



Law Enforcement Guide to Muslims

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Basic Principles of Faith



- Modesty/Hijab
 - Women and men are both asked to behave and dress modestly. Some women wear hijab to observe modesty. It is not permissible for them to take it off in front of any man who is not a mahram.
 - A woman's mahram is a person whom she is never permitted to marry because of their close blood relationship
 - Women do not shake hands with the opposite sex
- Praying/Prayer times
 - Muslims pray five times a day
 - Their prayers are known as Fajr (dawn), Dhuhr (after midday), Asr (afternoon), Maghrib (after sunset), Isha (nighttime)
 - They may stop what they are doing to pray
 - Before they they pray, Tthey must perform ablution
 - They wash their limbs (face, head, ears, arms, and feet)
 - Muslims face towards Mecca (towards the east)
 - Friday Prayer
 - Muslims gather for the noon prayer in the mosque every Friday
 - They join as a community to obey Allah as opposed to the privacy of their own homes.



Basic Principles of Faith



- Fasting
 - Muslims fast for one month every year
 - During the month of Ramadan
 - They aim to grow spiritually and come closer to Allah and loved one
 - They fast from food and other pleasures from sunrise to sunset
- Honesty
 - Muslims are committed to speaking the truth
 - This included abiding by the law
- Health code
 - Muslims don't eat pork or anything cooked in pork fat
 - Muslims don't drink alcohol or any food cooked in alcohol



Signs of Identifying Faith/Culture



- Muslims believe that faith is within the heart.
- It is quite difficult to identify faith but some signs of faith include but are not limited to:
 - Hijab “head scarf”
 - Covered up in modest clothes (males and females)
 - Holding Masbaha “praying rosary beads”
 - Beard
 - Kufi “prayer cap”
 - Niqab “ a veil that covers the face except the eyes”
 - Long robes, usually white, referred to as “Thobes”
- Not all Muslims have these, and not everyone with these are Muslims.





Basic Principles of Culture



- Interacting with the opposite sex
 - Muslim women prefer to interact with other women
 - Muslim men prefer to interact with other men
 - Most likely, neither will shake the hands of the opposite sex
- Language
 - The religion is Arabic but many Muslims come from different countries and speak other languages



Domestic Violence



- In some cultures domestic violence is seen as a family matter
 - They might not understand why police need to be involved
- Victims
 - May blame themselves for their spouse's abuse
 - They may fear they will lose their immigration status
 - Often times the husband controls the money
 - The wife will have to money if the husband is removed from the home



Mistrust Between the Community and Police



- Refugees/Immigrants may have a mistrust of police
 - Due to negative experiences with police/government forces in their country
 - Police could be seen as an extension of institutions that oppress Muslims
 - Some members of the Muslim community may feel they are under constant surveillance by the FBI
- 2017 "Muslim Ban"
 - In response to terrorism, lack of information sharing, and other public safety risks, President Trump signed an executive order that banned travel to the US, for 90 days
 - From Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen
 - These are predominately Muslim countries
 - Some Muslims saw this as an attack on their religion and felt unwelcomed in the US
 - People in dire situations were not able to flee to safety
 - The Supreme Court Blocked the executive order but on September 24th, 2017 they allowed a modified version which banned travel from
 - Chad, Iran, Libya, North Korea, Syria, Venezuela, Yemen, and Somalia

How Can Law Enforcement Help?



- When working with Muslims
 - If possible, bring along an interpreter
 - Be considerate of their culture stigmas especially those surrounding men/women
 - If the women will be alone have a female officer talk with her and/or bring a female social worker, a female victims advocate, or a community leader
 - Assure them that you are there to help and protect their rights
 - Law enforcement in the US is different than their countries
- To build better relationships
 - Participate in community events
 - Find opportunities to educate about the role of law enforcement in the community

