

"Read! For your Lord is most Generous.

(It is He) who taught by means of the pen;

taught man that which he knew not."

The Quran, Chapter 96, Verses 3-5

CAIR

The Council on American-Islamic Relations
is a non-profit, membership organization dedicated
to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues
of importance to the American public.

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Glossary of Muslim Terms

- Eid** A holiday.
- Halal** Permissible by Islamic law.
- Hijab** Clothing Muslim women wear in public. It is generally loose-fitting and includes a head-covering. Also called *Khimar*.
- Jum'ah** Friday prayer.
- Kufi** A cap worn by some Muslim men.
- Qur'an** Islam's revealed scripture.
- Ramadan** The month of fasting.

CAIR Research Center

CAIR Research Center conducts research on the American Muslim experience. Dr. Mohamed Nimer is the research and author of CAIR guides to Islamic religious practices.

Demographers say that Islam is one of the fastest growing religions in the United States and around the world. American Muslims are found in all sectors of society. This presence is perhaps most evident in the public school system, where Muslim students of various racial and ethnic backgrounds make up an increasing percentage of the school population.

Recent studies show that most Muslim children are enrolled in public schools. This growing demographic segment adds a new dimension to be considered as educators work with issues of diversity. The information contained in this booklet is designed to assist teachers, principals and other educators in formulating and implementing policies and programs that will help to create a culturally-sensitive academic environment. It will also serve as a guide for the accommodation of religiously-mandated practices of Muslim students.

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U.S. Legal Protection of Religious Rights

Prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, religious celebrations, as well as dietary and clothing requirements are practices of the Muslim faith. Such religious expressions are protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution, which protects the free exercise of

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religion. Moreover, the Equal Access Act of 1984 (upheld by the Supreme Court in 1990) affirmed the right of student-initiated religious activities in public schools.

Although Islamic religious practices have similarities to elements of other religions, the details of time and procedure that define what is proper religious practice may differ. The goal of this publication is to suggest practical steps to assist educators in accommodating the religious needs of Muslim students.

Dietary Requirements

The Qur'an (Islam's scripture) prohibits consumption of alcohol, pork, and any pork by-products or derivatives. Therefore, practicing Muslims are careful about the food they consume and how it is prepared. Muslims follow certain standards — called Halal (permissible by Islamic law) — in slaughter and preparation of meat and poultry. Some objectionable food items include:

- Pepperoni, sausage, and hot dogs containing pork.
- Bacon — alone or in soups, quiche, etc.
- Animal shortening — in breads, puddings, cookies, cakes, donuts, etc. Vegetable shortening is acceptable.
- Gelatin — in Jello, desserts, candies, marshmallows, chocolates, etc.
- Lard — in any product.

- Food ingredients containing alcohol, such as vanilla extract and Dijon mustard.

School lunch items containing ingredients derived from pork must be highlighted clearly, especially in elementary schools. For preschool and elementary food programs, many school cafeterias have been particularly helpful to Muslim parents and students by labeling such foods with a prominent visual marker, such as a red dot or a picture of a pig, for beginning readers.

Expressions of Personal Modesty

Islam prescribes that both men and women behave and dress modestly. Muslims believe that an emphasis on modesty encourages society to value individuals for their wisdom, skills and contribution to the community, rather than for physical attractiveness. There are a number of ways in which Muslims express such teachings.

Men and boys are always to be covered from the navel to the knee. Also, some male Muslim students wear a small head covering, called a kufi.

When in public, Muslim women wear loose-fitting, non-revealing clothing, known as hijab, or khimar. This attire, which may vary in style, includes a head covering.

The wearing of a head covering may lead to teasing by other students. Teachers should prevent classmates from pulling on or removing a Muslim student's scarf.

Religious Accommodation Suggestions

Pork and pork by-products in lunches

- Mark items with a red dot or a picture of a pig.

Muslim holidays

- Schedule exams and other major events around holidays.
- Do not mark students absent.

Ramadan fast

- Allow students to study in the library or elsewhere during lunch.

Physical education

- Discuss clothing requirements with Muslim parents.
- Reschedule classes for students preferring same-gender exercise environment.

Gender relations

- Do not extend hand first for handshake with opposite sex.
- Avoid touching when comforting students and parents of opposite sex.

