

# RAMADAN GUIDELINES FOR BUSINESSES OPERATING IN DMCC FREE ZONE

References to the "Labour Law" are to Federal Law No. 33 of 2021, as amended.

References to "DMCC" are to Dubai Multi Commodities Centre Authority, governed by Law No. 3 of 2020, as amended, issued in the Emirate of Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

## 1. What are Ramadan Hours?

Under the Labour Law, the normal working hours of all employees shall be reduced by two hours per day during the Holy month of Ramadan. This means that employees' normal working hours should not exceed 6 hours per day (as the statutory maximum working hours are 8 hours per day, exclusive of a one-hour rest break where daily working hours exceed 5).

Where an employee's working hours exceed 5 per day, they are still entitled to at least one hour of rest breaks per day, which is not included when calculating working hours. Accordingly, if an employee's normal working hours are from 9 AM until 6 PM (i.e., 8 working hours plus 1 hour's rest break), their normal working hours during Ramadan could be from 9 AM until 4 PM (i.e., 6 working hours plus 1 hour's rest break).

## 2. Does it apply to my company?

Yes, Ramadan hours apply to all companies operating in Dubai Multi Commodities Centre Free Zone.

## 3. Is it applicable to only Muslims/ fasting employees?

No, it is applicable to all employees irrespective of their religion or whether they are fasting or not.

## 4. Can my company get into trouble if we work normal hours?

DMCC will be conducting inspections from time to time to ensure that companies are compliant with the Labour Law and abiding by the Ramadan hours. Any company found in

breach of the Labour Law will, at the absolute discretion of DMCC, be subject to a Penalty (as defined in the DMCC Company Regulations).

**5. Can I only pay my employees for 6 hours during this period as they are not working full time?**

No, there should be no reduction in compensation as a result of a reduction in working hours. Employees should be paid at their normal rates as if they are working normal working hours.

**6. Can employees be requested to work overtime during Ramadan?**

Yes, employees may still be requested to work overtime of up to 2 hours per day and will be entitled to the usual statutory overtime payments in relation to such overtime worked.

**7. How can I keep my business running at full capacity during Ramadan?**

DMCC's updated standard employment contract grants member companies the flexibility to vary an employee's start and finish time during Ramadan (subject to providing employees with at least one week's advance notification of the adjusted start and finish times that will apply during Ramadan).

By adjusting start and finish times, employers can "stagger" working hours to ensure that there are always employees in the office. For example, certain employees or teams can be required to work from 8 AM to 3 PM (inclusive of a one-hour rest break), and others from 11 AM to 6 PM (inclusive of a one-hour rest break). This would ensure that the office is fully operational throughout the working day and can support business continuity.

**8. Does DMCC have a Food and Beverage policy for Ramadan?**

Yes, please refer to DMCC Policy Regarding Food & Beverage Operations during Ramadan at <https://www.dmcc.ae/free-zone/support/how-guides/managing-company> which will continue to apply in subsequent years unless otherwise notified.

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