

## **Your Rights**

### **Your Religious Rights at UCSD**

Faculty and Staff Christian Fellowship at UCSD is often asked questions related to understanding religious rights in the workplace. Employees want to know what they are allowed to say, what they are allowed to do, what they may display in their work area and what they may wear on their person.

The information here is an effort by FSCF to connect UCSD employees with resources and experts who provide answers to such questions. As such this is not a specifically "Christian" response to the question. The references provided here refer to rights of any person in any workplace.

Please read the following disclaimer: FSCF is not responsible for any action an employee takes, or any action taken against an employee, based on information provided at this web site. We are a only a UCSD Staff Association of volunteer members. We do our best to help all employees at UCSD figure out answers to their employment questions, but we are not and cannot be responsible for the accuracy of any content on this web site nor the ones to which we refer. The contents of this website do not constitute legal advice. If you are seeking legal advice, you will need to contact an attorney in regard to your legal matter.

Every UCSD employee must resolve all issues including those of any religious nature with their supervisor. If your supervisor has an issue which you dispute, you must resolve the issue through the campus Human Resources department according to campus policies and procedures. Please refer to <http://www-hr.ucsd.edu/%7Eemployeeel/complete.html> for more information on how to resolve any personnel conflicts at UCSD.

Most of the law relating to issues of religion in the workplace stems from Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It would be valuable for all employees to familiarize themselves with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including Title VII. You might begin through the link at <http://www.lc.org/Resources/workplace.htm>.

<http://www.regent.edu/review/issue7/christianrights.html> is a good site through which you may continue to educate yourself on your religious rights in the workplace. There are many simple questions and answers provided at the site which apply to all workplaces. The following questions from the site are synopsized here. Please refer to the above site for thorough explanations and answers to the questions.

### **Can I share the Gospel with co-workers at work?**

Employees may engage in religious speech at work if they are required to do so by sincerely held religious beliefs. The employee must inform the employer of this religious belief (preferably in writing). There may be no actual imposition by the employee on co-workers or disruption by the employee of the work routine.

### **Can I keep my Bible or other religious items at my desk?**

As with witnessing to co-workers, an employee can bring his Bible or other religious items to work and keep them at his desk if he is required to do so by sincerely held religious beliefs.

### **Do I have to work on Sundays if my religion prohibits it?**

Employers must accommodate requests by employees for absence on their Sabbath or other religious holidays in accordance with their sincerely held religious beliefs.

### **Can I go to work dressed in the particular fashion required by my religion?**

Employers must accommodate religious beliefs requiring an employee to dress or groom in a certain manner, unless the rule prohibiting certain religious dressing is justified by a business necessity.

### **Do I have to attend training if it violates my religious convictions?**

An employee cannot be required to attend training that will violate their sincerely held religious beliefs.

### **As a government employee, is all my religious speech at work protected by the First Amendment?**

Religious speech of government employees is protected so long as it does not significantly reduce efficiency in the workplace, and so long as it will not be attributed to the government employer.

### **As a government employee, can I advertise events at my church on the bulletin board at work?**

If a government employer allows employees to post non-work related material around the office, they cannot prohibit the posting of religious material.

Following are some other links which may be useful.

[UCSD Human Resources Department site](#)

[UCSD Policies on Equal Opportunity, Nondiscrimination and Nonharassment](#)

[UCSD Blink Menu Page on Diversity](#)

[Reference site for religious issues in the workplace](#)

[Minnesota site on religious issues in the workplace](#)