

TIP SHEET 4: Reasonable Accommodation

Religion is a protected ground under BC Human Rights Law, as well as under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Many of the current refugees to Canada are practising Muslims.

1

An employer has a positive duty to accommodate an employee's religious observances when doing so would not cause the employer undue hardship:

- For Muslim employees working shifts this could include scheduling an evening shift on Friday, or scheduling Saturdays or Sundays instead of Fridays.
- For organizations with a Monday to Friday workweek, allowing for an extended Friday lunch break could be a possible alternative.
- If it is not possible to alter the working hours, then the employee would not participate in the Friday prayer.

2

An important aspect of the Muslim faith is the Salah prayers, and these can be accommodated in any workplace:

- In most work environments, Muslim employees will be able to pray during their typical break times.
- In companies with more rigid break schedules, time for prayer may only be possible on scheduled break times.
- Safety first: prayer can and should be interrupted in the event of an emergency.

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3

Location is flexible:

- It is ideal for the prayer to take place in a private space, where the employee is able to wash prior to its commencement.
- Sometimes this can be done in a private room on the work site, or even in the First-Aid room on construction site.
- If washing is not an option, the prayer can still take place.

Useful Resources:

[BC Muslim Association](#)

[Manager's Guide to Reasonable Accommodation](#)

[Employer's Guide to Islamic Religious Practices](#)

[The Ontario Human Rights Commission | Issues Unique to Creed](#)