



Purpose of discussion

This year Ramadan begins on the 02nd April 2022 and ends on the 02nd May 2022 (+/- 1 day). Ramadhan is one of the five pillars of Islam and is a time when Muslims around the World have a compulsory obligation to fast (with some exceptions) during the day light hours only. The month of Ramadhan ends with celebration and is observed as the 'Festival of Breaking of the Fast' or 'Eid-ul-Fitr'

Fasting involves not only abstinence from eating, drinking, intimacy etc., during the daylight hours, but also a high control level of one's thoughts, attitudes, and behaviours.

Fasting starts with a meal before dawn (Suhur) and breaks with a meal at sunset (Iftaar), with no food or drink consumed during the day. It is important that we recognise the potential impacts on an individual, as well as providing available opportunities for support during the month of Ramadan.

Kick-off the discussion

It is important to understand the dynamics of how Fasting affects individuals so we can look out for each other at the work place.

Discussion points

Use the questions below to facilitate discussion. Remember, this isn't a compulsory questionnaire – the role of the facilitator is to create an engaging discussion where everyone's' needs are identified and solutions committed.

Discussion points	Supporting notes		
<p>1. How could fasting effect someone in the workplace?</p>	<p>The effects of fasting are not the same for everyone, it is different from person to person. Some of the health impacts of fasting could include;</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p>Benefits could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart health and diabetes prevention • Weight Loss • Detoxification and cleansing • Mental Health • Best time to quit smoking • Reduction in inflammation • Optimised energy metabolism • Increased cellular protection </td> <td> <p>Managing a Fasting Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat in moderation (avoids heartburn) • Balanced diet & water intake (reduces dehydration / headaches during Fast) • Do not take more than you can handle (avoid tiredness, heat related issues e.g. heat stroke, heat exhaustion) • Fruits & Vegetables (Reduce irritability, fatigue and stress) </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Benefits could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heart health and diabetes prevention • Weight Loss • Detoxification and cleansing • Mental Health • Best time to quit smoking • Reduction in inflammation • Optimised energy metabolism • Increased cellular protection 	<p>Managing a Fasting Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat in moderation (avoids heartburn) • Balanced diet & water intake (reduces dehydration / headaches during Fast) • Do not take more than you can handle (avoid tiredness, heat related issues e.g. heat stroke, heat exhaustion) • Fruits & Vegetables (Reduce irritability, fatigue and stress)
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<p>2. What can I do to help?</p>	<p>You can support fasting colleagues by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about fasting in team meetings, acknowledge that it is coming up and make sure all colleagues are aware of it. • Encourage discussion so that a fasting colleague feels they can come to you if they need some support. The person who is fasting will know how it may effect them and will be the best person to tell you about this. Don't make assumptions. • Be sensitive to what fasting means and look out for each other when out on track. 		



Discussion points

3. What adjustments can be made?

Supporting notes

It is worth noting that the purpose of fasting is to have positive effects on an individual's health and wellbeing. It's a time to reflect, consider the disadvantaged and also as a source of spiritually purifying the heart, soul, mind and body. The effects of fasting are different for everybody.

Due to the lack of food and drink, fatigue is a potential effect of fasting, and risk assessments for work should take this into account.

It is important for someone fasting to discuss this with their line manager – flexible working and other adjustments could be considered to make it easier for the individual. This could include;

- Being rota'd to work nightshifts to allow rest during the day
- Working through breaks to finish earlier in the day
- Physically demanding tasks could be rescheduled, or planned for earlier in the day
- Allow flexibility, where possible, travel away from home/site during Ramadan

Additional support

Find out more about fasting on Connect - <http://connect/CorporateServices/HRonline/DIP/DIP.aspx>

Contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team - diversityandinclusion@networkrail.co.uk

Read the Managing religion in the workplace guidance -

<http://connectdocs/NetworkRail/Documents/CorporateServices/HR/DIP/Everyone%20-%20Managing%20Religion%20in%20the%20Workplace%2016042014.pdf>

Muslims in Rail Guide to Ramadhan Fasting – www.muslimsinrail.org/ramadan or

Contact - info@muslimsinrail.org

