

RAMADAN AT HOME DURING COVID-19 2020

1. What is Ramadan?

The month of Ramadan is the holiest month of the Islamic year as this was when the Qua'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammed. Muslims around the world fast during daylight hours although there are a few exceptions such as the old or sick. Muslims also increase spiritual devotional acts such as prayer and strengthening family ties.

Ramadan 2020 takes place between 23/24 April & 23/24 May (depending on moon sightings) and will prove a very different experience for Muslims due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. What is the reason for Fasting?

Fasting is one of the five pillars of Islam.

Fasting plays an important role in many major religions and is a central feature in all the Abrahamic faiths; Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In Islam, Muslims are asked to fast during Ramadan and other times of the year too.

A key objective of fasting is to engender a sense of gratitude, self-discipline, and self-improvement as well as the closeness to God. This is called *taqwa*. The breaking of fast meal at sunset encourages families and local communities to share their meals. This is called *iftar*.

3. Ramadan at home

Ramadan will be a very different experience due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead of there being *taraweeh* prayers at the mosque or outside homes, these may be done online either pre-recorded or live. Virtual *iftars* with loved ones and community members may take place.

Remember to take regular breaks from work, perhaps around *salaah* (prayer) times. You may be able to start work earlier so you can have some downtime prior to *iftar*.

4. Advice for Employers and Managers

Some employees will be abstaining from food and drinks for up to 17 hours so may experience mild dehydration, causing headaches, tiredness, and a lack of concentration.

Be aware and open to discussing Ramadan and do not assume all employees want to be treated differently because they are fasting.

Be accommodating around annual leave requests, especially toward the end of Ramadan to celebrate *Eid* (holiday marking the end of Ramadan).

Allow workers to have regular breaks for afternoon prayers as needed (*Dhuhr and Asr*) if requested.

5. Useful Links

For more information about Ramadan, visit:

mcb.org.uk/ramadan,

About COVID-19, visit

mcb.org.uk/coronavirus