

Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (<https://www.ncronline.org>)

October 16, 2009 at 8:58am

No faith-based hiring with tax dollars

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NCR Today

My fellow NCR Today blogger Michael Sean Winters argues that faith-based institutions should be able to show preference for people of their own faith in hiring. But he omitted one very crucial phrase: "with public money."

What *The New York Times* editorial (with which he disagrees) was discussing was not hiring in general, but hiring people for social service programs funded by public tax dollars under the Faith-based and Community Partnerships Program. These dollars cannot be used for anything that proselytizes, or promotes a religion anyway, or the whole program would run afoul of the First Amendment.

So, if one is hiring a drug counselor, or someone to run a soup kitchen or a job-training office, it's a neutral job -- religiously speaking -- and there is no reason to discriminate on the basis of religion. In fact, since such salaries are paid with tax dollars, there is every reason not to discriminate.

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