



Council on American-Islamic Relations

Washington State Chapter

9594 First Avenue Northeast, Suite 272, Seattle, Washington 98115

info@cairseattle.org 206.367.4081 www.cairseattle.org

October 22, 2012

XXXX

CEO, XXXX

XXXX

Seattle, Washington XXXX

Via U.S. Mail and Email

Re: Request for Religious Accommodations for Employee, Mr. XXXX

Dear Dr. XXXX:

We hope this letter reaches you in the best of health and spirits. We are contacting you on behalf of Mr. XXXX, a member of the American Muslim community and employee with the XXXX ("XXXX") since July 2003. We are requesting adequate and reasonable religious accommodations for Mr. XXXX, who observes religiously mandated prayers at the workplace. Mr. XXXX states that the accommodations currently provided are inadequate, and as a result, Mr. XXXX often skips his mandatory prayers. Mr. XXXX has authorized the Washington State chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations ("CAIR-WA") to contact you on his behalf, in a signed statement enclosed with this letter.

According to Mr. XXXX, there is no designated prayer area for him or other XXXX employees. There is a small quiet area for employees to use, which Mr. XXXX has utilized for prayer in the past. However, this room is very small and Mr. XXXX states that employees often go there to have quiet conversations on their break. Mr. XXXX stated that he has had to skip prayer on multiple occasions because he was waiting for someone else to vacate the quiet room and did not have enough time to complete prayers on his break. Because the room is so small, Mr. XXXX stated that he cannot pray in the room at the same time as female employees, due to his religious beliefs, and thus is often forced to skip prayer.

In late 2011 or early 2012, Mr. XXXX did not have space to pray in the quiet room, so he used the men's locker room to pray. A security guard saw Mr. XXXX praying in the locker room and told Mr. XXXX he could not pray in the locker room.

Devout Muslims believe that they must perform prayer five times each day at specific times of day. Before prayer, Muslims are required to wash their faces, hands, and feet with clean water. This washing is normally performed in a restroom sink. During the act of worship, Muslims stand, bow, and touch the forehead to the ground. Worship may be performed in a quiet, dry, clean place. Other employees should not walk in front of or interrupt the worshiper during prayers. It is this religious practice that Mr. XXXX observes as a practicing Muslim.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 gives an employer the affirmative obligation to accommodate an employee's religious practice after an employee notifies the employer of her/his need for a religious

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

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accommodation, unless it causes them undue hardship. We believe XXXX can provide their employees a designated prayer area without causing undue hardship.

Therefore, we respectfully request that the XXXX provide a designated, nondenominational prayer area on-site for all employees of XXXX. We recognize and appreciate that the XXXX has made attempts to meet this need for accommodations in the past, and welcome the opportunity to work collaboratively to make these accommodations adequate for all employees. We hope you understand that we send our request in a spirit of coöperation rather than hostility. We welcome the opportunity to meet with you and discuss these accommodations in greater detail.

Please do not hesitate to reach me via e-mail at jgist@cair.com or via phone at 206.367.4081. We look forward to your positive reply.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Gist
Civil Rights Coordinator

Enclosure: Signed Information Release Statement

cc: XXXX, President, XXXX
XXXX, Executive Director, XXXX
XXXX, Vice President for Human Resources, XXXX
Mr. S. Arsalan Bukhari, Executive Director, CAIR-WA
Mr. XXXX

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