

Media Release

Ms Ros Spence MP
Minister for Multicultural Affairs
Minister for Community Sport
Minister for Youth



Thursday, 23 April 2020

SUPPORTING VICTORIA'S MUSLIM COMMUNITY DURING RAMADAN

The Victorian Government is helping Victoria's Muslim community find new ways to celebrate Ramadan, with many of the traditional services and customs ruled out this year due to coronavirus measures.

Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ros Spence today announced that a grassroots video campaign will be developed to share the experience of Ramadan and \$25,000 provided to the Bachar Houli Foundation to mentor up to 30 young Muslim Victorians.

The Foundation, headed by AFL premiership player Bachar Houli, was launched in 2013 and runs an acclaimed leadership program supporting young Muslims and providing links to traineeships and employment.

With Ramadan starting this evening and ending on 23 May, the Government is investing a further \$5,000 to help mosques get IT-ready so they can hold digital services and to reach out to their communities during the month-long observance.

The Islamic Council of Victoria will also receive \$20,000 to continue their work providing halal food packs to families in need.

The initiatives are about getting behind the Muslim community at a challenging time and ensuring they are supported to celebrate Ramadan – one of the most significant events on the Muslim calendar.

Islam is the fourth most commonly practiced religion in Victoria, with almost 200,000 Muslim Victorians.

Each year, Muslim communities across the world observe the holy month of Ramadan followed by celebrating Eid-al-Fitr, an important time of prayer, reflection and community solidarity.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Multicultural Affairs Ros Spence

"Like so many things, celebrating Ramadan will look very different this year because of coronavirus."

"A lot of Victorians have made sacrifices throughout this pandemic – and I know many in the Muslim community will be hurting at not being able to attend nightly prayers or get together with family."

"While we can't gather together in person this year, we can still show our support for Muslim Victorians by helping continue the great work of the Islamic Council of Victoria and the Bachar Houli Foundation."