



How Faculty, Staff, & Administrators can Support Muslims Participating in **RAMADAN**



First things first.
What's Ramadan?



In the US, Ramadan 2021 began the evening of Monday, April 12th and will end the evening of Wednesday, May 12th.

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic Lunar calendar and has 29 or 30 days depending on the sighting of the new moon. Fasting during the month of Ramadan is the fourth pillar of Islam.

Why is it important to show support?



Ramadan is a very special holiday for Muslims. However, fasting can be taxing and impact one's physical, cognitive, spiritual, and emotional well-being. Additionally, fasting and increased praying during the month of Ramadan presents unique challenges in countries where Islam is not the primary religion.

By supporting Muslims who are fasting during the month of Ramadan, we are helping to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all!

What can I do?



Be flexible around the fasting schedule

- **SLEEP** - Understand that Muslim faculty, staff, and students may stay up late to pray and wake up very early to eat, so they will need to adjust to a new sleep schedule.
- **ASSIGNMENTS & TASKS** - Because fasting affects energy levels and cognitive functioning, Muslims may need religious accommodations for exams and assignments.
- **FOOD IN CLASS/MEETINGS** - Muslims may eat a snack during class/meetings if they coincide with sunset in their time zone.
- **FASTING EXEMPTIONS** - Exemptions from fasting that should not be misinterpreted as failure to adhere to the Ramadan:
 - Severe illness or traveling during Ramadan
 - Menstruating Muslims are also not required to fast. However, this may alert others that they are menstruating, which could be uncomfortable. Some may choose to eat and drink secretly during this time.



Accommodate employees & REAL students

Pro-Tip!

Ideal working times during Ramadan are early in the morning and 1 hour after sunset

- **FLEXIBLE WORK HOURS** - Fasting impacts energy levels. Encourage supervisors to be more flexible with working hours during Ramadan. Consider allowing employees to:
 - work right after sunrise or sunset (when energy levels are highest)
 - take time off or have off-days during the week
- **ALERT REAL PARTNERS** - The REAL Program should communicate with external partners annually about showing support and making work accommodations for Muslim REAL students during Ramadan.
- **PROJECTS** - Supervisors should be flexible when assigning very time- or work-intensive projects during Ramadan.



Pro-Tip!

Prayer accommodation is especially important on Fridays - the traditional holy day in Islam

Increase understanding for prayer times

- **CLASS/MEETING BREAKS** - Allow a 15-minute break during class or meetings for Muslims to go pray if it coincides with prayer time. If you cannot provide a break, allow Muslim staff, faculty, and students to leave class/meetings to pray.
- **EVENTS** - Be mindful of hosting evening programming or events that could conflict with sunset or prayer times.



Encourage cultural sensitivity & belonging

- **ACKNOWLEDGE** - Administrators, faculty, and supervisors can acknowledge the special month in emails and through relevant decor and events. Offer the greeting, *Ramadan Mubarak* (Happy Ramadan).
- **DECOR & PROGRAMMING** - The departments and RSPH can display relevant decor and host events with current Muslim figures working in Public Health to show support and encourage a sense of belonging.
- **SPEAK UP & REPORT** - Support the Muslim community at Rollins by speaking up, reporting discrimination you see, and promoting an atmosphere of understanding, compassion, and inclusivity.
- **INVITE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNS** - Recognize that everyone is different and may experience unique problems during Ramadan. Support fasting Muslims in their unique challenges.



Promote mental well-being

- **INCLUSIVE RESOURCES** - Ensure that counseling and other mental health resources available on campus are inclusive of various religions and spirituality.
- **GUIDANCE** - Remind Muslims who are fasting during Ramadan to practice mindfulness and wellness

By implementing these suggestions, you can cultivate a more inclusive and supportive community for Muslim students, staff, and faculty during this holy month of Ramadan.

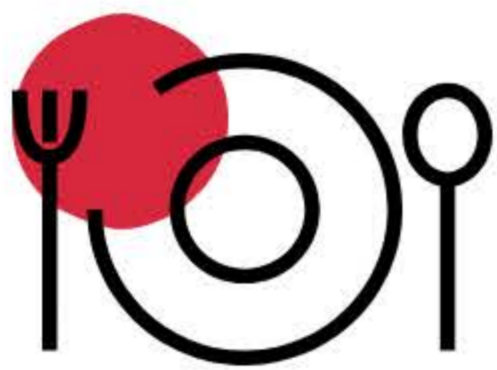
Ramadan Mubarak!



Happy Ramadan!

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

What do Muslims do during Ramadan?



Fast

Muslims fast from dawn to dusk each day during the month of Ramadan. They abstain from food, drink, smoking, and sexual relations while fasting.



Spirituality & Worship

During Ramadan, Muslims increase acts of worship, prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, as well as practice contemplation and self-reflection.



Charity & Community

During Ramadan, Muslims increase their acts of charity and kindness. This is also a time of increased communal and family gatherings (though less so during the pandemic).

Key Terms

Iftar

meal to break the fast

Salah

prayer

Ramadan

commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an

Wudu

ablution; ritual washing before prayer

Suhoor

pre-dawn meal

Night of Qadr

night of prayer and devotion marking the night the Qur'an was revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him)

Eid al Fitr

holiday and festival for the breaking of the fast at the end of Ramadan

Muslims pray
5 times a day

Fajr - dawn

Dhuhr - after midday

Asr - afternoon

Maghrib - sunset

Isha - nighttime



Developed and provided by the RSPH Department of Epidemiology's Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Committee (DEDEIC).
A special thank you to the feedback provided by the RSPH Muslim community. Produced April 2021.

For general DEI suggestions, complaints, or questions, our committee can be reached at DEDEIC@emory.edu