



Ministry
of Justice

Prayer guidance for managers and staff

Muslims are required to pray five times a day, as a core part of their faith and one of the five pillars of Islam - this is also referred to as Salat. Salat is performed five times a day by Muslims and is obligatory. The importance of prayer gives Muslims the pattern of their day, therefore, this includes the workplace. This document can be used by both management and staff, as best practice - to ensure Muslim colleagues are given both the time and facilities, to practice their faith openly and comfortably, in order to create a more inclusive workplace and ensure the civil service does not breach the [Equality Act 2010 \(EqA\)](#) with regards to religion and the **PSED (Public sector equality duty)**.

It is important to remember religion is a protected characteristic, and **Section 149(1) of the EqA 2010** states that a public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have **due regard** to the need to:

- **Eliminate conduct prohibited by or under the Act** - could the lack of reasonable adjustments/facilities for your Muslim staff amount to unlawful direct/indirect discrimination?
- **Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not** - for prayer, are you meeting the needs of all users?

How can managers help staff?

One-to-one: Have a one-to-one chat about prayers with your employees to understand their needs and situation. Consider break timing, space, special needs, and privacy. Every Muslim is different, therefore individual needs will also be different and it is crucial to avoid generalising needs between individuals.

Allocate space and time for prayer: Please provide adequate time and facilities for the Muslim to pray comfortably. Other than scheduled breaks, staff can use HSE/DSE breaks. Many people who use DSE take a few minutes for a Coffee or tea break this is covered in the HSE Work routine and breaks ([Work routine and breaks - Display screen equipment - HSE](#)). This can be used as a break for prayer. If a department was seen as using this for one group but denying it for another group, it would breach the Equality Act, with regards to religion.

How many prayers to consider in the workplace? Between 1 and 3

Prayer name	Prayer timing
Fajr	Between dawn and sunrise.
Zuhr	Early to late afternoon (Lunch time). Often midday, after the sun passes its highest
Asr	Late afternoon but before sunset
Maghrib	Just after sunset
Isha	Night

Zuhr, Asr and Maghrib prayers normally fall into office hours, but Asr and Maghrib may fall outside when days are longer around the summer.

Duration: Approximately 10-20 minutes per prayer.

On average, Muslims will need around 5 minutes for ablution and another 5-10 minutes to pray obligatory prayers. **Please note, this may vary between individuals** due to disabilities, physical health or other factors. So, it is important to first assess your staffs' needs regarding time away from their desk.

Facility needs: Ablution facility and prayer room. Muslims must pray in a clean area, with enough privacy to not be disturbed, and female Muslims will need to take off their headscarf during ablution, so it is important they are given the privacy away from male staff.

Comfortable: Access to ablution facilities and a prayer/contemplation room, separate for genders. If separation is not possible, reasonable adjustments should be made to ensure segregation. It should be easy to clean up after themselves e.g., mop provided. Cleaning facilities will vary across sites, but it is important to consider health and safety of staff around ablution/washing facilities and practical ways of cleaning.

Manageable: Access to a contemplation/reflection room for prayer and an ablution facility or accessible toilets with mop and regular sized sink. Genders will have to

wait for each other to finish unless the room has a privacy barrier or there are two facilities each. Consider installing ablution sinks to accommodate those with disabilities/restricted mobility to access high sinks. Reasonable adjustments should be made for staff where this is not possible.

Difficult: A curtained meeting room or other room for prayer that needs to be empty at the right time. Using disabled toilets. Gender segregation is necessary regardless.

Friday prayer: This is normally held between **12.30pm and 2pm** depending on the mosque. Some sites may have their own Friday prayers. Individual needs will vary and is important to discuss these between management and staff. Friday prayer requirements only apply to male staff.

Useful resources for managers:

MoJ Muslim Network: <https://intranet.justice.gov.uk/about-us/staff-networks/moj-muslim-network/>

Peace & Blessings Team: Search for “[Peace & Blessings](#)” in MS Teams.

Chaplaincy HQ advisor: ibrahim.mehtar@justice.gov.uk

Chaplaincy support: <https://intranet.noms.gsi.gov.uk/support/chaplaincy>

Slack: [#islam](#)

Guidance for Muslim staff that pray

Take precautions: If you are required to attend the workplace during COVID-19 measures, please ensure you follow safety instructions and guidance when using ablution and prayer facilities. Please refer to your building/facilities manager.

One-to-one: Have a one-to-one chat about prayers with your manager so both of you can understand each other and the needs.

Keep washing and prayer facilities clean and tidy: It is the way of Muslims to stay pure, be considerate, clean, and clear up after themselves.

Work together: If Muslims work together to resolve prayer issues and potentially pray **Jumma (Friday prayer)** in the office that will save a lot of time.

Be proactive, be prepared: Praying is fardh so must be done. Plan how you are going to do it as efficiently as possible in advance. Know the best places for prayer

and ablution as well as the closest mosques and their timing. Call them early if you need to do the Friday prayer to get the times.

Stay in touch with Muslims: Use the *Peace & blessings team*, *Slack* or the *Muslim network Email* address for any questions – This will allow you to have the information you need, when you need it.

Travelling: Follow the correct traveller rules for the school of thought that you follow if you are outside of the locality distance while at work and shorten prayers as required.

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Peace & Blessings Team: Search for “Peace & Blessings” on MS Teams.

Slack: [#islam](#)

Prayer room finder: <https://tinyurl.com/MoJReflect> (Also available on *Peace & Blessings Team*)