

5 SYMBOLS OF SIKH RELIGION Why Sikhs wear them?



Sikhs wear 5 Ks as a badge of their religious identity. They are called Ks as they begin with the Punjabi letter K.

These are:

Kesh – uncut hair, a sign of saintliness. Men cover their hair with a turban and women with a Duppatta.

Kanga – a comb to keep hair tidy, a sign of cleanliness.

Kara – a steel bracelet, a reminder to do good deeds.

Kacch – shorts, symbol of self-control and chastity.

Kirpan – a short sword, to remind Sikhs to defend the weak.

WHAT ARE THE DIETRY REQUIREMENTS?

There are no hard and fast rules about diet. It is a matter of preference. In the gurdwaras, the food served is always vegetarian. However, Sikhs are forbidden to eat Halal. Tobacco, alcohol and other drugs are also forbidden.



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Further information on the implications of the new legislation for employers and Sikh employees can be found on the NSO website: www.nsouk.co.uk

The Department for Communities and Local Government is supporting the promotion of the Sikh Consultancy Service.



EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY (RELIGION OR BELIEF) REGULATIONS 2003

What do the regulations say?

The regulations apply to all aspects of employment. They make it unlawful on the grounds of religion or belief to:

- discriminate directly against anyone. That is, to treat some less favourably than others.
- discriminate indirectly against anyone. That is to apply criterion, provision or practice which disadvantages some.
- harass anyone. That is to create an environment in which some are degraded, intimidated or humiliated.

Exceptions can be made in circumstances when there is a genuine occupational requirement for the worker to be of a particular religion or belief.

The Network of Sikh Organisations UK (NSO) has established a Sikh Consultancy Service to provide guidance to employers and employees on employment issues relating to the Sikh religion. **The employers need to know:**

WHAT IS THEIR BELIEF?

- One God
- Oneness of humanity
- Equality of women.
- Respect for other religions
- Service to humanity.

WHAT TIME THEY PRAY?

A Sikh is to pray in the morning before going to work, in the afternoon after work and at night before going to bed. They do not need any special time off to pray during the day.

PLACE OF WORSHIP?

A Sikh place of worship is called a Gurdwara. Sikhs worship one God and teachings written by the Sikh Gurus in the Guru Granth Sahib guide Sikhs to lead a fulfilling life. The Guru Granth Sahib is central to all Sikh prayers,

ceremonies and all celebrations. Whoever wants to worship one God is welcomed to join the prayers. After the prayers, all members of the congregation eat together as members of one family.

GURDWARA - SRI HARIMANDIR SAHIB (GOLDEN TEMPLE)



CELEBERATIONS (FESTIVALS)



Sikhs do not believe in any day being a particularly holy day and they have fixed dates for many of the main festivals. There is no impact on the

work place. The birthdays of Guru Nanak, the first Sikh Guru and Guru Gobind Singh, the tenth and the last human, martyrdoms of Guru Arjan and Guru Teg Bahadur and Visakhi and Bandi Chor (Diwali) are celebrated with great enthusiasm.



WHAT ARE THEIR DRESS REQUIREMENTS?

There are no hard and fast rules as to what Sikhs wear. It is a matter of choice. However, a turban is a religious requirement for men. Mostly men and women wear western clothes when they go to work. But for visiting a Gurdwara or Punjabi gatherings, women tend to wear Punjabi clothes such as Kameez and Salwar and Dupatta.