Family life/sex education program

- Allow parents reasonable time to review any material dealing with "sex education."
- Allow children to opt-out from all or part of the family life program.

Prayer

- Allow Muslim students to pray in unused rooms.

Fairness in classroom and text presentations

- Check textbook for religious bias.
- Invite Muslim speakers to social studies and world religion classes.

a sign of disrespect to the symbol of the nation. Many Muslim parents teach their children to stand up but not to recite the pledge.

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In conclusion, with the recent leaps in communication technology and the changing demographics of our communities, American society is coming face to face with new cultures, new beliefs and new ideas. Giving students the tools to interact, to understand, and to learn from other cultures will offer them invaluable insights into the basic human qualities that we all share.

As the Qur'an says, "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (Not that you may despise each other)."

We hope the publication of this guide will be an important step toward that goal.

Adolescence and Gender Relations

Puberty is a major turning point in the life of a Muslim. For those who have reached puberty, Islam prescribes certain parameters for relations between the sexes. For example, many Muslims are reluctant to shake hands with the opposite sex, even with teachers or administrators. This should not be taken as an insult, but as a sign of personal modesty.

Also, Muslims may raise religious objections to coed physical education classes and to school-sponsored dances. Students should not be pressured to participate or penalized for not taking part in such activities.

Physical Education

Muslim boys and girls may not take same-sex communal after-sport showers without wearing appropriate covering of their bodies. Private showers should be made available, or gym classes could be scheduled in a late period, allowing the student to shower at home.

School administrators may discuss with students alternative clothing in physical education classes. Alternatives could include knee-length shorts for boys and full track suits for girls.

Muslim students should not be forced to participate in coed swimming classes. Schools that require swimming skills have offered outside certification as an option.

Muslim Holidays

There are several days in the Muslim calendar with special religious significance, but the major celebrations common to all Muslims are the two Eid (holiday) days. The first Eid day is celebrated on the day after the month of Ramadan (the month of fasting). The second is celebrated on the tenth day of the twelfth Islamic month.

The festivities include congregational prayer, gatherings with family and friends, and gifts and entertainment, especially for children. A typical greeting on these occasions is "Eid Mubarak," or "Blessed Eid." To accommodate the needs of students during these observances, schools should add Muslim holidays to their calendars.

Celebrating Eid requires that Muslims take at least one day off from school. There should be no penalty for this religious obligation. Because the occurrence of Eid depends on the sighting of the new moon, the exact date can only be determined with certainty the night before. Muslim communities around the country would like to see that Eid receives recognition similar to that given to Christmas and Hanukkah, especially in schools where Muslims constitute a significant segment of the student population.

Where the number of Muslim students is low, schools can demonstrate commitment to diversity by refraining from marking students absent when they do not attend school on

not take offense if the worshipper does not answer their call during the prayer. However, in case of an emergency, the Muslim will respond to an announcement by stopping the prayer immediately.

Organizing Prayers Through Extracurricular Clubs

Teachers need not be involved in any way in student-initiated prayers. Muslim students, like their counterparts from other faiths, can establish extracurricular clubs to organize prayer activities.

Friday Congregational Prayer

In Islam, Friday is the day for congregational worship, called Jum'ah. It is an obligation that must be fulfilled. Jum'ah lasts about one hour and takes place at the mosque during midday prayer. Those who are conscientious about attending this prayer may request a temporary release from school or an extended lunch period.

In high schools and universities where the number of students interested in performing the prayer is large, the function can be conducted by students on the school premises.

Pledge of Allegiance

Islam discourages acts of reverence to anyone or anything but God. Some Muslims may be hesitant to recite the pledge of allegiance. This, however, should not be taken as

Daily Prayer

Islam urges "God consciousness" in the individual's life. To that end, Islam prescribes that believers perform prayer five times each day. Two such times, a few minutes after meridian of the sun and approximately two hours after that, may fall within regular school hours. It usually takes less than 15 minutes to accomplish the religious requirements of the prayer.

Washing

Before each prayer, Muslims are required to wash their faces, hands and feet with clean water. This washing is normally performed in a rest room sink or other facility that has running water, and takes about two minutes.

