



PRESS RELEASE



مجلس القضاء الإسلامي

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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

MJC CALLS FOR SUSPENSION OF JUMUAH PRAYERS FOR FOUR WEEKS

The Muslim Judicial Council (SA), after consultation with medical experts and various stakeholders have declared that Jumuah prayers will be suspended for a period of four weeks. This will be reviewed on a regular basis as the situation evolves in South Africa. We recommend that special consideration be given to the spatial planning inside the Masjid. As South Africans we are required to fulfil our civic responsibility to work toward the CONTAINMENT of the coronavirus before it spreads out of control.

Case studies have proven that taking drastic measures upfront will limit the spread and effect of this pandemic. Uppermost in the Sharia is the preservation of life and implementing social distancing is one such attempt to prevent further transmission of the virus. South Africans in all spheres of society are called upon to practice social distancing to contain the spread of the virus.

It should be made very clear that the MJC (SA) is not calling for the closure of Masajid, we do however respect the position of those who have decided to close their respective Masjid. Strong measures should be put in place that limit the amount of Mussallis coming to the Masjid. The sick, elderly, small children, women and those with pre-existing respiratory illnesses must refrain from coming to the Masjid until we can overcome this crisis.

Our prayers are with all the health workers who are in the front line of this pandemic. We acknowledge your tireless efforts. May you be fortified in this time of crisis.

We remind the Muslim Ummah to increase in good deeds, liven our homes with the recitation of Quran and intensify our duah.

Yours in the service of humanity

**Office of the Secretary General
Muslim Judicial Council (SA)
18/03/2020**





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CORONA VIRUS: THE MJC POSITION REVISED

After consultation with medical experts and the Department of Health, and with the benefit of exposure to the latest developments and statistics, the Fatwa Committee has revised the position it announced on 16/03/2020. Our revised position is as follows:

1. Jumu'ah ṣalāh in the masājid will be **suspended for the next four weeks**.
2. While masājid will remain open for the regular ṣalāh with jamā'ah, members of the public are encouraged not to go to the masājid in large numbers, and are **strongly encouraged to perform congregational ṣalāh at home or at alternative private locations** over the coming period. We continue to monitor the situation, and if things go worse, the call could be made for jamā'ah ṣalāh in masājid to be suspended as well.
3. All restrictions pertaining to gathering in the masājid as contained in our earlier fatwa remain in effect. The public is strongly encouraged to **practice social distancing as much as possible**. Social distancing has been proven to be most effective factor in flattening the infection curve.
4. Persons who are themselves asymptomatic, but have within their households others with compromised immunity should take particularly extra care to avoid all public gatherings, including at masājid.
5. The change in our position was necessitated by rapid developments on the ground:
 - 5.1. Transmission of the virus has now begun at a **community level**.
 - 5.2. The rate of infection is now **climbing exponentially**.

- 5.3. Objective and dispassionate consideration of the manner and potential rate of transmission predicts a disastrous outcome should we remain with measures less stringent than the ones adopted in this revised position.
6. We presently find ourselves in the same position as Italy found itself in 3 to 4 weeks ago. At this stage a window of opportunity opens to adopt drastic precautionary measures. This window remains open for a very limited time. Italy failed to seize the opportunity and do the necessary. Whether or not we will within a few weeks' time face a situation similar to that of Italy right now **depends on our willingness to take decisive action at this moment.**
7. We remain respectful of those who adopt precautionary measures less drastic than our own. However, we cannot emphasise enough the disastrous consequences that face the community if we fail to do anything.
8. All factors considered, we realise and acknowledge the possibility—slim though it may be to our perception—that our stance might not be 100% correct. If we have erred, the worst consequence will be that our community would have missed Jumu'ah and jamā'ah for a limited period. But if the opposite position is in fact the wrong one, **the consequences that follow will be of the type for which no amount of apologising can ever compensate. What is at stake is human life,** and this consideration alone should suffice to convey the seriousness of the situation, and the rationale for the change in our position.
9. We direct an earnest appeal to the public to make every effort in the trying period that lies ahead **not to engage in disputes, bickering and name-calling**—for such behaviour drives away Allah's Raḥmah at a time when we need it more than ever. Instead, **engage in dhikr of Allah, tilāwah of Qur'ān and constant du'ā** that Allah guide the Ummah in both its leadership and members towards a course of action that will preserve lives and keep aloft the universal mission and message of Muḥammad RasūluLlāh ﷺ in both spirit and letter.

والله تعالى أعلم

And Allah knows best.



MT Karaan