



Networking for Inspiration and Unity
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Recommended Masjid Guidelines during the Covid-19 Pandemic

16 March 2020 | Based on the guidelines issued by Jamiatul Ulama KZN

In light of the present circumstances, we issue the guidelines below. We suggest that they be implemented with immediate effect.

In these guidelines, although the word “Masjid” is used, it applies equally to Musallas and other Salaah facilities.

A. Regarding Masjids

1. No towels are to be used at the wudhu facility.
2. Paper towels should instead be made available. Disposal bins for these towels should be provided.
3. Procedures should be put in place to ensure that the paper towels are regularly and properly disposed of.
4. Staff members handling paper towels should be provided appropriate protective wear (masks and gloves).
5. Toilets, Wudhu area and other common areas should be regularly disinfected.

B. Vulnerable and those showing symptoms

6. The following persons are urged to perform even their Fardh Salaah at home:
 - a. Those who have a medical condition such as diabetes, cancer, asthma, HIV, Aids, or other similar conditions.
 - b. Those showing flu like symptoms.
 - c. Those who have travelled out of the country within the last two weeks, even if they do not display symptoms.

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C. Daily Jamaat (congregational) Salaah

Instead of the normal Jamaat Salaah which we are accustomed to, the following should apply during this period of pandemic.

7. Make wudhu at home. Only if one is unable to do so should one use the facilities at the Masjid.
8. Perform all Sunnah and nafl (optional) Salaah at home, or other suitable place where one is secluded. The Masjid shall only be used for Fardh Salaah. Keep in mind that this does not mean that nafl and Sunnah Salaah is waived, but only that it is not to be performed in the Masjid.
9. If one has no other suitable place to perform one's Sunnah and Nafl Salaah, then these may be performed in the Masjid provided that one keeps a distance of at least 2 metres away from the closest person.
10. Carry your own Musalla (prayer mat) and use the same for Salaah. This will be used over the normal carpet found in the Masjid. The purpose of the musalla is that in the event of one coughing or sneezing in Salaah, the effects thereof are not left on the Masjid carpet. If one forgot to bring one's own musalla along, then one may place some other material (a towel, scarf or similar item) on the area on which one normally touches the ground during sajdah. Do not share one's musalla (or other similar item) with others since that would defeat its purpose. Make sure to wash one's musalla regularly with disinfectant.
11. Each Jamaat shall consist of an Imaam and a maximum of Forty-nine muqtadis (followers).

The reason this number has been chosen is that, in terms of the directive issues by the President of the Republic, gatherings of more than 100 are prohibited. Taking into account that at any given moment, there will most likely be one Jamaat leaving and another arriving in the Masjid, this will ensure that the number does not exceed 100.

12. There shall be multiple Jamaats within the same Masjid. So as soon as an Imaam and a few muqtadis are available, they will make one Jamaat and promptly leave, followed by the next Jamaat. In this way there will be multiple Jamaats in one Masjid. By way of example, if there are normally 150 musallis (including the Imaam) who attend Fajr Salaah in a Masjid, there will now be 3 different Jamaats, each consisting of an Imaam and 49 muqtadis. Assuming each Jamaat takes 10 minutes, the 3 various Jamaats will be spread over 30 minutes.

Each Masjid may set up arrangements to suit its peculiar circumstances. These are not hard and fast rules, but guidelines. As the Muslim community, we must not be seen to be acting defiantly against the law of the country when we can make adjustments and accommodations whilst still preserving our core practices.

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13. The Qiraat recited in the Fardh Salaah shall be brief.
14. There will be one Azaan and each Jamaat will have its own Iqaamah.
15. Immediately after the Salaam of the Fardh salaah, brothers should be encouraged to leave. This will make way for others.
16. Other optional forms of Ibaadah such as tilaawat, zikr, dua should preferably be made at home, and not in the Musjid.

D. Jumuah (Friday congregational) Salaah

In addition to the guidelines above regarding Jamaat Salaah, the following shall apply regarding Jumuah Salaah.

17. Multiple venues for Jumuah Salaah should be arranged. This is not restricted to Masaajid and Musallas. Any other suitable place may be used, such as homes, parks, offices, halls, etc.: keeping in mind that each Jamaat will consist of an Imaam and a maximum of 49 Muqtadis.
18. The Imaam does not necessarily have to be a Haafiz or Maulana. However, if one is available, that would be better.
19. The pre-khutbah lecture (generally given in English) shall be suspended during this period. Alternatively, some Masaajid may use their broadcast facilities (Bilal receiver / internet linked broadcast) should they wish to continue with such lectures.
20. As mentioned above, the Sunnah and Nafl (both before and after the Fardh) will be made at home. The collective Jumuah will consist of Athaan, Khutbah (in Arabic), Iqaamah and the two rakaats of Fardh Salaah. The Khutbah shall be a shorten version, a copy of which appears further below.
21. The venue will not necessarily require a mimbar (raised platform) or an Asaa (stick held by Imaam). The Imaam may simply stand on ground level, face the muqtadis and read out the khutbah from the notes below. As mentioned above, the recitation during the Fardh Salaah should be brief.

E. Janaza Salaah

22. Similar to the above, groups of fifty at a time may come, one after the other, and perform the Janaza Salaah.

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23. Once all have been given a chance to perform Janaza Salaah, only close family members and friends should accompany the deceased for burial, whilst maintaining the number at a maximum of 100.

F. Other programs

24. All other programs such as “big nights”, Jalsas and lectures should be suspended until further notice. Nikahs may be conducted only where a delay may be difficult, provided that the numbers are properly controlled.

Keep in mind that these are guidelines. We have no right to impose our will on everyone. Hence, should any person / group disagree with these guidelines; we should attempt to encourage them with kindness and wisdom. However, if they still refuse, this should not lead to disputes, quarrels and conflict.

The Eastern Cape Masjid Forum will continue to monitor the situation and provide updates to our community. More guidelines will most likely be issued regarding Ramadaan.

These guidelines are temporary and exceptional measures based on the current circumstances. Once the Eastern Cape Masjid Forum gives notice of the cessation of these measures, the procedures at Masjids should go back to normal.

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