Prayer Space and Time

During the act of worship, which include specific recitations from the Qur'an, the Muslim will stand, bow and touch the forehead to the ground. Worship may be performed in any quiet, clean room. During the prayer, the worshiper will face toward Mecca (generally northeast in America). Total privacy is not required. However, others should not walk in front of or interrupt the worshiper during the prayer.

When the Muslim prays, he or she is fully engaged. He or she may not respond to a conversation. Students and teachers should

Eid. Also, major events (games, exams, plays, etc.) should be scheduled around these holidays.

Fasting

Islamic holy days and festivals follow the lunar calendar. Like the solar calendar, it has twelve months. However, a lunar month, which is marked by the appearance of a new crescent moon, may last only 29 days. As a result, the lunar year is about 11 days shorter than the solar year.

The month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, is the time when Muslims are required to fast. Fasting during Ramadan is one of the five "pillars" of Islam. (The other pillars include a declaration of faith, daily prayer, offering regular charity, and pilgrimage to Mecca.)

Observing the Ramadan fast means refraining from eating and drinking from break of dawn to sunset. The dates of this fast change each year, so the fast will eventually rotate throughout the full solar year. Ramadan is a period of self-restraint and a time to focus on moral conduct. It is also a time to empathize with those who are less fortunate and appreciate what one has.

Fasting is prescribed when children reach the age of puberty. Still, Muslim families allow their young children to experiment with fasting. Fasting students should be allowed to go to the school library instead of

the cafeteria during lunch. Also, they should be excused from strenuous physical activity during the fast.

To turn the diversity in the classroom to educational advantage, a teacher may invite a Muslim student or guest speaker to explain the practices and traditions surrounding the Ramadan fast. This will help the Muslim student avoid a feeling of awkwardness about not having lunch with his or her fellow students during the month. By providing opportunities for students of varied religious backgrounds to share their special occasions, the school helps to support parents and communities in their efforts to teach beneficial values. Such information is also important preparation for students as future citizens.

Curriculum Issues

Many Muslims feel their faith has been treated with bias in textbooks and school programs. Although availability of more accurate and balanced instructional material is increasing, the continued use of outdated material in social studies and world history classes reinforces perceptions of Islam as a foreign creed and Muslims as enemies.

Such divisiveness has contributed to incidents of harassment and violence against Muslim children by their schoolmates. In a number of cases, Muslim children have been mocked as "devil worshippers," "sand n--gers,"

and "camel jockeys."

School boards may want to review policies and programs in light of the increasing Muslim population in the public school system. Textbooks that contribute to religious prejudice are not suitable for educating students. Books that lack reliable information are usually replete with mistakes about the basic Islamic beliefs. One common error is the definition of "Allah" as a particular Muslim god rather than the same God of Christianity and Judaism. Qualified Muslim educators should participate in the textbook selection process, particularly for history, social studies and geography texts.

Family Life/Sex Education

Family life and sex education material presented in schools is another sensitive matter to Muslims. In Islam individuals become religiously responsible for their deeds when they reach puberty. Islam puts great emphasis on modesty, chastity and morality and there is a specific set of teachings with regard to human development and its related issues.

Close contact with local Islamic centers is essential to encourage input from the Muslim community. Class materials should be available for review and parents should have the option to remove their children from all or part of the program.

RELIGIOUS
Practices

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Ramadan Fast

Ramadan is a period of personal restraint and a time to focus on moral conduct. The month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, is the time in which Muslims are required to fast. Observing Ramadan means refraining from eating and drinking from dawn to sunset. This implies a temporary change in food schedule. The morning meal, called suhoor (pre-dawn meal), must be taken before dawn, when the early morning light breaks the darkness. The evening meal, called iftar (fast-breaking meal) must be served immediately after sunset.

Sick persons are not required to fast during Ramadan, but they must make up missed days after recovery. If the patient still wishes to observe the fast, oral medications can be rescheduled for intake during the night. Injections do not invalidate the fast unless they are nutritious or used as substitute for nutrition.

Almsgiving

Caring for the poor and disadvantaged is considered a foundation of the Islamic faith. For Muslims with ability, there are mandatory annual and seasonal obligations of giving charity. The Islamic tradition requires Muslims to give a portion of their wealth to eligible categories of the needy. Also, Islam recommends generous charitable giving in general--no matter what personal circumstance, as even a smile is charity.

