



Date: 30th April 2021
Document Code: 66-01
Version: 01

Guidelines

Guidelines for Prevention of SARS-CoV-2 Transmission during Eid-Ul-Fitr

Objective

To prevent person-to-person transmission of SARS-CoV-2 on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr with a focus on social distancing and preventive measures during Eid prayers and social gatherings.

Rationale

In the context of COVID-19, Eid-ul-Fitr events could amplify the transmission of the virus and potentially disrupt the country's response capacity. SAR-CoV-2 is transmitted from person to person through inhalation of respiratory droplets and contact. The risk of transmission increases with proximity and prolonged interaction between infected and uninfected individuals.

Eidgah is an open-air space outside a mosque, or other open grounds usually outside the city (or at the outskirts) where Eid prayers are performed as a part of Islamic culture. In this COVID-19 era these spaces with crowded worshippers can accelerate spread of COVID-19. So, these guidelines have been developed to ensure social distancing and preventive measures during Eid prayers as well as preparatory shopping and social gatherings for Muslims on Eid-ul-Fitr.

General Considerations:

- Public should only undertake minimal necessary travel during these Eid-ul-Fitr holidays.
- Face mask (fabric/surgical mask) is mandatory for all outdoor activities and indoor gatherings.
- Social visits during Eid-ul-Fitr and general family get-togethers should be avoided.
- The tradition of "Eid Embracing" should be avoided as it can enhance transmission.
- Eid-ul-Fitr shopping should only be restricted to minimal essentials; crowded markets and malls should be avoided.
- During Eid holidays, stay at home stay safe. Avoid going to public places like amusement parks and other tourist spots.



- Large scale home gatherings should be avoided. Guest list should be kept smaller and ensure there is enough room to enable guests from different households to stay at least 1 meter (3 feet) apart.
- Outdoor family gatherings may be held, preferably during day time, strictly observing SOPs with assigned seating arrangements of 1 meter (3 feet) distance. Care must be taken to avoid physical or close contact.
- Avoid hugging and kissing. Elderly and at risk may suffer serious consequences.
- For indoor gatherings, opening windows and doors can ensure proper ventilation and help lower the risk. Indoor gatherings should be avoided. Poor ventilation and air conditioning both pose high risk of transmission.
- Events must be kept for shorter duration. Longer gatherings pose a greater risk of disease transmission.
- Disinfect the venue place after the gathering/event ends. Household bleach or alcohol wipes may be used to clean surfaces.

Preventive Measures at Eid-gah/Open grounds and Mosques for Eid Prayers

- Avoid going for prayers if you are having respiratory symptoms.
- Make wuddu/ablution at home.
- Take your own prayer mat/janamaz with you.
- Every person should wear fabric/surgical mask.
- Prefer open air where feasible or open all the windows and doors.
- Provision of hand sanitizer at the gate/entrance points.
- Ensure safe distancing (1 meter/3 feet) during entry/exit and prayers.
- No carpets or mats to be laid down in mosques.
- Short duration of pre prayer sermons and post prayers khutbah. Imams should deliver the sermons on the topic of the pandemic and preventative measures that Government of Pakistan has taken in order to slow the spread to give individuals an active role in promoting health and safety of the members of society.
- Clean floors for prayers must be ensured by washing them with chlorinated water regularly.
- Close physical contact, holding and shaking hands and hugging pose a great risk of disease transmission and must be avoided.
- Water coolers should not to be used.



Note: The above recommendations are being regularly reviewed by the Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations & Coordination and will be updated based on the international recommendations and best practices.

The Ministry acknowledges the contribution of Dr. Ifrah Javaid, Dr Amjad Mahboob, Dr Nosheen Nasir and HSA/ HPSIU/ NIH team to compile these guidelines.

References

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3. World Health Organization. Practical considerations and recommendations for religious leaders and faith-based communities in the context of COVID-19, Interim guidance, April 2020
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For more information, please contact:

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<http://covid.gov.pk/>

<http://nhsrc.gov.pk/>

<https://www.facebook.com/NHSRCOfficial>

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