



Community Announcement

Covid-19 and congregational prayers

The protection of life is the highest principle in Islamic Law. Shariah permits a Muslim, faced with a life-threatening pandemic such as Covid-19 (coronavirus), to not attend the five daily congregational prayers and the Friday prayer.

This is especially important with Covid-19 because it is spread through close social interaction. The Government's recommendation is that we keep a distance of about 2 meters from other people. Clearly this means we cannot pray as we would usually.

Therefore, FIANZ recommends all Islamic associations and mosque managements throughout New Zealand to consider suspending all congregational prayers in mosques, halls and wherever else prayers may normally be conducted.

Groups of brothers should not be tempted to organize their own congregational prayers. Instead, we encourage Muslims to pray at home individually or with their family. A normal 4 rak'at Dhuhr prayer is permissible in the place of the Friday prayer.

In making this recommendation, we are following the lead of leading Islamic centres around the globe. Religious authorities and many reputed scholars have considered this deeply and issued fatwas accordingly. Measures like this are not without precedent in our history.

COVID-19, like the flu, can be spread from person to person. When a person who has COVID-19 coughs, sneezes or talks, they may spread droplets containing the virus a short distance, which quickly settle on surrounding surfaces. You may get infected by the virus if you touch those surfaces or objects and then touch your mouth, nose or eyes.

That's why it's really important to use good hygiene, regularly wash and thoroughly dry your hands, and use good cough etiquette.

How to protect yourself and others

- Cough or sneeze into your elbow or by covering your mouth and nose with tissues.
- Put used tissues in the bin or a bag immediately.
- Wash your hands with soap and water often (for at least 20 seconds).

- Try to avoid close contact with people who are unwell.
- Don't touch your eyes, nose or mouth if your hands are not clean.
- Avoid personal contact, such as kissing, sharing cups or food with sick people.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects, such as doorknobs.
- Stay home if you feel unwell.
- Call Healthline on 0800 358 5453 if you have any symptoms and have been to any countries or territories of concern or have been in close contact with someone confirmed with COVID-19.

The symptoms of COVID-19 are:

- a cough
- a high temperature (at least 38°C)
- shortness of breath.

We don't yet know how long symptoms take to show after a person has been infected, but current World Health Organization assessments suggest that it is 2–10 days.

Please get updates from Government sources. Ignore possibly incorrect information from unauthorized sources. Let us be united in stopping the spread of this disease and pray to Allah SWT that we get rid of this before the start of Ramadhan.

Tariq Saeed

Secretary FIANZ

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