Pilgrimage

Every capable Muslim is obliged to go on a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in a lifetime during the pilgrimage season, which starts two months after Ramadan. The round trip and the

religious rites in the holy places usually take seven to ten days.

Muslim Holidays

Eid (Day of festivity) is the main holiday celebrated by Muslims twice a year. The first, Eid al Fitr, is celebrated at the end of the month of Ramadan. The second, Eid al Adha, is celebrated on the tenth day of the twelfth Islamic month. A typical greeting on these occasions is Eid Mubarak (Blessed Eid). Celebrating Eid requires that Muslims take only one day off from work. A special congregational prayer for the whole community takes place in the morning between sunrise and noon. The festivities usually include carnivals for children, family visitations, gift exchanges, and community meals.

There are other days of religious significance for Muslims. These include:

Night of Power (Lailat al-Qadr): This observance occurs during the last ten days of Ramadan. Muslims believe the revelation of the Qur'an began on that night. Devout Muslims offer special prayers throughout the night. During this time Muslims may stay at the mosque all night, or even go to the mosque during the "wee hours."

Ashura: This commemoration occurs on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Muslim calendar. It marks the day when God saved Moses and the believers from Pharaoh and his soldiers. Following the example of the Prophet Muhammad, many Muslims fast on that day and another day before or after the event. Ashura also commemorates the martyrdom of Hussein, grandson of the Prophet Muhammad and the third most revered Imam for the Shi'a Muslim com-

munity (which represents about 10-15 percent of Muslims). Gatherings are conducted in which this historical event and its lessons are memorialized.

Al-Isra wal-Miraj (The Night Journey and Ascension): This event is marked on the 27th day of Rajab, the seventh month in the Islamic calendar. The Qur'an states that the Prophet Muhammad was taken by the power of God on a night journey from Mecca to the Aqsa Mosque in Jerusalem. From there, he was then taken to Heaven, where he received the order to start the practice of the obligatory daily prayer. Gatherings are conducted in which the story of the miraculous journey is told from religious texts.

Mosques usually experience higher attendance levels around and during these occasions. Consequently, traffic around mosques becomes heavier than usual. During Ramadan, mosques may be busy with people even late into the night, and before dawn.

Clothing

Islam prescribes that both men and women behave and dress modestly. Muslims believe that men and women should be valued as members of society who must be judged by their wisdom, skills and contribution to community, and not by their physical attributes. There are a number of ways in which Muslims express such teachings:

Men

Some men wear a beard and/or a small head covering, called a Kufi. Some men wear long tunics or robes to cover their bodies more fully.

Qur'an and Other Literature

The Qur'an is the most important source of religious knowledge for Muslims. Muslims revere it as the last revelation from God to mankind. If an officer has cause to believe the Qur'an may contain any contraband, it may be inspected and, if needed, taken as evidence. Should Qur'ans be seized, they should not be placed on the floor and should be handled with respect as much as possible. This way, officers can demonstrate that they separate the actions of suspects from a holy scripture cherished by all Muslims. Requirements of religious sensitivity, of course, are superseded by safety concerns under emergency circumstances.

Beards

Following the example of the Prophet Muhammad, many Muslim men wear beards. Some Muslim scholars are of the opinion that wearing of a beard is a religious obligation. Cleanliness and proper appearance are required by Islamic teachings.

Muslim Calendar

There are several days in the Muslim calendar with special religious significance. Islamic holy days and festivals follow the lunar calendar. Like the solar calendar, there are twelve lunar months. However, a lunar month, which is marked by the appearance of a new crescent moon on the horizon, may last only 29 days. Thus, a lunar year has about 11 days fewer than the solar year. Therefore, it is important for administrators to note that the dates of Muslim observances and special celebrations change each year because of this difference between the solar and lunar calendars.

announcement as to the nature of the emergency will suffice to interrupt and, if needed, stop the prayer. During the act of worship, in both individual and congregational prayer, specific verses from the Qur'an are recited silently or aloud, and the Muslim will stand, bow and touch the forehead to the ground. During the prayers, the worshiper will face in a direction towards Mecca, called qiblah—which is generally northeast in America. Before the prayer, Muslims are required to wash their faces, hands and feet with pure water. This ablution, called wudu, is normally performed in a restroom sink or other facility that has running water.

