





# Corrections and Community Supervision

ANDREW M. CUOMO  
Governor

ANTHONY J. ANNUCCI  
Acting Commissioner

## MEMORANDUM

TO: All Incarcerated Individuals

FROM: Jeff McKoy, Deputy Commissioner, Program Services   
James O'Gorman, Deputy Commissioner, Correctional Facilities 

SUBJECT: Congregate Worship – Islamic Faith

DATE: March 19, 2020

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The Majlis Ash-Shura of New York State is the official authorizing entity which advises the Department on religious matters pertaining to the Islamic Faith. In response to the local, national, and global threat to public health and safety posed by COVID-19 (the Corona Virus), the Majlis Ash-Shura of New York State has formally recommended that all congregate Muslim services at Department correctional facilities, be suspended until further notice. This recommendation was made with the understanding that social distancing, a necessary preventative practice for everyone's protection at this time, is not considered to be acceptable during prayer. As such, and as an interim measure, the Department has suspended congregate worship to take effect on March 20, 2020, for adherents of the Islamic Faith. However, you are encouraged to worship individually.

The Majlis-Shura leadership has indicated that the suspension of congregate worship meets the primary objective of Islamic canon law, which is the preservation of human life. Further, it is consistent with the current recommended practices of mosques and Muslim places and houses of worship in Mecca and Madinah, Arabia, as well as throughout the United States of America, and specifically in the tristate area of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

The suspension of congregate worship will be reviewed weekly.