

# Safety Hour Discussion Pack

Topic: **Fasting**

## Purpose of the discussion:

Ramadan 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 daylight hours only. The month of Ramadan ends with celebrations and is observed as the ‘Festival of Breaking of the Fast’ or ‘Eid-ul-Fitr’

Fasting involves no eating or drinking during the daylight hours, but also a high control 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.

**it is important to understand how fasting affects individuals so we can look out for each other at the work place.**

Discussion points: Use below to plan your facilitated discussion. Remember, you don’t have to have all the answers – the role of the facilitator is to create an engaging discussion where everyone identifies and commits to solutions.

Discussion points	Supporting notes		
How could fasting effect someone in the workplace?	<p>The effects of fasting are not the same for everyone, it is different from person to person.</p> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <p>Benefits could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention of type 2 diabetes</li> <li>Detoxification and cleansing</li> <li>Improved mental health</li> <li>Best time to quit smoking</li> <li>Weight loss</li> </ul> </td> <td style="vertical-align: top; padding-left: 20px;"> <p>Dis-benefits could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dizziness or light-headedness</li> <li>Headaches</li> <li>Tiredness</li> <li>Heat stroke or exhaustion</li> <li>Reduced concentration</li> <li>Irritability</li> </ul> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Benefits could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevention of type 2 diabetes</li> <li>Detoxification and cleansing</li> <li>Improved mental health</li> <li>Best time to quit smoking</li> <li>Weight loss</li> </ul>	<p>Dis-benefits could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dizziness or light-headedness</li> <li>Headaches</li> <li>Tiredness</li> <li>Heat stroke or exhaustion</li> <li>Reduced concentration</li> <li>Irritability</li> </ul>
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What can I do to help?	<p>You can support fasting colleagues by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Talking about fasting in team meetings, acknowledge that it is coming up and make sure all colleagues are aware of it.</li> <li>Encouraging 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.</li> <li>Being sensitive to what fasting means and look out for each other when out on track.</li> </ul>		

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## Topic: Fasting

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<p>What adjustments can be made?</p>	<p>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 is also as a source of spiritually purifying the heart, soul, mind and body.</p> <p><b>The effects of fasting are different for everybody.</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>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;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Being rota'd to work nightshifts to allow rest during the day</li> <li>• Working through breaks to finish earlier in the day</li> <li>• Physically demanding tasks could be rescheduled, or planned for earlier in the day</li> <li>• Allow flexibility, where possible, travel away from home/site during Ramadan</li> </ul>

### For further information:

Find out more about fasting on Connect -

<http://connect/CorporateServices/HRonline/DIP/DIP.aspx>

Contact the Diversity and Inclusion Team - [diversityandinclusion@networkrail.co.uk](mailto: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>

Contact the Multi-Faith Staff Network - [Multi-Faith@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:Multi-Faith@networkrail.co.uk)