Friday Congregational Prayer

In Islam, Friday is the day for weekly congregational services, called Jum'ah. This event takes the place of the daily nighttime prayer and includes a sermon, called the Khutbah, which is delivered by an Imam (Prayer Leader). Some Friday congregational prayers may take about 60-90 minutes; others may last until the afternoon prayer. This is especially true in winter, when there is only about two-hour difference between the noon and the afternoon prayer times. The Jum'ah prayer is held in a mosque or other community space.

Because of the rapid Muslim population growth taking place in many parts of the country, mosques conduct several services on Fridays. Fire departments are advised to schedule random inspections on other days. Should any necessary business be conducted involving the premises of Islamic centers on Friday, that business must be completed before 10:00 A.M. or scheduled to start after 3:00 P.M.

Women

When in public, Muslim women tend to wear loose-fitting, non-revealing clothing. In the presence of unrelated men, Muslim women wear attire known as hijab in observance of religious commands. This attire, which may vary in style, usually includes covering the hair, neck, and body, except the face and hands. Some women following strict religious interpretations may wear niqab, or a face veil.

Muslim Names

Converts to Islam often adopt Muslim names. Popular names include the name of the Prophet Muhammad and other prophets mentioned in the Qur'an. Common Muslim names may be hyphenated (even though in some spellings the hyphen may be dropped). The first part of the name may be Abd (or Abdul), which means servant. The second part may be one of the names or attributes of God, ninety-nine of which are mentioned in the Qur'an. For example, Abdul-Rahim (sometimes spelled Abdurrahim or Abdelrahim) means the Servant of the Most Merciful.

Still, one must be cautious of stereotypes. Some non-Muslims may have what some may believe to be Muslim-sounding names, while Muslims may bear names lacking any religious influence.

Prayer Rugs

Muslims may typically be seen praying on special rugs. A prayer rug is about the size of a large towel. The prayer rug may be searched as needed, but like the Qur'an should be treated with respect—never to be thrown away or stepped on. Muslims may use any clean, flat

ect, such as cardboard or a piece of paper, in
ce of a prayer rug.

Rights of Muslim Law Enforcement Officers

Some Muslim law enforcement officers have successfully settled job discrimination complaints, which often involved religious accommodation concerns; others had to seek help through the legal system. Such religiously mandated expressions are protected by the following provisions in the Bill of Rights and federal law:

- The First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which protects the free exercise of religion.
- Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which provides that an employer may not discriminate against a person because he/she adheres to a particular faith, and that employers must accommodate an employee's religious practices unless doing so would cause undue hardship to the employer.
- In a number of cases the courts have affirmed the right of Muslims to exercise their religious precepts. On October 4, 1999, the Supreme Court let stand a lower court ruling in favor of bearded Muslim police officers against the Newark Police Department's no-beard policy. The ruling, issued by the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit Court in *Fraternal Order of Police v. City of Newark* (App. No. 97-5542), stated:

Because the Department makes exemptions from its policy for secular reasons and has not offered any substantial justification for refusing to provide similar treatment for officers who are required to wear beards for religious reasons,

opportunity to periodically, reflect upon his or her life with the intention to turn away from wrongdoing in favor of the straight path.

Daily Prayer

Islam urges "God-consciousness" in the individual's life. To that end, Islam prescribes prayers, which are considered reminders for Muslims to be good. Muslims are required to offer mandatory prayers at the following times each day:

1. Morning Prayer (Fajr) may be offered from break-of-dawn until just before sunrise.
2. Noon Prayer (Zuhr) may be offered from just after midday until mid-afternoon.
3. Afternoon Prayer ('Asr) may be offered from late afternoon until just before sunset.
4. Sunset Prayer (Maghrib) may be offered from sunset until darkness.
5. Night Prayer (Isha) may be offered throughout the night hours.

Muslims usually keep prayer timetables, schedules calculated for specific geographic locations. While Islam encourages Muslims to pray at the mosque as many do every day, any dry space free of impurities is suitable for prayer. Thus it is not unusual to see Muslims fulfilling such acts of devotion in highway rest areas or other public places (e.g. at airports, shopping malls or on duty).

