

# RAMADAN IN THE WORKPLACE: GUIDANCE FOR INCLUSIVE PRACTICE AT KPU

## What Is Ramadan?

Ramadan is the **ninth month of the Islamic lunar calendar**. The exact dates each year may vary based on **moon sighting**, a traditional method used in many Muslim communities to mark the start and end of lunar months.

Ramadan is a sacred month dedicated to **spiritual reflection, self-discipline, prayer, charity, and community connection**. During this month, many Muslims engage in **daily fasting from dawn to sunset**, abstaining from all food and drink—including water. Fasting during the month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam, in addition to the declaration of faith (Shahada), performing the five daily prayers (Salah), giving alms or charity (Zakat), and making the pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj) if able. However, not everyone is required to fast; exemptions exist for those who are ill, elderly, pregnant, traveling, facing other health-related challenges, or experiencing poverty or extreme hardship.

Ramadan concludes with **Eid al-Fitr**, a major celebration marking the end of the fasting month. Celebrated for 1-3 days, this holiday begins with early morning congregational prayer and emphasizes **charity, family gatherings, and community joy**. Like Ramadan itself, the exact date of Eid is confirmed close to the end of the month once the new moon is sighted.

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## Creating an Inclusive Environment at KPU during the month of Ramadan

To ensure that members of the KPU community who observe Ramadan feel supported and included, consider the following practices:

### Scheduling Meetings and Events

- Avoid scheduling late afternoon or sunset-hour meetings, as this window coincides with **both low energy levels** for those fasting and the period where they **end their fast**.
- Be thoughtful about events centered around food, as these may be challenging for individuals who are fasting.

## Flexibility

- Offer schedule flexibility wherever operationally feasible.
- Allow individuals time to **break their fast (Iftar)** and engage in **prayer**, particularly at sunset.

## Time-Off & Workload Planning

- Anticipate and accommodate **requests for time off** during Ramadan and for Eid al-Fitr.
- Avoid assumptions about who is observing Ramadan and to what extent—practices vary widely.

## Respect & Privacy

- Some individuals may choose not to discuss their observance.
- Respect privacy and avoid placing expectations on fasting or participation.

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## Support and Accommodation at KPU

Sections 8(1) and 13(1) of the [British Columbia Human Rights Code](#) prohibit discrimination on the basis of religion in services (including educational institutions) and in employment. As a result, students and employees may request accommodation for sincerely held religious beliefs or observances. These requests can be made through:

- Supervisors
- Instructors
- Human Resources
- Student Services

Providing accommodation is a meaningful way to support inclusion and demonstrates KPU's commitment to fostering a campus environment where everyone feels a sense of belonging, dignity, and respect.

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## For Guidance or Support

If you have questions about inclusive practices, accommodations, or supporting Ramadan observance at KPU, please contact the **Office of Equity and Inclusive Communities** at [oeic@kpu.ca](mailto:oeic@kpu.ca).

This document was adapted from the [Muslim Advisory Council of Canada's Ramadan Toolkit](#) and the [University of Toronto's Ramadan in the Workplace Inclusive Employer Guide](#)

