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Employee Gave Adequate Notice Of Religious Belief In Refusing COVID Vaccination

California Employment Law on **September 22, 2026**

Weiss v. The Permanente Med. Grp., Inc., 182 F.4th 1139 (9th Cir. 2026)

Permanente initially granted employee Mimi Weiss a religious exemption from its COVID-19 vaccine mandate, then requested supplemental information after learning that some employees had submitted insincere requests. When Weiss did not fully answer, the employer revoked the exemption and terminated her employment. The district court dismissed Weiss's Title VII and FEHA failure-to-accommodate claims because she failed to allege she gave the employer adequate notice of the conflict between her religious beliefs and the vaccine mandate. The Ninth Circuit reversed the dismissal, holding that Weiss had plausibly alleged she had informed the employer of a bona fide religious belief that conflicted with the vaccination mandate. At the pleading stage, an employee need only allege they provided enough information for the employer to understand that an actual conflict exists between a religious practice or belief and a job requirement, not the validity of those beliefs or practices. *See also* *Cherry v. Washington Dep't of Fish & Wildlife*, 2026 WL 2451427 (9th Cir. 2026) (under Title VII, employers offering employees access to a process that provided only a limited possibility of reassignment was not necessarily a reasonable accommodation of religious beliefs and practices).

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