During the prayer time, the Muslim is fully engaged. He or she may not respond to a ringing telephone or conversation. Officers should not take offense if the worshiper does not answer their call during the prayer. However, in the case of an emergency, an

place in Islamic centers, which offered comfortable venue for interaction between law enforcement and Muslim communities. However, mistrust of the police and security agencies may be found among recent immigrants because of negative experiences they may have had in their countries of origin (where officers of the law have been implicated in corruption and abuse of the citizenry). Thus some may exhibit fear or reluctance when dealing with law enforcement authorities.

The Islamic Creed

The Muslim creed is simply a belief in six core elements: (1) The One God; (2) the angels; (3) the divine scriptures, which include the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospel, and the Qur'an; (4) the Messengers of God, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus, and Muhammad, who was the last prophet; (5) the Day of Judgment, when people will receive the reward (Heaven) or punishment (Hell) for their deeds on earth; (6) and supremacy of God's will.

Islam stresses that all believers are brothers and sisters who should work together to promote good and forbid evil. Thus, the Muslim concept of group solidarity assumes not only a positive collective will, but also an individual commitment to good deeds. Islam commands morality in personal life as well as justice and equity in relations between people.

To help the believers sustain the disciplined life Islam prescribes, the Qur'an makes obligatory on Muslims a number of practices including prayer, fasting, almsgiving and pilgrimage. Islamic devotions are meant to increase God-consciousness and to offer the believer an

we conclude that the Department's policy violates the First Amendment.

Death

It is essential that family members (or the local mosque, if family members cannot be reached) know immediately when a Muslim is dying or has died. All efforts must be made to ensure that a person's body is ceremonially washed according to Islamic teachings and buried in 24 hours if at all possible. A dying Muslim would appreciate help in turning his or her face toward Mecca (northeast in the United States), in accordance with Muslim practice. Muslims wash the body of the dead and bury him or her quickly. Cremation is not permissible and embalming should not be performed unless required by law. Muslims may have specified in their wills where they should be buried and who should handle their funeral and burial. Such requests should be accommodated.

Autopsy

Islam prohibits the mutilation of dead bodies because it shows a lack of respect for the dead. Unless required in connection with an investigation of a crime, an autopsy should not be performed.

General Interaction

It is appropriate to keep a physical space when dealing with members of the Muslim community. Words of sympathy for victims of crime are considered adequate emotional support. Some Muslims may be uncomfortable with gestures that include any touching, especially from the opposite gender, because of religious concepts of modest behavior.

Officers speaking with a Muslim of the oppo-

site gender may observe that individual avoiding eye contact. Rather than being a sign of evasion or deceit, it is likely that the individual is following religious teachings of modesty which require "lowering the gaze."

Many Muslims, especially immigrants, may feel great fear or discomfort around dogs for cultural reasons. Canine officers should take this into account while performing their duties.

Body Searches

Islam prescribes certain parameters for relations between the sexes. For example, many Muslims may interact formally and are reluctant to shake hands with the opposite sex. This should not be taken as an insult, but as a sign of personal modesty.

Following religious teachings, Muslim females may want to stay fully covered in public and Muslim males may want to keep their bodies covered from the navel to the knees. Muslim detainees in facilities with open showers should be allowed to wrap themselves with large towels. The officer doing shakedown, including pat searches, should be of the same gender as the Muslim. Also, in non-emergency situations, frisking and strip-searches should be conducted while respecting the privacy of the suspect. Whenever the situation permits, female paramedics should attend to Muslim female patients.

Etiquette on Entering Homes and Mosques

Because Muslims kneel to the ground in prayer, they try to keep their flooring free of impurities. In mosques as well as places of residence, Muslims take off their shoes before stepping on carpeted areas (often upon entering the front door). When alone, Muslims may not invite officers of the opposite gender into the house,

The information contained in this publication is designed to assist law enforcement and other security personnel and administrators in formulating and implementing policies that will help create a culturally-sensitive environment and a cooperative relationship between American Muslims and law enforcement agencies. Because of the lack of experience many police officers and federal agents have about Islam, they may wonder what Islam and Muslims are. This publication does not aspire to provide a detailed description of Muslim life, rather it does attempt to highlight aspects that are most relevant to the law enforcement environment.

The booklet will also serve as a guide to the religiously mandated practices of Muslims who work for or have contact with security, and law enforcement entities. This guide is also designed as a quick reference tool to all emergency response professionals and volunteers, including firefighters and emergency medical technicians.

