



Muslim Legal Society of Texas

Understanding Ramadan & Eid Celebrations

*A Comprehensive Guide for Law Firms
and Legal Employers*

February – March 2026



Muslim Legal Society
of Texas

A Note From Our Directors

The Muslim Legal Society of Texas is honored to provide this comprehensive guide on the holy month of Ramadan and the sacred festival of Eid al-Fitr. Our goal is to foster greater awareness, share authentic knowledge, highlight best practices, and offer recommendations to support an environment where Muslim attorneys and staff can fully observe and experience these sacred traditions.

By deepening their understanding of Ramadan's religious significance and the observances encompassed by this month, legal employers and firms can better accommodate the needs of their Muslim employees. This will cultivate a more welcoming, equitable, and inclusive workplace culture. We hope this guide serves as an educational resource, a practical tool, and a means to build connections across communities.

In the spirit of Ramadan, we wish for increased compassion, unity, and service to humanity.

**Board of Directors,
Muslim Legal Society of Texas**

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Ramadan – An Introduction

Ramadan is the 9th month of the Islamic lunar calendar and is commemorated globally by over 1.8 billion Muslims across the world. During this sacred month, healthy adult Muslims are obligated to fast each day from dawn until sunset by completely abstaining from all food, drinks, and sexual relations. Ramadan marks the first revelation of the Quran to the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him ("PBUH")) and is seen as an opportunity for spiritual purification, increased devotion, and strengthening one's relationship with God (Allah).

Fasting, along with increased prayer, charity, and good deeds are considered the means through which Muslims can renew their faith, attain closeness to God, and cultivate discipline, patience, empathy and gratitude. While complying with the ritual fast is the central practice, Ramadan is much more than just fasting - it represents a transformative experience spiritually, physically and socially.

This annual observance and its associated rituals have been practiced for over 1400 years, originating from the first revelation in the 7th century in Mecca, Saudi Arabia. Ramadan is one of the Five Pillars of Islam - the fundamental religious duties in the faith. For Muslims, it is the most sacred time of the year.

Key Dates & Times

Ramadan 2026

Start Date: February 18, 2026

End Date: March 19, 2026

Duration: 29 or 30 days (determined by lunar sightings)

Fasting Hours in Texas (*After Daylight Savings):

Pre-Dawn Meal (Suhoor): \approx 4:15am – 5:15am (* \approx 5:15am – 6:15am)

Start of Fast: Break of Dawn \approx 5:30am (* \approx 6:30am)

End of Fast (Iftar): Sunset \approx 6:20pm (* \approx 7:30pm)

Eid al-Fitr 2025:

Estimated Date: March 20, 2026

(To be confirmed based on moon sighting in late Ramadan)

Islamic Calendar: Based on the cycles of the moon. Each month begins with the sighting of the new crescent moon. This makes the dates shift by around 10 days earlier each subsequent year on the Gregorian calendar.

Varying Fasting Hours: Muslims around the world fast during the daylight hours in their specific locations. Countries closer to the poles can experience fasting periods over 20 hours in summer.

Origins and Significance of Ramadan

Ramadan in Islamic History and Tradition:

- Commemorates the first revelation of the Quran to Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) through the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) in 610 CE in the city of Mecca.
- Arabs of pre-Islamic times used to fast during this month as a ritual cleansing.
- The practice of fasting during Ramadan was formalized through a Quranic verse revealed in the second year after Muhammad's (PBUH) migration to Medina.

Religious and Spiritual Significance:

- One of the Five Pillars of Islam which form the foundation of Muslim life.
- Fasting during Ramadan is an obligatory act of sincere worship and obedience to God (Allah).
- It enables the believer to attain closeness to God and seek His pleasure, mercy and forgiveness.
- Develops God-consciousness (Taqwa), self-restraint and combat against one's baser desires/habits.
- Renews focus on Quran recitation, reflection on its teachings, and understanding God's guidance.

Fasting

The Central Practice

Fasting during Ramadan requires abstaining from all:

- Food and drinks (including water)
- Sexual relations
- Smoking and mind-altering substances
- Gossiping, swearing, lying or any unethical conduct

From: Dawn (Fajr prayer) until Sunset (Maghrib prayer) each day.

Rules for Fasting:

- Fasting is only obligatory for mentally sound, healthy adults.
- The pre-dawn meal (Suhoor) must be consumed before dawn.
- The fast is broken at sunset with a meal (Iftar)

Why Muslims Fast:

Fasting enables spiritual purification, creates empathy with those in need, reduces distractions from material pleasures, and develops patience, humility and gratitude. The physical element of fasting is combined with spiritual devotion to attain God's pleasure.

