discrimination, or denial of promotion, schooling, training, or assignment.</p>	<p><b>Slide #11: DoD Policy</b></p>
<b>RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURES</b>	<b>TIME:</b>
<p>➤ <b>Accommodation Procedures:</b></p> <p>Military commanders should consider the following factors when determining whether to grant a request:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The importance of military requirements in terms of mission accomplishment, including military readiness, unit cohesion, good order, discipline, health, and safety</li> <li>2. The religious importance of the accommodation to the requester</li> <li>3. The cumulative impact of repeated accommodations of a similar nature</li> <li>4. Alternative means available to meet the requested accommodation</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #12: Accommodation Procedures</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b> The procedures are intended to promote standard procedures for resolving difficult questions involving the accommodation of religious practices.</p> <p>[Note: Be aware that this may set an inaccurate, negative tone with respect to religious accommodation. <b>The intent is to accommodate religious practices to the maximum extent possible</b>].</p> <p>In view of the different mission requirements of each command, individual, case by case consideration of specific requests for accommodation is necessary.</p>

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
<p>5. Previous treatment of the same or similar requests, including treatment of similar requests made for other than religious reasons</p> <p>If a waiver of current Service policy is required to approve a request, the decision authority rests with the Secretary concerned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secretary = Secretary of the Military Department of the individual making the request</li> </ul> <p><b>Lead-off Question (LOQ):</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p>
<p>➤ <b>Accommodation Procedures: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When a request for accommodation is <u>not approved</u>, and continued tension between the unit's requirements and the individual's religious practices is apparent, administrative actions should be considered</li> <li>Based on the needs of the military service, administrative actions that may be considered include assignment, reassignment, reclassification, or separation</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide 13: Accommodation Procedures</b></p> <p>DoDI 1300.17 will be used by the Military Departments in the development of implementing documents on the exercise of command discretion concerning the accommodation of religious practices.</p>
<p>➤ <b>Accommodation Procedures: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Worship practices, holy days, and Sabbath or similar religious observance requests will be accommodated to the extent possible consistent with mission accomplishment</li> <li>Religious beliefs shall be included as a factor for consideration when granting separate rations (meals)</li> <li>Religious beliefs shall be considered as a factor for the waiver of required medical practices, subject to military requirements including medical risks to the unit.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide 14: Accommodation Procedures</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b></p>

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
<p>➤ <b>Accommodation Procedures: (Continued)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Individual Service uniform/grooming implementing regulations are the authority per law, and DoD policy</li> <li>2. Members may wear items of <u>religious apparel</u> while in uniform, except where the items would interfere with the performance of military duties or the item is not neat and conservative</li> <li>3. When evaluating religious accommodation requests regarding <u>grooming</u> (e.g., hair length and styles) and <u>body art</u>, factors to consider include whether approving the accommodation would: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Impair the safe and effective operation of weapons, military equipment, or machinery</li> <li>b. Pose a health or safety hazard to the Service member wearing the religious apparel and/or others</li> <li>c. Interfere with the wear or proper function of special or protective clothing or equipment (e.g., helmets, flak jackets, flight suits, camouflaged uniforms, protective masks, wet suits, and crash and rescue equipment)</li> <li>d. Otherwise impairs the accomplishment of the military mission</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #15: Accommodation Procedures</b></p> <p><b>Additional Information:</b> Religious items or articles not visible or otherwise apparent may be worn with the uniform provided they shall not interfere with the performance of the member’s military duties or interfere with the proper wearing of any authorized article of the uniform.</p> <p>A complete ban on wearing any visible items of religious apparel may be appropriate under circumstances in which the Service member’s duties, the military mission, or the maintenance of discipline require absolute uniformity. For example, members may be prohibited from wearing visible religious apparel while wearing historical or ceremonial uniforms; participating in review formations, parades, honor or color guards, and similar ceremonial details and functions.</p> <p><b>Lead-off Question (LOQ):</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Follow-up Question:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p> <p><b>Anticipated Response:</b> <i>Locally Developed</i></p>
<b>SUMMARY</b>	<b>TIME:</b>
<p>➤ <b>Summary:</b></p> <p>This training addressed the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. DoD Policy for Accommodation of Religious Practices</li> <li>2. Religious Accommodation Procedures</li> </ol>	<p><b>Slide #16: Training Summary</b></p> <p><b>Instructor Note:</b> Summarize the training by asking questions of the participants.</p>

Discussion Point	Instructional Guidance
	<p>Example:</p> <p><b>Question:</b> How can a request for a religious accommodation support mission readiness?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b> It can increase individual and family readiness; therefore, supporting mission readiness</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Department of Defense Instruction. (2009). <i>Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services</i> (DoDI 1300.17). Washington, D.C. (Incorporating Change 1, January 22, 2014).</li> <li>• Department of Defense Instruction. (2012). <i>DoD Civil Liberties Program</i> (DoDI 1000.29).</li> </ul>	<p><b>Slide #17: References &amp; Resources</b></p>