

JUSTICE NEWS

Department of Justice

Office of Public Affairs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 6, 2017

Attorney General Sessions Issues Guidance On Federal Law Protections For Religious Liberty

Attorney General Sessions today issued guidance to all administrative agencies and executive departments regarding religious liberty protections in federal law and made the following statement:

“Our freedom as citizens has always been inextricably linked with our religious freedom as a people. It has protected both the freedom to worship and the freedom not to believe. Every American has a right to believe, worship, and exercise their faith. The protections for this right, enshrined in our Constitution and laws, serve to declare and protect this important part of our heritage.

“As President Trump said, ‘Faith is deeply embedded into the history of our country, the spirit of our founding and the soul of our nation . . . [this administration] will not allow people of faith to be targeted, bullied or silenced anymore.’

“The constitutional protection of religious beliefs and the right to exercise those beliefs have served this country well, have made us one of the most tolerant countries in the world, and have also helped make us the freest and most generous. President Trump promised that this administration would ‘lead by example on religious liberty,’ and he is delivering on that promise.”

The memorandum was issued pursuant to President Trump’s Executive Order No. 13798 (May 4, 2017), which directed the Attorney General to “issue guidance interpreting religious liberty protections in Federal law” in order “to guide all agencies in complying with relevant Federal law.”

The guidance interprets existing protections for religious liberty in Federal law, identifying 20 high-level principles that administrative agencies and executive departments can put to practical use to ensure the religious freedoms of Americans are lawfully protected. Attorney General Sessions also issued a second memorandum to the Department of Justice, directing implementation of the religious liberty guidance within the Department.

NOTE: To view the guidance click [here](#) and to view the Attorney General’s implementing memorandum click [here](#).

Attachment(s):

[Download implementation of memorandum on federal law protections for religious liberty](#)
[Download federal law protections for religious liberty](#)

Component(s):

[Office of the Attorney General](#)

Press Release Number:

17-1119



Updated October 6, 2017