

# Agudath Israel Hails Florida Court Decision: Prisons Must Continue Offering Kosher Food

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On July 14th, the 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the Justice Department and rejected the attempt by the Florida Department of Corrections to end its kosher meal program. The Court of Appeals [decision](#) is an extraordinary victory for religious liberty, one that extends beyond the context of kosher food in prison.

All too often, accommodations of religion by state authorities are rejected or avoided because of some generalized, amorphous concern. And indeed that kind of vague concern has been enough to dismiss – sometimes out of hand – religious freedom guarantees found in the Constitution and federal and state law. This decision makes clear that any concern that may be seen as allowing an infringement of religious rights must be real, specific and demonstrable, and that there must be a serious exploration of possible and practical ways to accommodate. Maintaining this high standard and incorporating it into the minds of government officials better ensures that religious liberty will remain a cherished American value and helps prevent infringements from happening in the first instance. This is especially vital at a time when religious freedom is being besieged in many areas.

To read the *amicus* brief filed by COLPA (National Jewish Commission On Law and Public Affairs) of which Agudath Israel of America is a founding member, click [here](#)