

Possible Religious denial appeal language: "As it appears this is a blanket denial, I feel that it is in violation of my First Amendment and Title VII rights. Religion is specifically protected under the Constitution and claiming, "for the good of the service, to ensure readiness, or to protect others, does not meet the strict scrutiny test, in that it is a one size fits all approach. We have been under this pandemic for two years now with little to no impact on readiness, threat to others, or an impact on the good of the service, other than a mandate that is literally separating those via ideology. Please explain in detail how my being forever unvaccinated and following my religious tenets will have an impact, in any way, since it has not for two plus years."

According to Maj Gen Taliaferro, Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice Director for Operations, testifying before Congress on 17 Feb 2021, the military is and has been ready:

Representative Mike Rogers, Homeland Security Committee Ranking Member asked Maj Gen Taliaferro: "What about...Are they deployable? If somebody is not vaccinated, is that individual deployable?"

Maj Gen Taliaferro: "So, Ranking Member, the services and the combatant commands have worked very hard over the last year to make sure that we can operate in a COVID environment before vaccinations were available. The addition of the vaccination should make us more capable in that environment, but we've already demonstrated over the last year that we're fully capable of operating in a COVID environment."

Rep Rogers: "So, I take that to mean, yes, they're deployable even if they have not been vaccinated?"

Maj Gen Taliaferro: "Yes, Sir."

When asked for the current state of readiness across the Services with only 2/3 vaccine compliance, Maj Gen Taliaferro replied "The Services have been adaptive and resilient, that when larger formation exercises weren't possible, they've substituted those with some smaller formations. Smaller formations that have allowed them to maintain their basic proficiency and currency and combat readiness." He added "The overall C ratings, or readiness ratings for all the Services' Combat Commands have stayed within historic norms."