UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

EID AL-ADHA IN THE WORKPLACE

Inclusive Employer Guide

EQUITY · DIVERSITY · INCLUSION

What is Eid al-Adha?

Eid al-Adha (*EED al-UHD-huh*) is also known as the Feast of Sacrifice, and is celebrated by Muslims all over the world for a period of one to four days.

The holiday honours the Prophet Ibrahim's devotion to Allah. In the Quran, Allah appears to Ibrahim in a dream and asks him to sacrifice his only son, Ismail, to prove his obedience. Ibrahim agrees, but before he can perform the command Allah intervenes, offering a lamb to sacrifice instead.

Eid al-Adha also marks the end of Hajj. Hajj is the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and is one of the five pillars of Islam. According to Islamic tenets, Muslims who are physically and financially able to perform Hajj are obligated to perform the pilgrimage at least once in their lifetime.

How is it observed?

Eid al-Adha follows the Islamic Lunar Calendar and falls on a different date in the Gregorian calendar each year. This year it is expected to begin on Wednesday, June 28 and end on the evening of July 2.

On the morning of Eid al-Adha, Muslims visit their local mosques where they perform Eid prayers and listen to a sermon delivered by their imam. Following Eid prayers, Muslims embrace their loved ones and friends, wishing one another "Eid Mubarak" or "Happy Eid." The rest of the day is spent socializing with family and friends, eating together, and exchanging gifts.

Charity is also an important element of the holiday. It is customary to donate a significant sum of money to charity, to be used to help those less fortunate.

To honour Ibrahim and Ismail, Muslims may also partake in the practice of slaughtering an animal, known as "Qurbani", "Udhiya" or "Hadi". Families will either visit farms themselves or order their animal through halal meat shops to donate. The meat is either distributed to the poor and needy or among family and friends. Usually, it is divided in to three parts. One third of the meat is eaten by the family and their relatives, one third is given away to friends, and the remaining third is donated to the poor.

HOW CAN WE CREATE AN INCLUSIVE ENVIRONMENT?

1 **Get educated.** Ensure staff who supervise or work alongside Muslim colleagues are aware of Eid al-Adha and how they can be supportive.

2 **Intentional planning.** Update your scheduling tools to reflect religious observance dates and to support the planning activities. Avoid booking meetings and scheduling events during Eid al-Adha if possible.

The University of Toronto recognizes its obligation to prevent discriminatory impacts on members of its community that arise from the failure to accommodate based on religion or creed. It is the responsibility of both the Manager and the individual seeking accommodation to work cooperatively and respectfully to explore and implement appropriate accommodation options. Accommodate requests for time off for religious observances. If shift work is the norm, staff may want to switch shifts to observe Eid al-Adha. Look for solutions that suit all parties.

3 **Be thoughtful.** You can wish your Muslim colleagues "*Eid Mubarak*" (EED moo-BAH-ruck) or "*Eid Seed*" (EED SAY-eed) as way to celebrate the day with them.

4 **Don't make assumptions.** For personal reasons, not all Muslim colleagues may take time off for Eid al-Adha, but they may still observe in various ways.