

Maine Governor Violates Employment Law, First Amendment Rights

Liberty Counsel has filed the reply in federal U.S. District Court in support of moving forward in the case for more than 2,000 health care workers against Gov. Janet Mills, health officials of the Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and five of Maine's largest hospital systems, regarding the state's attempt to ignore federal law and remove religious exemptions and accommodations from unlawful COVID shot mandates.

The state and the provider defendants have moved to dismiss the case. However, Mills' executive order overrides and ignores both Title VII employment law and the First Amendment Free Exercise clause. Therefore, this case should move forward to discovery and a merits determination.

On Aug. 12, 2021, Mills announced that Maine will require health care workers to accept or receive one of the three currently available COVID-19 shots to remain employed in the health care profession. This edict forced numerous doctors, nurses, medical professionals and other health care workers to choose between the exercise of their sincerely held religious beliefs and their employment. Mills and state officials have claimed explicitly and illegally that federal law does not apply to health care workers in Maine and that no protections or considerations will be given to their religious beliefs.

Mills even threatened to revoke the licenses of all health care employers who fail to mandate that all employees receive the COVID-19 injection, despite the unconstitutional fact that she is discriminating against religious employees who decline

vaccination while favoring those who decline for secular, medical reasons.

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act clearly requires that every employer with over 15 employees must provide religious accommodations “unless an employer demonstrates that he is unable to reasonably accommodate an employee’s or prospective employee’s religious observance or practice without undue hardship.” Throughout COVID, health care employees worked every day with reasonable accommodations, and the state and the employers can continue to provide those.

Liberty Counsel founder and Chairman Mat Staver said, “Gov. Mills cannot ignore the law and discriminate against health care workers with sincerely held religious beliefs. We will press forward with this case because all Maine health care workers have the legal right to request reasonable accommodation, and forcing COVID shots without exemptions is unlawful.” {eo}

This article originally appeared at .

Follow breaking news like this on our new platform, CHARISMA PLUS.