Muslims and the Law Enforcement Community

American Muslims emphasize respect for the law of the land, as the Islamic tradition maintains law and order as a top priority for a functioning society. The Qur'an regards the unjust taking of someone's life or property as a criminal behavior and great sin. The Islamic scripture also regards justice as a supreme value. Informed by these teachings, Muslims generally look favorably at law enforcement. On various circumstances American Muslim community organizations have met with law enforcement officials to discuss issues of cooperation. Meetings across the country took

<i>Lailat al-Qadr</i>	Night of Power, a religious occasion.
<i>Niqab</i>	A face veil worn by some Muslim women.
<i>Qiblah</i>	The direction of Mecca, which Muslims face during prayer.
<i>Qur'an</i>	Islam's scripture, sometimes spelled Koran.
<i>Ramadan</i>	The month of fasting.
<i>Suhoor</i>	Pre-dawn meal, eaten before the day's fast begins.
<i>Wudu</i>	Ablution, a ritual washing before prayer.

again, because of religious concepts of modesty. In non-emergency situations, officers demonstrate sensitivity when they adhere to such etiquette during visitation of Muslim places of worship. If conducting home searches, officers should allow women to cover in the presences of non related men.

Recruiting Muslims

Muslim community organizations encourage their members to join law enforcement. Still, many Muslims hesitate to do so. In the case of some recent immigrants, their countries of origin may have had police officers who were agents of repressive regimes. Other Muslims shun service believing that American law enforcement agencies tolerate an anti-Muslim bias. There have been many instances when Muslims were profiled based on their faith, ethnicity or political views. In some cases they were questioned or visited by federal agents at their homes or places of work based on unsubstantiated reports. Also, anti-Muslim remarks have been attributed to even some high officials. Law enforcement agencies can increase the chance of recruitment in the Muslim community by dispelling such fears and exhibiting utmost fairness at all times.

Muslim Community Outreach

There are about seven million Muslims in the U.S. and they are found in every state. For more information and questions, call the Council on American-Islamic Relations at (202) 488-8787. Also, check your local telephone directory for the nearby Islamic center to contact a local imam or an outreach officer. A local Muslim center may be located on the Internet by visiting <www.islamicfinder.com>. For more details

about the concerns of Muslim employees consult *An Employer's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices*. For more information on issues relevant to Muslims in detention, consult *A Correctional Institution's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices*. Both publications are available from CAIR at <publications@cair-net.org>. Muslim police officer groups can also help improve relations between the community and law enforcement institutions.

Glossary of Muslim Terms

<i>Al-Isra wal-Miraj</i>	Night Journey and Ascension, a religious occasion.
<i>Allah</i>	Arabic word for God.
<i>Ashura</i>	Name of a religious observance, which occurs on the tenth day of Muharram, the first month of the Muslim lunar calendar.
<i>Eid</i>	A day of festivity, major religious holiday.
<i>Eid Mubarak</i>	Greeting: Blessed Festival.
<i>Halal</i>	Permissible by Islamic law.
<i>Hijab</i>	Clothing Muslim women wear in public. It is generally loose-fitting and includes a head covering.
<i>Iftar</i>	Fast-breaking meal, eaten after sunset.
<i>Imam</i>	Prayer leader.
<i>Jum'ah</i>	Friday congregational prayer, the Muslim weekly worship service.
<i>Khutbah</i>	A sermon during Jum'ah.
<i>Kufi</i>	A cap sometimes worn by Muslim men.

Other Titles in This Series:

An Employer's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices

An Educator's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices

A Health Care Provider's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices

A Correctional Institution's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices

*"... Stand out firmly for justice,
as witnesses to God,
even as against yourselves,
or your parents,
or your kin,
and whether it be [against] rich or poor..."*

Qur'an, 4:135

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**LAW ENFORCEMENT
OFFICIAL'S GUIDE
TO THE
MUSLIM COMMUNITY**

The Council on American-Islamic Relations is a non-profit, membership organization dedicated to presenting an Islamic perspective on issues of importance to the American public. CAIR conducts sensitivity training workshops for the benefit of administrators and other personnel at corporations and government agencies.

CAIR Research Center conducts research on the American Muslim experience. Dr. Mohamed Nimer is the director of research and author of CAIR's Guide Series.

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