

The referenced sample requests for non-association are provided for reference ONLY.

DO NOT simply copy them for your own use, as this will weaken the assertion that the objection is your own sincerely based religious objection.

Case 1:

This request was made, and eventually approved with an alternative charity several years prior to 2005. This person claimed no church membership but did claim religious based beliefs.

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REQUEST FOR NON-ASSOCIATION OF THE WFSE UNION ON THE BASIS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND CONSCIENCE

Washington Federation of State Employees
1212 Jefferson Street, Suite 300
Olympia, WA 98501

cc: <company "boss">

cc: <company payroll>

cc: <company HRD>

Membership or financial support of the WFSE union is a direct conflict of my conscience based on religious belief. I am requesting, based on the provision of WAC 391-95-030, an accommodation for the diversion of the equivalent of union dues to a non-religious charity.

While I am not a formal member of any religious organization, my personal religious beliefs are sincere and deeply held. I was raised in a religious home, and attended religious services and training while I was growing up. I attended and have completed confirmation. All of this has helped form basic religious beliefs by which I attempt to guide my life and choices.

At the urging of co-workers, I joined the WFSE. During that time, especially during the "union shop" election, I learned much about the union's motivation, tactics, and actions. I've seen the union work, from the inside out. The union's tactics and actions clarified for me my issues of conscience, and I therefore terminated my membership.

The fundamental issues of life and conscience that I would address here that are in conflict with the union are really quite simple, and are basic principles of most organized religions: fulfill your obligations, act truthfully, and treat others as you would like to be treated.

Fulfill your obligations

James 5:12 says: *“Above all, my brothers, do not swear - not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your ‘Yes’ be yes and your ‘No’ no, or you will be condemned.”* In other words, be a man of your word. Do what you say.

Colossians 3:22-25 says: *“Slaves, obey your earthly master in everything; and do it not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.”*

When I came to work at <xxxxxx>, I entered into an unwritten contract to do a certain job for a certain pay. It is wrong for me to go back on my word and do a lesser job just because I don't think I am being paid enough, or I don't like my work conditions anymore, or I want to show “union power” to my employer.

Talk of “work slowdowns” that I have heard union officers advocate is totally against my conscience.

Act Truthfully

Leviticus 19:11 says: *“Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another”.*

On <date> I went to the WFSE office to terminate my union membership. I spoke with Allen Whitehead. This was before the election was certified. He outright told me that I **could not** terminate my union membership. This was not true.

The union letter dated <date> said: *“You are now a part of the largest state employee union in the State”.* This was not true. The whole intent of the letter was to get people to join the union.

The union letter also said: *“Please remember that you must complete the payroll deduction authorization card”.* This also was not true.

The union letter also made other statements, which read by the average unknowlegable person, would lead them into actions that are not required to fulfill their “union shop” obligation.

These actions by the union itself are in direct conflict my religious ethic "act truthfully". I cannot in good conscience join or financially support an organization who will use these kinds of tactics against members of it's own bargaining unit, those it is supposed to be helping.

Treat others as you would like to be treated

Matthew 7:12 says: "*So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets*". This is one of perhaps the most widely recognized religious principles in the world.

The ASCME Steward Handbook (of which WFSE is an affiliate) has this to say about tactics:

"Power is not only what you have but what the opposition thinks you have"

(Translation: bluff a lot)

"Whenever possible go outside the experience of the opposition"

(Translation: play to their ignorance, and keep them ignorant)

"Ridicule is a most potent weapon"

(Translation: intimidate them)

"The threat is usually more terrifying than the action itself"

(Translation: threaten a lot)

In light of this strategy, it is very understandable why I have seen the actions by the union and union members that I have documented in the previous sections.

But this is not the way I choose to treat others. I expect them to treat me also with respect and fairness. Based on my personal religious convictions, I therefore cannot join the union nor support it financially in any way.

