



Islamic Council of Victoria

ICV Mosque Policy

Policy statement:

Much like any other religious institution, it is imperative that the ICV has a defined policy concerning behaviour and etiquette in its mosque(s) and prayer facilities. The main purpose of this policy is to keep the interior of the mosque/prayer facility distraction free so that Muslims can remain focused on worship. While some of these matters are universal, like not allowing shoes in the prayer hall, the ICV is cognisant that these rules may vary from place to place, and as the circumstances determine.

Rationale:

One of ICV's most important assets is its Mosque reputation. This document sets out the guidelines for any Mosque or prayer facility operated by the ICV

Mosque Features:

Mosques can vary widely in size from large Islamic centers that can hold thousands of worshippers to small storefronts that may serve just a handful of people. But no matter the architectural differences, all mosques share similar interior features, including a prayer hall and a "mihrab" (or niche). The prayer hall in each mosque is positioned in the direction of Mecca, which Muslims must face toward during prayer; in Victoria, worshipers face West-Northwest.

The prayer halls should always be open and free of clutter (there are no pews or chairs) in order to hold numerous worshippers who stand in lines and bow in unison.

The mihrab, or niche, serves as an indicator for which wall of the mosque faces Mecca. It may be decorated with Arabic calligraphy and helps reflect the voice of the prayer leader with its curved shape.

Clothing and Cleanliness:

When worshipping in a mosque, both men and women are required to wear modest, conservative clothing. Both genders should wear loose clean clothes that do not reveal the shape of the body. Women may be required to cover their hair with a "hijab" or a scarf.

Cleanliness is seen as an essential part of the worshipping experience and as such, all visitors to the mosque should be in state of relative cleanliness. This includes removing shoes before entering the prayer hall, as to avoid soiling the rugs or carpets. Muslims should also cleanse themselves before prayer in an ablution ritual called "wudu."

Visitors:

If there are non-Muslim visitors to the Mosque, the ICV will undertake best endeavours to make them aware of this policy and abide by them while they are inside the prayer facility. It should be



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noted that mosque rules often vary between men and women, especially in regard to clothing and prayer position (men and women are usually separated in the prayer hall; ideally with women occupying the rows behind the men).

Universal mosque rules include not entering a mosque during prayer time; dressing modestly; removing your shoes before entering; not eating inside a mosque; and keeping noise to a minimum.

Non-Religious Functions:

ICV Mosques and prayer facilities play a pivotal role in the daily lives of Victorian Muslims by opening their doors for a variety of functions. These non-religious functions include serving as community centers; welfare organizations; schools; are arenas for social gatherings; and locations for civic activities.

The ICV Head Imam is the final arbiter as to what is an appropriate function at ICV Mosques and Prayer Facilities.

Application:

This policy applies to all ICV Mosques and Prayers Spaces.

Responsibility:

The responsibility for this policy is the ICV Head Imam.

Key words

Mosque – Religious Obligations

Policy Title:	Mosque Policy	
Endorsed by: ICV Board	Date: 1 September 2011	Version No: 1/2011
Date of next review: <insert date>		
Responsible: ICV Head Imam		