April 23, 2020
Dear Partners and Community Members,

As our Muslim communities head into the month of Ramadan during these challenging times, the Alameda County Public Health Department would like to thank you for helping us reduce the spread of COVID-19 by continuing to shelter in place. Please be reminded that mosques must remain closed to prayer and all community gatherings are prohibited per the Health Officer’s shelter in place order. We respectfully ask that you continue to stay home and modify your observance of Ramadan to protect yourself and those you love from COVID-19:

- Observe Ramadan at home, in the house that you live in, with the family members you live with.
- Be mindful of the shelter in place guidelines: avoid leaving your home to distribute food for charity, visit family or friends, or to attend mosque for prayers or gatherings.
- Donate food safely online through local food banks such as the Alameda County Community Food Bank.
- Celebrate Eid al-Fitr in your own homes with the people you live with and avoid gathering in any open space, others’ homes, or mosque to offer Eid prayers.

Technology Resources to keep in touch, share celebrations and maintain traditions during Ramadan

Our communities are advised to pray from home and not congregate for traditions such as breaking of the fast (iftar) or prayers in the evening at the Mosque (Tarawih), and to refrain from spending the last ten days at the Mosque for worship (Itikaf). While we do not yet know what the shelter in place guidelines will be in late May, it is likely that you will need to refrain from attending communal Eid celebrations at the end of Ramadan.

There are many virtual ways you can celebrate your faith safely at home:

- Zoom is allowing users to sign up and host up to 40-minute video conferences for free; this may be a good option if you have a large group to connect for prayer or a virtual Eid al-Fitr.
- Google Hangouts has a video chat tool that can connect up to 25 users together at one time, no matter what kind of phone or computer they are on.
- FaceTime is an option for iPhone and Mac users, good for small groups, such as checking on family and friends who may need supplies for iftar.
- Facebook Live is being used by some mosques to live stream evening Tarawih prayers after iftar. Make sure you have your notifications turned on, so you will get the alert when the live stream begins.
- House Party is good for large group chats and allows people to jump in and out of conversations. This may be an alternative way to connect with your family and friends for iftar or, host a virtual Eid al-Fitr.

The guidelines have been created in consultation with the Northern California Islamic Council leadership. We advise you to seek guidance from your spiritual leaders during this important month of fasting and charity obligations. Many mosques are offering virtual services through the internet.

To help protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community from COVID-19:

- Limit leaving your home to essential needs such as food or medicine, and practice physical distancing when outside and among others.
- It is now required for everyone over the age of 12 to wear a face covering when you go out in public per Alameda County Face Covering Order.
- Wash your hands with soap and warm water for 20 seconds frequently and always after possible exposure such as after shopping or touching any items or surfaces outside your home.
- Clean items you frequently use such as cell phones, computer keyboards, cupboard and door handles.
- Families are advised to follow the Health Officer Orders and information updates on Covid-19.