

Preparing for Phased Re-Opening of Mosques, Madrasas and Community Centres

*In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.
May Allah send infinite Mercy, Salutations and Blessings upon Muhammad, the Final Messenger.*

On behalf of **Markazi Jamiat Ahl-e-Hadith UK (MJAH)**, we would like to thank our affiliate Masaajid and Centres for their quick responses to the rapidly changing situation of Covid-19, and for their sacrifices in adhering to the lockdown rules prior, during as well as post Ramadhan & Eid ul Fitr.

May Allah remove the pandemic from us and may He grant everyone infected by Coronavirus swift and full recovery. Aameen. We make dua for those from our community who have lost their lives during the pandemic, that Allah (The Almighty) shrouds them in His mercy, and that He grants them paradise. We also ask Allah to grant sabr (patience) to their families and friends, and may He support them through this difficult time.

We would like to extend our gratitude to the committee members, Imams, teachers and key workers who have facilitated their services online as much as possible and also broadcasted regular reminders and sermons to keep our communities well connected with the masaajid. We pray that Allah accepts their efforts and rewards them abundantly.

Alhamdulillah, due to the reduction of the spread of Covid-19 around the world, many masaajid have started opening again with restrictions. Since our government is also planning to allow public places and services to reopen in early July 2020, we are providing some guidance to our affiliate Masaajid & Centres.

At this stage, we would like to ask our affiliates to reassure their communities that the Masaajid will do what they can to work towards the gradual reopening of their facilities in a safe manner without endangering the health of any attendees. This process is complex, thus many factors need to be considered. We have set about creating an action plan based on risk assessment and guidance issued by the government. We aim to be ready with this anytime the government approves partial or full reopening of the Masaajid, Insha Allah.

We would also request our affiliates to ask their communities to remain patient in the coming weeks and months. The reopening of Masaajid is likely to be a slow and measured process, and will only be successful with the cooperation and support of the community. Although we would love to have our Masaajid fully open immediately, this could lead to a spike in cases and

further delay the reopening process, hence it is likely that the end goal of full reopening may take many months.

In drawing up these plans, we advise our affiliates to work with the expertise of their local religious and non-religious authorities in the upcoming weeks.

MJAH, along with other authorities and organisations recommends everyone to consider the following guidelines:

1. **A Covid-19 Safety officer** should be appointed within the management team. This is a good chance to bring a young and enthusiastic person into a management role. They must have the ability to engage with a wide range of community members, scholars, imams, neighbours, volunteers, regional Muslim networks and local authorities.
2. **A Risk Assessment** of the Masjid premises should be conducted. This should consist of at least the following; security, entrance/exit procedures, shoe storage areas, fire hazards, marked distance spaces, prioritising wudhu at home, posters and notices to serve as reminders, door steps to minimise touching door handles, cleaning procedures, contactless fundraising, face masks and PPE, as well as possibly staggering prayer times to limit congregation sizes, advice to high risk or vulnerable worshipers and lastly trauma that any community members might have suffered due to the virus.
3. **Estimate your new capacity according to the government guidelines (currently 2 meter distance)** – the maintaining of a 2-meter distance will result in a lower capacity than before, we advise that it is essential to plan ahead and conduct trial runs of how many people can fit into the prayer halls. The Halls and rooms should first be marked out showing 2-meter gaps and then an estimation should be made of how many people can safely fit.
4. **Identify New Equipment Needs** – This will include things such as new signs and barriers, hand sanitiser and tissues, more thorough cleaning procedures, disposable items such as table covers and sheets on the carpet along with asking community members to bring their own prayer mats.
5. **Creating Awareness** – Discuss all new procedures and measures with all those who are involved with the masjid so that everyone is aware on how to safely follow all new protocol.
6. **Communication with the congregation and the wider community** – This will involve educating the people on why the new safety procedures are important, as without that it is unlikely that they would be followed. This is paramount when it comes to older regular attendees. It is likely to be the case that young children will be strongly discouraged to attend due to their not being able to maintain distancing. Furthermore, this can be a very good way of da'wah by making the wider community aware of what is happening with the Masjid.

7. **Local Authorities & Insurance** – Please make sure you speak to your local authorities and your insurance provider prior to opening to the community in order to not breach their guidelines. Please take everything seriously and we urge you to follow the rules provided by the authorities.
8. **Budgeting** – Please budget correctly for the health and safety of all attendees and please do not underestimate any safety measures especially in terms of spending.

For now, the Masaajid will remain closed. We urge our affiliates to continue following the government's guidance and encourage your congregations to carry on praying at home. Please do not be tempted to go against the guidelines, as ultimately, we will only be putting each other and our loved ones at risk.

We pray that Allah keeps every member of our community safe so we may once again enjoy each other's company in the future.



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