

Sha'baan 21, 1441 (April 15, 2020)

In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful

RAMADAN ADVISORY FOR THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY IN HAMILTON

All praise belongs to Allah, peace and blessings be upon the messenger of Allah. Dear Community members, AS-Salamu Alaikum wa Rahmatullah! We pray to Almighty Allah that you are keeping healthy and safe alongside your loved ones. We, the Imams of the various local mosques in Hamilton, would like to share with you this important information as we prepare ourselves to receive the month of Ramadan in these very unusual and challenging times with the global pandemic of Covid-19. United we pray and continue to supplicate that this hardship be lifted quickly.

Introduction:

We understand how difficult it has been for higher authorities to make decisions in the midst of a pandemic. In a similar manner, understand the hardship that we face making unprecedented decisions at these durable moments. The matter of Ramadan was never historically left to public discussion. This major decision was made by the Qadhee (Supreme Judge) of the locality, under the auspices of the Haakim (Ruler). In Muslim majority countries, such decision is made by the appropriate sector/office in the government. In our communities in the West, matters of Fiqhi debate that affect the general public are made by various scholarly bodies in the country and in this particular scenario, the scholars and Imams of this City of Hamilton, after crosschecking with international, national and local Muslim scholarly bodies such as Assembly of Muslim Jurists of America (AMJA), Canadian Council of Imams (CCI), Canadian Council of Muslim Theologians (CCMT), Fiqh Council of North America (FCNA), European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR), and confirmation with the appropriate authorities in the health sector.

Ramadan 1441 AH:

As per the Fiqh Council of North America (FCNA):

First day of Ramadan 1441 AH shall be Friday April 24, 2020.

Last day of Ramadan 1441 AH shall be Saturday May 23, 2020.

For details of Ramadan Timetable, please consult with your respective mosque's websites or newsletters.

Function of Mosques:

Unless the Authorities ease the restrictions, the Imams Council of Greater Hamilton (ICGH) is disheartened to ***extend the closure order of all local Mosques to the public until further notice.*** In addition to the suspension of regular Mosques' activities, **all Ramadan related activities of the Mosques will be suspended including: *Iftaar gatherings, Etikaaf program, Taraweeh and Tahajjud prayers.***

Virtual Jama'ah Salah (online Congregational Prayer)

The valid madhhabs do agree that very long distances (such as in live broadcast of Salah) cannot be overlooked, and that this would nullify the Salah. Hence, it is the consensus of the overwhelming majority of the Scholars that sharing of physical space, continuity of the rows, and the ability to follow the movements of the Imam simultaneously are required for validity of Jama'ah Salah (Congregational prayer).

Therefore, the Imams Council of Greater Hamilton (ICGH) renders virtual Jama'ah Salah (online congregational prayer) to be invalid.

Taraweeh prayer:

Viewing many different Fatawa that were made available to us and discussing the matter in depth. The Imams Council of Greater Hamilton (ICGH) has reached the following conclusion:

- Saving lives from an anticipated danger such as the covid-19 virus takes precedence over establishing prayers in the Mosques, whether these prayers are compulsory or optional.
- Suspension of compulsory prayers (Five daily prayers, Friday Prayer) while establishing voluntary prayers (Such as Taraweeh & Tahjajjud) is contradictory to the spirit of Islam. That being said, Taraweeh Prayer is voluntary/optional and not fardh (mandatory).
- Giving preference to any individual to attend a service of the Masjid will be considered favoritism. Therefore, limitation of even five congregants will also be considered unfair.
- Thus, ***there will be no Taraweeh prayers established in any of the mosques throughout The City of Hamilton***, as it is permissible to establish it at home, which the Prophet (SAW) and the companions did in the early stages of Islam.

Recommendation for Muslim Families:

The ICGH pleads to all Muslims not to limit spirit of Ramdan only to the Mosques, and ***recommends that Muslim families revive the spirit of this Holy month at their homes by:***

- designate a certain area or room in your home as a Musalla (Prayer room)
- Assign one of the children or youngsters to call Adhaan and Iqamah.
- Pray in Congregation as a family, and maintain the Sunnah of Taraweeh with our families.
- Use creative methods to bring a positive and exciting Ramadan atmosphere at home. you may do so with activities such as: Sharing a family story time, reading and discussing a daily Hadith, conducting an in-home Quran Halaqah, a family quiz competition, etc.
- stay connected with your Mosques and Imams virtually.

Sadaqatul Fitr:

The ICGH determined that ***Sadaqatul Fitr for Ramadan of this year shall be \$10/person (minimum)***. We encourage you to contact your respective Mosque to find out how to deliver your Sadaqatul Fitr in a timely fashion inshaAllah.

Unified Virtual Ramadan Programs:

To stay connected with the community and to reach out to as many people as possible during these unprecedented times, *The Imams Council of Greater Hamilton (ICGH) is working to offer a variety of alternative virtual Ramadan programs, such as:*

- Live daily sessions in English with local Imams/speakers.
- Live sessions in various languages (Arabic, Urdu, Dari, Somali, Bosnian and Turkish)
- Live daily Quran Recitation by local Imams and Huffaz (Total of two Khatmas during Ramadan)
- Live daily short Hadeeth/Khaterah with a Du'aa half an hour before sunset time.
- Live daily short Quran Recitation by young participants of the Annual Quran Competition.
- Live daily Quiz Competition with prizes to be won.

Please stay tuned for the details of schedules, speakers, Qaris, and quiz questions.

Support your local Mosques:

We understand that almost everyone in our communities have been financially affected with this widespread pandemic of Covid-19. Our local mosques depend on and operate on your generous contributions. Thus, supporting your local mosques, food banks, and relief organizations during these challenging times takes precedence over other matters. Please remember that Ramadan is a golden opportunity to give and reap multitude of rewards, and the best time to spend for the sake of Allah is when you yourself are in a dire need.

Wassalam Alaikum warhmatullah wa barakatuh.

Signed by

Shaikh Arafat Elashi- Muslim Association of Hamilton

Shaikh Sayed Tora- Muslim Association of Hamilton

Shaikh Kamal Gurgi - Hamilton Downtown Mosque

Shaikh Ismail Fetic- Bosnian Islamic Centre of Hamilton

Shaikh Muhammad Abdullah Molvi- Ibrahim Jame Mosque

Shaikh Ayman Taher- Ibrahim Jame Mosque

Shaikh Asjed Bemat - Muslim Association of Hamilton

Shaikh Abdullah Qaderi - Muslim Association of Hamilton (Umar Mosque)

Br. Husam Hameed - EbuBekir Islamic Centre