

# Supporting Your Muslim Employees During Ramadan



There are approximately 1.9 billion Muslims around the world and we will soon be heading into one of the most sacred months of the Islamic calendar: **Ramadan**.

This year, Ramadan is predicted to begin on or around 28 February 2025 and will last for approximately 30 days, culminating in the celebration of Eid Ul-Fitr. During this time Muslims will reflect on and strive to improve their faith, by fasting from sunrise to sunset and engaging in acts of worship such as prayer, reflection and giving to charity.

As an employer, here are some things you may wish to consider to show support for your Muslim employees and foster a culture of respect in the workplace.

***“Ramadan can be a real opportunity to demonstrate great management and nurture the relationship of mutual trust and respect between you and your team.*”**

***If you're not all that familiar with Ramadan customs, you may be anxious about getting it wrong. However, the basic legal principle is simple: you must make sure employees participating in Ramadan are not treated less favourably based on their religion or belief.”***

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## Accommodating fasting

The main act of worship during Ramadan is to fast from sunrise to sunset. Fasting could lead to fatigue, so allowing more rest breaks, modifying the employee's duties or allowing them to work through lunch may be beneficial.

Decreased energy may also affect employees' performance or productivity. It is always best to work with your employees to find solutions - this might include scheduling meetings and other essential or demanding tasks at the start of their shift when they have the most energy.

## Flexible working arrangements

It may be sensible to allow Muslim employees to work from home temporarily. Allowing employees to work from home avoids them expending their energy on commuting to and from the workplace, and allows them to use their breaks to engage in extra worship more easily, which is very common during Ramadan.

In particular, you may wish to consider flexible working hours on a Friday, which is regarded as the holiest day of the week for Muslims, to accommodate colleagues who want to attend prayers at their local Mosque.

## Providing a prayer space

Consider allocating a room for prayer. Remember, enforcing a 'no prayer in the workplace' rule may constitute indirect discrimination, and it would disproportionately affect Muslim employees compared to those of other religions who would not normally be required to pray at set times throughout the day.

## Time off requests

It may be that employees are aware of their own limitations while fasting and therefore choose to request time off so that this doesn't interfere with work, or would just like to have some time off to engage in extra worship or celebrate Eid Ul-Fitr.

There is no automatic right to time off in this context and requests should be handled in line with your annual leave policy. However, you should try to be as reasonable, fair and accommodating as possible.

## Fostering a culture of respect

Above all, foster a culture of respect. It is worth circulating a company-wide email or putting up a notice in communal areas to make everyone aware of Ramadan.

You could even make it part of your Company's events calendar by introducing an initiative for non-Muslim employees to take part in a one-day fast with their Muslim colleagues, and you should ensure that any other social events that are held during this time accommodate your Muslim staff as well, where possible.

Managers should lead the way in making sure employees are sensitive to people's religious beliefs and it may be worth reminding them of your policy on bullying and harassment.

For more information about our support

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