Daily Rituals & Traditions

Suhoor - The pre-dawn meal consumed before beginning the daily fast at sunrise. Typically includes foods high in protein and complex carbs to sustain energy levels.

Fasting (Sawm) - Total abstinence from all food, drinks, smoking and sexual relations from dawn to sunset. Also avoiding gossip, lying, anger and all unethical conduct.

Iftar - The evening meal where Muslims break their daily fast at sunset. Typically dates and water or milk are consumed first.

Daily Prayers (Salah) - Muslims pray 5 obligatory prayers a day, facing the direction of the Kaaba shrine in Mecca. More devotion is given to these prayers during Ramadan.

Taraweeh - Additional lengthy nightly congregational prayers reciting long portions of the Quran. Usually performed at mosques but can also be done at home.

Laylat Al-Qadr (Night of Power) - Marking the night in the final 10 days of Ramadan when the first verses of the Quran were revealed to Prophet Muhammad. Considered the holiest night of the year.

Quran Recitation - More time is dedicated to reciting and reflecting on the teachings of the Quran. Some mosques conduct Tafsir sessions (classes explaining the Quran).

Charity (Zakat) - Enhanced charitable giving and volunteer work are encouraged, especially serving the poor, needy or those fasting.

Purposes & Transformative Impact

Ramadan enables Muslims to attain multiple objectives and experience spiritual, physical and social renewal:

Spiritual Purification

- Cultivate sincere devotion and obedience to God.
- Detach from distractions of material life and bad habits.
- Develop God-consciousness, patience, humility and gratitude.
- Seek forgiveness from God and attain closeness to Him.
- Renew focus on Quran recitation and understanding its teachings.

Self-Restraint & Discipline

- Exercise self-control over desires, cravings and impulses.
- Build willpower and break addiction to habits like smoking.
- Manage anger, ego, greed and other negative emotions.
- Develop empathy for the hungry and impoverished.

Health & Wellness

- Detoxify spiritually and physically through intermittent fasting.
- Rest the digestive system and avoid over-consumption.
- Become more mindful of nutrition and consuming mindfully.
- Lose weight and kick unhealthy consumption habits.

Community & Charity

- Create unity and shared experience among Muslim communities.
- Bond with family and friends over nightly community iftar meals.
- Increase charitable giving, donating, and volunteer service.
- Forge connections and break down differences among people.

Who is Exempt from Fasting

While fasting is obligatory for mentally sound, healthy adult Muslims, certain groups are exempt from the fast:

- Children before reaching puberty.
- The elderly and frail, for whom fasting is very difficult.
- Pregnant and nursing women who have concerns over their own health or their child's.
- Those with chronic illnesses or disabilities that make fasting unbearable or risky.
- Those taking medications that may interact adversely with fasting.
- Women on their menstrual cycle.
- Long distance travelers.

Temporary Exemptions:

- Short-term illnesses such as flu or food poisoning that make fasting difficult.
- For example: those with COVID-19 symptoms, illness or recovery during Ramadan.

Employers should understand and avoid making assumptions. Those who are exempt from fasting can often make up the missed days later in the year when they are able.

Considerations for Legal Employers

With over 1.5 million Muslims living in Texas, it is highly likely that law firms and legal employers will have Muslim employees observing the fast during Ramadan each year. Here are key considerations for supporting them:

Scheduling & Productivity

- Expect some requests for flexible hours, work-from-home, split breaks.
- Avoid mandatory events/trainings during typical fasting hours if possible.
- Employees may feel more fatigued in the first week before adjusting.
- Allow flexibility and avoid assumptions about productivity decline.

Leaves & Religious Accommodations

- Expect requests for paid or unpaid leaves of 1-2 weeks around Ramadan.
- Be prepared to accommodate time-off requests around Eid holidays.
- Provide clean, private spaces for daily prayers if possible, in accordance with accommodation policies.
- Train managers on religious accommodation policies and procedures.

Workplace Culture

- Host educational sessions on Ramadan practices to raise awareness.
- Make efforts to include fasting staff in business meetings & social events.
- Avoid making assumptions about who is or is not fasting.
- Defer offering foods/beverages. Be considerate at meals/events.
- Plan your own workplace events/socials at non-fasting times if possible.

