

COVID-19: Al Madina Masjid, Barking Emergency Measures

Following UK government, medical and scholarly guidance, Al Madina Masjid and Community Centre (AMMCC) has taken the difficult step of further enhancing protective measures by restricting to the public all congregational services and activities.

This is a decision taken to prevent the further spread of the coronavirus in the UK.

As a responsible management we have a duty of care towards our communities.

The preservation of life takes precedence over everything else and for this reason, we are cancelling all major activities at the mosques. This includes:

- Jumu'ah prayers
- Daily salah (congregational prayers)
- Madrassah and educational classes
- Talks, conferences and other regular lectures
- Sports activities
- The HIVE women's Centre

Imam Abu Bakar, a nominated trustee and 3 community members will continue to observe the 5 daily prayers at the mosque including the Jumu'ah prayer, but no members of the public will be allowed access.

Ultimately, we turn to God and seek His protection in all matters, but this includes taking all the necessary precautions to protect ourselves and others. It is therefore imperative that we follow the advice of the medical authorities and do everything we can to delay the spread of the virus. This will help to prevent the overloading of our medical services so that they can save more lives as well as give us more time to find a vaccine, God willing.

We have taken this decision after discussing the situation with scholars and medical experts and deem it necessary due to the size of the congregation at AMMCC, which poses a serious risk to the spread of the virus.

In history, situations like this have occurred and we have clear guidance from the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) about quarantine circumstances. For this reason, we ask everyone to please pray salah (prayers) at home. This includes Jumu'ah, which should be replaced with the normal dhuhr prayer.

We also have a responsibility to refrain from harming others through actions such as panic buying. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "There should be neither harm nor reciprocating harm."

This is a test for us all and we would like to remind the community to be patient and calm during this period. It is not a time for hysteria, but rather a time to seek the vulnerable and offer support.

"And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient"
[Al Quran: 155]

This has been a very difficult decision for us and weighs heavily as a burden upon us, we hope that everyone can understand the severity of the situation and offer their support and co-operation. This is not a time to argue or fight, there are of course differing opinions which we acknowledge but have taken the decision to restrict access to the masjid for the greater benefit of our communities

We pray that Allah SWT protects us all through these testing times.

Ameen.

The Trustees of The Barking Muslims Association.