I am therefore proposing as alternative, as provided by the provision of WAC 391-95-030, payment of the equivalent of union dues to the <non-religious charity>. This charity is registered with the State of Washington as a "Human Service" charity. As a show of good faith I have commenced such alternate payments starting this month.

I believe this choice of charity is consistent with the union's often stated goal of "helping the weak and needy".

I believe I have sufficiently documented my genuine sincere religious beliefs and how they are in conflict with union membership or support.

I trust the union will make a reasonable accommodation in this matter.

If not, however, I intend to pursue all legal remedies available to me, including appeal to the Public Employment Relations Commission.

Further, I would note that my rights to religious belief and practice are fundamentally guaranteed to me by the First and Fourteenth amendments of the US Constitution, and by the Washington State Constitution Article I, Section 11 (which guarantees “Absolute freedom of conscience”, subject only to limitations not applicable in this case).

Subservient statutory guarantees include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Washington State RCW 49.60.30. None of these laws require “church membership” or even the concurrence of a religious body with an individual’s personal religious beliefs.

If my employment is terminated or threatened to be terminated because of my religious beliefs, it would be my intent to follow all possible legal remedies, including but not limited to, filing complaints with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and/or the State Human Rights Commission.

I trust that this request will be reasonably approved, and that such actions will not be needed.

I attest that this is a true statement of my sincere beliefs.

Sincerely,

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Cases 2 and 3

These two cases were made in 2005 and were initially denied. They have been resolved under the mediation assistance of the EEOC, both with charities from the “approved” list.

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Washington Federation of State Employees

June xx, 2005

1212 Jefferson Street, Suite 300

Olympia, WA 98501

REQUEST FOR NON-ASSOCIATION OF THE WFSE UNION BASED ON RELIGIOUS BELIEF
AND CONSCIENCE

Membership or financial support of the WFSE union is in direct conflict with my religious beliefs and conscience. I am requesting, based on the provision of WAC391-95-030, an accommodation of the equivalent of union dues to a non-religious charity, <one-of-the-listed-five>.

I have been a member of the <church>, for over <n> years. The local church that I attend is <local church>. My pastor's name is <name>. I support this church with my time, talents and money. One of the fundamental beliefs of my church is that the Bible or Scriptures, including the old and new testaments are the authoritative Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct. The scripture is the authority over me and how I conduct my life, and teaches me that my body is the "Temple of the Holy Spirit." 1 Corinthians 6: 19. This means God lives in me and I must not do anything that would dishonor Him. A Christian's attitudes and actions are to be lived out in every area of life and that includes my employment. Ephesians 6:5-8; "Slaves, obey your masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward every one for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

When I accepted employment here at <employer>, I agreed to an unwritten contract where I would do a certain job for a certain amount of pay. I have done this with my best efforts as a way of honoring and showing respect to my employer. There is no room for "strike", or "work slowdown". As a Christian it is also my responsibility to be honest and fair. Exodus 23:1 tells me, "Do not bear false witness. Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness." Jesus goes on to say in Matthew 7:12: "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets." The union has been deceptive and misleading, and the whole process of becoming a "union shop" is a major example of this. We did not understand what was happening and nothing was really told us about the effort going on to make union membership mandatory. Later on we were told that we would have to join the union or lose our job, which then we understood. However it was too late and it was a "done deal". We have been lied to about what our options were and are. Many still do not know that we now have other charities to select, a decision made May 21st. This choice is still not known by most of us

My rights to religious belief and practice are fundamentally guaranteed to me by the First and Fourteenth amendments of the US Constitution, and by the Washington State Constitution Article 1, Section 11 which guarantees "Absolute freedom of conscience", subject only to limitation not applicable to this case.

I trust that this request will be reasonably approved and that my monies will be directed to <one-of-the-listed-five>. This statement that I am making is a true and sincere statement of my beliefs.

