

ICBC POLICY ON MOONSIGHTING

Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullahi wa barakaatuh!

This announcement explains the ICBC policy with regard to setting the Islamic calendar, i. e., moon sighting.

For the past several years, Islamic Centers in the Greater Austin area, including ICBC, ICGA, ICLT, ICRR, NAMCC, and Nueces Mosque have been united upon “the global moon sighting position” as a policy for determining the start and end of Ramadan. This policy has helped us keep our Eid prayers in unison following Allah SWT’s command to “hold fast to the rope of Allah, altogether, and do not become divided” (3:103).

The global moon sighting position is a valid position for determining the beginning of an Islamic month. Using accurate scientific astronomical calculations is also another acceptable method and a Shariah-compliant position that has been validated by the scholars of the European Council for Fatwa and Research (ECFR) and the Fiqh Council of North America (FCNA). The astronomical calculations position has been adopted by many Islamic Centers across North America and Europe, and we believe that adopting this position will provide us with a consistent methodology needed for better planning of our holidays and events logistics.

The religious and executive leadership of Central Texas Islamic Centers, including GIC, ICBC, ICGA, ICLT, ICRR, NAMCC, Nueces Mosque, and Temple Masjid, have all agreed to adopt the position of the astronomical calculation in Austin to establish the Islamic Calendar and determine the beginning of Islamic months, including Ramadan and Eid-ul-Fitr. Regarding Eid-ul-Adha, we will continue to follow the Hajj announcement made by Saudi Arabia.

Secondary to the Islamic jurisprudence but important nonetheless are the practical implications of adopting this methodology. Here are a few of them:

- A consistent policy for Ramadan and both Eids brings unity to Central Texas Muslims
- Avoiding hardship for the community by no longer having to wait for the West coast sightings, sometimes late into the night
- A consistent methodology for the entire year, making it easy for the community to plan, observe, and practice important religious events and rituals (such as Ramadan, Eids, fasting 13th, 14th, and 15th of each month, etc.)
- Better planning (school holidays, work time off, Eid logistics, etc.) and making it easy for families with children to observe and participate in Islamic holidays To take advantage of the newly passed Texas law recognizing Islamic holidays ([Bill for Ramadan, Official Eids Recognition](#))

We realize various jurisprudential opinions exist on moon sighting. Whereas some people accept moon sighting only locally, some prefer moon sighting from anywhere in North America, while others accept moon sighting from all over the world. All these opinions are permissible by the Shariah, and Imams from local masjid have issued consensus opinion to this effect. While we may have differences of opinion amongst us, the unity of the Muslim Ummah is of paramount importance. May Allah SWT guide us and keep us on the right path, Aameen.

Jazakum Allahu Khairan

The Executive Board
Islamic Center of Brushy Creek