

A Ramadan Guide for Attorneys and Clients

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Summary

- For attorneys, understanding Ramadan can help foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment for both Muslim colleagues and clients.
- Fasting does not mean that professional responsibilities come to a halt. Balancing work and fasting requires careful planning and self-care.
- Whether interacting with Muslim clients or coworkers, acknowledging their observance can strengthen professional relationships.



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As the holy month of Ramadan approaches, millions of Muslims around the world prepare for a time of fasting, prayer, reflection, and community. Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar, holds deep spiritual significance, serving as a period of self-discipline, gratitude, and devotion to God. For attorneys, understanding Ramadan can help foster a more inclusive and supportive work environment for both Muslim colleagues and clients.

The Essence of Ramadan

During Ramadan, Muslims fast from dawn to sunset each day—abstaining from food, drink (including water), smoking, and marital relations. This act of fasting is designed to bring individuals closer to God, enhance self-control, and foster a sense of empathy for those less fortunate. It is a time to purify the soul, strengthen faith, and engage in acts of worship and kindness.

In addition to fasting, Muslims dedicate themselves to increased prayer, especially the nightly Taraweeh prayers, giving to charity (Zakat), and reciting the Quran. The last ten nights of Ramadan hold particular significance, as they include Laylat al-Qadr (the Night of Power), which is believed to be the night when the Quran was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). Many Muslims devote these nights to intensified worship and supplication.

The conclusion of Ramadan is marked by Eid al-Fitr, a joyous celebration where families and communities come together for prayers, festive meals, and acts of charity. This day signifies gratitude for successfully completing the month of fasting and spiritual renewal.

Fasting and Professional Responsibilities

Muslims across various professions, including attorneys, are obligated to fast unless exempt due to illness, menstruation, pregnancy, or other valid reasons. However, fasting does not mean that professional responsibilities come to a halt. Balancing work and fasting requires careful planning and self-care. Non-Muslim colleagues and employers who are aware of these obligations can create a more understanding and accommodating work environment.

Practical Tips for Attorneys and Employers During Ramadan

1. Staying Hydrated and Eating Nutritious Foods

Proper hydration and nutrition are essential to maintaining energy levels throughout the day. Attorneys, who often have demanding schedules, should focus on consuming nutrient-dense foods and staying hydrated during non-fasting hours.

- **Hydration.** Drink plenty of water during Suhoor (pre-dawn meal) and Iftar (breaking the fast). Incorporating electrolyte-rich drinks can help sustain hydration.
- **Nutritious foods.** Opt for complex carbohydrates (whole grains, oats), proteins (eggs, lean meats, legumes), and healthy fats (avocados, nuts) to maintain energy levels.
- **Breaking the fast with dates.** The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) recommended breaking the fast with dates, saying, “When one of you breaks his fast, let him break it with dates, for they are blessed. If he cannot find dates, then with water, for it is pure” (Sunan Abi Dawood 2356). Dates provide a natural source of sugar, restoring blood glucose levels quickly and preventing fatigue. They are also packed with fiber, vitamins, and essential minerals, making them an excellent choice for replenishing the body after fasting.

2. Planning for Maximum Productivity


Attorneys have busy schedules filled with court appearances, client meetings, and case preparations. Strategic planning can help maintain productivity during Ramadan:

- **Prioritize important tasks early.** Schedule mentally demanding work, such as legal drafting or client consultations, in the morning when energy levels are higher.
- **Take short breaks.** Incorporate moments for rest, reflection, and prayer throughout the day to prevent burnout.
- **Utilize technology.** Leverage digital tools such as case management software and automated scheduling to streamline the work process.

**“When We Send Invoices,
They Are Promptly Paid.”**

– Rebecca LaSalle, Attorney (Client Survey)



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3. Incorporating Exercise into Your Routine

Physical well-being should not be neglected during Ramadan. While energy levels fluctuate, regular exercise can help maintain overall health and stamina.

- **Find the best times to work out.** Consider light exercises such as walking or stretching before Suhoor and strength training or cardio after Iftar when the body is replenished.
- **Listen to your body.** Adjust the intensity of workouts based on how you feel while fasting.

4. Fostering Workplace Accommodations and Understanding

Open communication with employers and colleagues about Ramadan can foster a more inclusive work environment. Consider discussing accommodations such as:

- **Flexible scheduling.** Adjust work hours to start earlier and finish earlier, if possible.
- **Avoiding lunch meetings.** Request that meetings be scheduled at times that do not conflict with fasting.
- **Prayer breaks.** Muslims observe five daily prayers: Fajr (before dawn), Dhuhr (afternoon), Asr (late afternoon), Maghrib (after sunset, marking the time to break the fast), and Isha (night). During the workday, Dhuhr and Asr typically fall within office hours, requiring Muslim employees to take short breaks for prayer. To support religious inclusivity, employers should provide a quiet, private space where employees can comfortably fulfill their prayer obligations.
- **Evening commitments.** Be mindful of late meetings, as many Muslims attend night prayers.

Additionally, employers and colleagues should be considerate of the physical and mental toll fasting can take. Whether interacting with Muslim clients or coworkers, acknowledging their observance can strengthen professional relationships. A simple understanding that Muslim attorneys may be exhausted, particularly in the late afternoon, can go a long way in promoting empathy and workplace harmony.

Build Stronger, More Inclusive Professional Networks

Ramadan is a time of spiritual growth, self-discipline, and community. For Muslim attorneys, balancing fasting with professional duties requires thoughtful planning, proper nutrition, and open communication in the workplace. By embracing the essence of Ramadan and fostering mutual respect, legal professionals can create a supportive environment that allows all individuals to thrive.

Understanding the significance of Ramadan and making small accommodations can enhance workplace relationships and build stronger, more inclusive professional networks.

May this Ramadan be a time of reflection, faith, and renewal for all.

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