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| **Introduction**Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr this year will occur 23 April to 23 May 2020, during the expected peak of the COVID-19 outbreak. Despite the additional pressure that the COVID-19 pandemic has created, it is essential that managers consider these guidelines for the health and well-being of Muslim staff in a way that does not negatively impact on project safety or service delivery. It is advised that staff observing Ramadan have conversations with managers to mitigate any risks to the project or their role.Skanska would like to commend all staff still working either on site or from home during the COVID-19 outbreak. This is a great act of giving and sacrifice and the rewards in Ramadan will be multiplied manifold. For Muslim staff who would like further guidance on COVID-19 and its impact on Muslim communities and Mosques, please see the [Muslim Council of Britain](https://mcb.org.uk/mcb-updates/coronavirus-guidance-for-mosques-and-madrassas/) website for more details.**Advice for staff fasting during Ramadan**The fast lasts between dawn and sunset. It is compulsory for all healthy adult Muslims (who are otherwise not exempt) on reaching puberty; it is a total fast, with complete abstinence from both food and drink. Fast starts from dawn and finishes at sunset. A Ramadan timetable can be obtained from the local mosque.Do let your manager know you will be fasting and discuss the impact it may have on your routine or habits. They can then support you by considering reasonable workplace adjustments. They will also be able to seek your guidance on and alert you to events where iftar meals may be served.Where you can, balance your workday. Try to organise your day so that rotas, meetings and conference calls happen, where possible, when you are at your most alert, ensuring that your colleague’s own requirements and normal work tasks are also considered.Any annual leave requests should be discussed with your line manager well in advance and while booking, discuss how you can maintain minimal impact on team working.Try to ensure that you take your usual allocated breaks throughout the day, and where possible, get some fresh air at these times.Discuss with your manager how you can make provision for prayer times during the working day.Drink lots of water throughout the period when you are not fasting to keep hydrated thereby avoiding headaches and tiredness.Staff who are not well (COVID-19 related or generally) or pregnant, please consider the concession provided by the religion whereby these groups are excused from fasting. Seek medical advice if you are unsure. The missed fasts can be made up later in the year once you feel capable.**Advice for managers and supervisors**Do not make assumptions about who in your team may be observing Ramadan – Islam is a faith that welcomes people of all races and backgrounds. Observing Ramadan may not be noticeable so make it easy for your team members to let you know if they are fasting.If you manage a member of staff who will be observing Ramadan, ensure that you have some one-to-one time to discuss any workplace adjustments that can be considered. Fasting can affect people in different ways. For example, some people may understandably become a little quieter or slightly tired at times.Dignity and respect from managers and colleagues is helpful and expected. Be aware that fasting colleagues will not even be drinking any fluid (including water) and they may therefore feel less energetic and even less inclined to join in office conversations on occasions – don’t take it personally and ensure communication can be made in other ways where possible.Workplace adjustments should not impact negatively on their normal safe working practices and delivery. Managers and staff can discuss and consider options such as occasional working from home where appropriate to the role and individual circumstances, core hour working where time can be made up in lieu, and provision for paid and unpaid leave where viable. When Ramadan falls in summer months it can be particularly challenging, as days are longer.If members of the team observing Ramadan feel comfortable doing so, encourage normal discussions about Ramadan and how the team can best support them. Colleagues who are fasting will not expect others, who are not observing Ramadan to do the same, so please don’t feel anxious about making a cup of tea for the team or eating your lunch. However, please be sensitive by not continually offering them a piece of cake!You may find that some staff request up two weeks annual leave towards the end of Ramadan to help focus on and intensify their acts of worship. This should be treated as any other annual leave request, therefore managers using their judgment to ensure that negative impact on the team is mitigated against but should try and accommodate as fully as possible.Please ensure staff have reasonable time during the day to complete prayers and an appropriate space is allocated for this purpose. With the additional pressure on staff due to COVID-19, staff may have to vary their times for daily prayers and, hence it is important that staff are provided with a place, during Ramadan for prayer where possible. |
| **Distribution:****Action required:** |