

Medical Students Request Religious Exemption From COVID Shots

Liberty Counsel sent a demand letter to Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine (VCOM) on behalf of three medical students who were denied religious exemptions and have received threats from the school for refusing to take the COVID injection. The Louisiana Attorney General also issued a demand letter to VCOM.

Students R., S. and K. are medical students at VCOM and were notified that the administration was requiring them to receive a COVID-19 “vaccine” as a condition of enrollment and participating in classes and activities in person. They are also required to wear a mask until they provide proof of being fully vaccinated. The three students hold sincere religious beliefs that prohibit them from receiving the COVID shot.

Louisiana law requires all colleges to grant an exemption from a vaccine upon receipt of a “basic written dissent” from the student. They exceeded the legal requirement by submitting the school’s “forms,” their own personal letters and statements from their ministers substantiating that having the injection violates their sincerely held beliefs. One student also opposes the shots because they all used aborted fetal cell lines in the testing phase, and Johnson & Johnson also uses aborted fetal cell lines in the deployment or distribution phase. This student believes life begins at conception and the intentional destruction of a human life is sinful. Her sincerely held religious beliefs prevents her from participating directly or indirectly in abortion or the destruction of human life.

The school not only denied their exemption requests but

created a “snitch” program targeting the students. They have since received threatening emails and have been told they could be suspended and recommended for dismissal if they continue their studies without taking the shot.

The school policy states, “In order to create a safe workplace, and one where physicians who care for patients, university athletes, and others, to avoid transmitting COVID-19 the faculty who work on campus as well as the students must participate in vaccination. This prevents the spread of COVID-19 between the students in the classroom, the employees on campus, and the patients being cared for. VCOM expects a medical student to be informed on and stay abreast of evidence-based medicine rather than the media or political opinion regarding COVID-19. There is a predominance of evidence that vaccination is the only means to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and lead to an assurance for the health and welfare of patients.”

However, the medical school seems to ignore the VAERS data that reports 463,456 adverse events, including 10,991 deaths, from the COVID shots as of July 9, 2021.

Louisiana Attorney General Jeff Landry also sent a letter to school officials stating, “I am committed to defending the students’ right to make informed, individualized choices about whether to receive COVID-19 vaccines. I will pursue any legal means available to ensure that the rights of Louisiana residents attending VCOM are protected from both overt and covert coercion, harassment, and retaliation by VCOM for asserting their legal rights.”

In his letter, Landry also reminds the administration they are violating Louisiana and federal law and may jeopardize their “collaborative” relationship with the state.

“The Louisiana Preservation of Religious Freedom Act and the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution as interpreted most

recently in light of COVID-19 restrictions provide additional protections against overreaching, discriminatory enforcement of the law at the expense of conscientious objectors to the vaccine and religious believers. More importantly, under Louisiana law, immunizations at colleges and universities are never mandatory if a student presents a written statement from a physician that a medical exemption is warranted or if a student presents a written 'dissent from the student,'" Landry wrote.

Liberty Counsel founder and Chairman Mat Staver said, "It is shocking that a medical school would violate federal and state law and medical evidence to threaten these students to succumb to an experimental drug. We will not allow the rights and free choice of these students to be violated. The COVID injections are not licensed by the FDA and are still in the investigation and experimental phase. Even if they were licensed by the FDA, employers and schools must respect a person's personal and religious decision to not inject a drug into their body. No school may force or coerce anyone to take these injections, and certainly not when doing so violates sincerely held religious beliefs." {eo}

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