Sincerely,

<name>

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REQUEST FOR NON-ASSOCIATION OF THE WFSE UNION ON THE BASIS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF AND CONSCIENCE

Washington Federation of State Employees
1212 Jefferson Street, Suite 300
Olympia, WA 98501

cc: <employer>

cc: <employer HR>

Membership or financial support of the WFSE union is a direct conflict of my conscience based on religious belief. I am requesting, based on the provision of WAC 395-95-030, an accommodation for the diversion of the equivalent of union dues to a non-religious charity.

I have been a member of churches of the denomination which I currently attend for over 25 years. I attend regularly, and support this church materially, and with my time and service. I am a member of xxxxxxxx. My pastor's name is yyyyyy.

One of the fundamental tenets of my church and denomination is that the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments, are the authoritative Word of God and the only perfect rule for faith, doctrine and conduct.

We understand this to mean at least two major things. First, that the principles contained in the Scripture are superior to any other authority ("the only perfect rule"). Should principles contained in the Bible conflict with other claims of authority, even civil law, the Scriptural authority is superior.

Second, we understand this tenet to mean that the Christian believer's conduct ought to be different than non-believers. The Scripture is the authority over our conduct. Christian belief is more than mere mental assent to a set of doctrines.

Romans 12:2 says *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.”* The Phillips translation says it this way: *“Don’t let the world squeeze you into it’s mold”*.

The Bible teaches that God lives in every Christian believer. I Corinthians 6:19,20, speaking of the believer, says: *Do not you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own, you were bought with a price. Therefore honor God with your body.”*

John 1:4, speaking of Jesus, God Incarnate, says: *“In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in darkness but the darkness has not understood it.”*

Jesus taught that we are to let that light living in us shine to the world around us (John 5:14-16): *“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.”*

1 Peter 2:12 says *“Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.”*

A second major tenet of my denomination and local church is the reality of freedom in Christ. Within the context of the authority of Scripture, differences of opinion in matters of interpretation, doctrine and practice are permitted. I respect other’s beliefs who are different than mine. They respect mine. Within the denomination and local congregations are a variety of people, with equally supported and valid beliefs. My church not only permits diversity of belief within the context of Scriptural authority, it encourages it. Each believer is challenged to study for themselves the scripture and to come to their own understanding and application to their own life.

Following then, in complete agreement, compliance and support of the teaching of my church, are some of my own personal beliefs that are in conflict with union membership or support.

Life Focus

The bible teaches me not to focus on the temporary things of this life. 1 Peter 1:17 says *“Since you call on the Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear”*. And further in 1 Peter 1:24 *“For, all men are like grass and their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall”*. James 4:4 says *“You adulterous people, don’t you*

know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”

With respect to money or material things the bible says (Matthew 6:24-25): *“No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money. Therefore, I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more important than food and the body more important than clothes?”* And Matthew 6:33: *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well”.*

My life, then, is to be focused on God, his kingdom, and things that will last beyond this life.

In contrast, the union is focused on money. The claim is that the union is the defender of the weak. But if everyone is satisfied with their employment, salary, and work conditions, there is no need for the union. The union has a vested interest in making and keeping union members unsatisfied. Unhappy with their salary. Unhappy with their working conditions. The more people that are unhappy, the more union dues. The more union dues, the richer the union is. Continued union existence is dependent on employees seeing themselves as “victims”. Much of the union’s literature has the purpose of stirring up dissatisfaction.

This focus on material things, including money, is 180 degrees in conflict with my life focus, based on Scriptural teaching and belief. I thus cannot under any circumstances with a clear conscience join or even support in any way, an organization which is completely opposed to my religious based life view.

