

Army Vax Objectors Stranded in ‘Limbo’ Apart from Families, Booted Off Base: Legal Defense Group

Army spokesman says he's "unaware of any policy directing unvaccinated Soldiers must reside off base."

By [Greg Piper](#)

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Some service members requesting religious exemptions from vaccine mandates are separated from their families indefinitely, and a subset has also been kicked off base, according to a legal group aiding them and challenging the military mandate in court.

The Army is stalling religious accommodation requests (RARs) from service members seeking exemptions from the military’s sweeping COVID-19 vaccination mandate, leaving objectors in “limbo and frozen in time,” claims religious freedom legal defense organization Liberty Counsel.

“The Army will not process the RARs,” wrote Mat Staver, chairman and founder of the Christian nonprofit. “Instead, it is effectively holding hostage every military member who files an RAR, whether the member is in the states or in a foreign country. The Army hopes the pressure of being separated from family with their careers frozen will force the faithful to bow the knee to Joe Biden.”

[Liberty Counsel shared a message](#) April 29 from “Sheldon,” an Army service member who is stuck in South Korea even though his one-year “unaccompanied” tour ended in December.

“I’m being held hostage here, separated from my family, including my 9-month-old daughter who barely knows me because of my pending exemption request,” Sheldon wrote, adding that his wife’s “mental health is deteriorating” under the stress of indefinite separation.

Staver told Just the News his organization was working with about 1,100 service members and does calls every week to gather more stories.

One service member transferring from Hawaii to Florida is stuck without family in Alabama, a required training location before Florida, while an intended East Coast transfer who already sent a car and furniture is stuck in California and can't live on base, according to Staver.

Army media relations officer Lt. Col. Terry Kelley told Just the News he couldn't comment on a pseudonymous service member's case, but wrote in an email he was "unaware of any policy directing unvaccinated Soldiers must reside off base."

Given the Army's response, Staver clarified "there is no written policy" but that Liberty Counsel has dealt with several situations where a soldier or couple was verbally ordered to leave the base and given no housing reimbursement, leading some to live out of their cars.

Staver said he would ask service members to provide any written explanations they were given for eviction for Just the News to review.

Kelley also shared [Army vaccination rates and exemption request tallies](#) as of May 5. Among 4,302 religious requests, eight have been approved and 927 rejected.

"They're not denying anybody" the chance to appeal, just sitting on requests to avoid litigation, Staver said. By keeping service members in limbo and putting them on menial details such as "broom closet" work, the Army's goal is coercing vaccinations, he claimed.

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Featured image: Pfc. Shaniah Edwards, Medical Detachment, prepares to administer the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to soldiers and airmen at the Joint Force Headquarters, February 12, 2021. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Leona C. Hendrickson - Source.)

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