Eid al-Fitr

Celebration of Renewal

Eid al-Fitr is a joyous global festival marking the successful completion of the spiritual journey of Ramadan. Muslims observe it through:

- 1. Eid Prayers** - Congregational Eid prayers at mosques early in the morning on Eid day, involving special sermons and remembrance.
- 2. Gift Giving** - Giving gifts like new clothing, money, toys, sweets - especially to young children - is a joyous Eid tradition.
- 3. Charity** - Donations and acts of charity are emphasized before Eid.
- 4. Feasting & Community** - Social gatherings, parties, carnivals, festivities with delicious foods and treats. A celebration of togetherness.
- 5. Time Off & Travel** - Many Muslims take 1-2 days off work for Eid prayers and family visits. Travel to ancestral hometowns is common.

Eid Greetings: Muslims greet one another with the phrases "**Eid Mubarak**" (Blessed Eid).

Eid Dates: The exact date is based on moon sighting and calculated by local communities. Employers should be prepared for leave requests on either of the 2 days Eid may fall on.

Health, Wellness & Safety

During Ramadan

While fasting can be spiritually uplifting, it also requires adjustments to maintain proper health, wellness and safety:

Physical Health

- Allow flexible scheduling for fatigue and sluggishness in the first week.
- Provide cool resting areas. Adjust demanding physical work.
- Ensure access to water and encourage proper hydration pre/post-fasting.

Mental Health

- Check in on staff regularly for signs of burnout, irritability, anxiety.
- Accommodate needs for counseling support, mental health days off.
- Offer mindfulness training, meditation sessions.

Safety

- Make adjustments to ensure fasting staff can safely operate machinery, drive or do hazardous tasks.
- Fatigue and dehydration may impact coordination, focus, reaction times.

Nutrition

- Educate on healthy suhoor and iftar meals for sustained energy.
- Recommend nutritious options high in complex carbs, proteins, fruits, vegetables.

Employer Resources

- Promote on-site employee resource groups for mutual support.
- Offer webinars, health & nutrition guidance on healthy fasting practices.

Frequently Asked Questions

General Fasting Queries

Q: How many Muslims fast for Ramadan globally?

A: Over 1 billion healthy adult Muslims worldwide observe the Ramadan fast annually.

Q: Do all Muslims have to fast during Ramadan?

A: No, fasting is only religiously obligated for the healthy, mentally sound adults. Groups like children, the elderly, sick and women who are pregnant/menstruating are exempt.

Q: Do fasting Muslims have to make up missed days?

A: Yes, if fasting days are missed due to travel or temporary illness, they make up those missed days later in the year.

Q: Can Muslims drink water while fasting?

A: No, Muslims abstain completely from all food and drinks, even water, from dawn until sunset during Ramadan fasts.

Q: Do Muslims fast while traveling?

A: Muslims who travel long distances during Ramadan are exempt from fasting for the days they are traveling, and make up those later.

Q: Can a fasting Muslim get injections or intravenous IVs?

A: Most scholars rule that injections or IVs providing direct nutrition invalidate the fast. Non-nutritional injections are generally permitted.

Q: Do Muslims fast for Ramadan if they work night shifts?

A: Yes, night shift workers still need to fast during daylight hours and can eat their meals before dawn and after sunset.

Frequently Asked Questions

Employer-Related Questions

Q: What adjustments should be made for fasting employees?

A: Offer flexibility with schedules, core hours, work-from-home, break times. Allow time off requests. Provide clean spaces for prayers. Defer offering food/drinks.

Q: Do we need to change project timelines due to Ramadan?

A: Review major deadlines and avoid mandatory events during typical fasting hours if possible. Some adjustment may be needed.

Q: Should we plan company social events during Ramadan?

A: Try to schedule workplace social events outside of sunup to sundown hours. Consider holding meal functions in the evenings after sunset.

Q: Are all Muslims spiritually uplifted during Ramadan?

A: While many find Ramadan spiritually reinvigorating, fasting can also impact mental health for some. Stay aware of employee wellbeing.

Q: Do employers need to allow time off for Eid prayers?

A: Yes, it is recommended employers accommodate 1-2 days off for Eid prayers, family visits and celebrations per religious accommodation policies.

Q: Should employers distribute Eid gifts to Muslim employees?

A: While not required, giving a small gift or card can be a thoughtful gesture to acknowledge Eid. Consult Muslim employees on appropriate practices.

Building Connections & Resources

Thank You

For Texas law firms and employers wishing to
build greater connections, offer support, or
access additional resources:

Contact the Muslim Legal Society of Texas

Website: mlstexas.org

Email: salam@mlstexas.org



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