Respect of Employer

A Christian believer’s guide to attitudes and actions in his or her employment is well characterized by the principles given in the following Scriptures:

Ephesians 6:5-8 *“Slaves, obey your masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward every one for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.”*

Colossians 3:22-25 *“Slaves, obey your earthly master in everything; and do it not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for his wrong, and there is no favoritism.”*

Colossians 3:12-14 *“Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all of these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.”*

When I accepted employment at <employer>, I agreed to an unwritten contract where I would do a certain job for a certain amount of pay. I have a spiritual obligation, not only to do that *“wholeheartedly”*, but to do it in such a way as to honor and show respect for my employer.

There is no room for “strike” or “work slowdown” in these principles. There is no room for “ridicule” or “threats” or “power plays” in these principles. Yet, these are the documented tactics of unions.

The union demonstrated actions and strategies are in total conflict with my beliefs about my employment obligations. I thus cannot in good conscience, under any circumstances join the union or financially support it.

Honesty and Integrity

The Christian responsibility for honesty is well known: *“Do not bear false witness”*. Exodus 23:1 expands on this: *“Do not spread false reports. Do not help a wicked man by being a malicious witness.”* Jesus expands on this and puts it in yet another way (Matthew 7:12): *“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets”*

When my son (also a member of the bargaining unit) went to the union office before the union shop was certified, he was told outright that he could not terminate his union membership. This was not true.

The letter from the union dated November 30 has two statements in it that are outright not true.

First it said: *“You are now a part of the largest state employee union in the State”*. This was not true. If an employee was not a member of the union before the certification, the certification did not make him/her a member. Employees must take action to join the union (which was, after all the whole intent of the letter).

Second the letter said: *“Please remember that you must complete the payroll deduction authorization card”*. This also was not true. The card was just one way of satisfying the union shop obligation. Use of the card results in “official” contractual union membership, and authorizes payroll deduction for the payment of dues. Neither are required by law. The AFSCME’s own web site documents that actual union membership is not a requirement. The union knows better.

The letter also makes other suggestions about employee's obligations which are misleading and deceptive.

Based on my personal experience, I have seen the union and union employees based on published tactics of the union coerce and intimidate employees into the highest possible union association.

All of this is totally opposed to my personal religious belief. Once again, I thus cannot in good conscience under any circumstances join, financially support in any way, or lend legitimacy or credibility to the union and its actions.

I cannot even support the Union run scholarship fund. It is not a registered charity with the State of Washington. It appears that the beneficiaries are only union members or their families. It appears to be legally attached to the union. Supporting it would lend legitimacy and credibility to the union which I cannot in clear conscience do based on my religious beliefs. My non-association with the union must be total and complete.

I am therefore proposing as alternative, as provided by the provision of WAC 395-95-030, payment of the equivalent of union dues to the <not-one-of-the-listed-five>. This charity is registered with the State of Washington as a "Human Service" charity. Although it is not clear from the union letter whether the obligation stated as required by December 30 is for January or December, as a show of good faith, I have commenced such alternate payments starting this month.

I believe this choice of charity is consistent with the union's often stated goal of "helping the weak and needy".

I believe I have sufficiently documented my genuine sincere religious beliefs and how they are in conflict with union membership or support.

I trust the union will make a reasonable accommodation in this matter.

If not, however, I intend to pursue all legal remedies available to me, including appeal to the Public Employment Relations Commission and/or the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Further, I would note that my rights to religious belief and practice are fundamentally guaranteed to me by the First and Fourteenth amendments of the US Constitution, and by the Washington State Constitution Article I, Section 11 (which guarantees "Absolute freedom of conscience", subject only to limitations not applicable in this case).

Subservient statutory guarantees include the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and Washington State RCW 49.60.30. None of these laws require “church membership” or even the concurrence of a religious body with an individual’s personal religious beliefs.

If my employment is terminated or threatened to be terminated because of my religious beliefs, it would be my intent to follow all possible legal remedies, including but not limited to, filing complaints with the Federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and/or the State Human Rights Commission.

I trust that this request will be reasonably approved, and that such actions will not be needed.

I attest that this is a true statement of my sincere beliefs.

Sincerely,

signed _____ date _____

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