

## What is it?

Islamophobia is a fear or prejudice towards the Islamic faith, Muslims, and those who share characteristics associated with Islam that could result in discrimination, marginalisation, and victimisation. Like all prejudices, this creates a distorted understanding of the particular group of people.

For victims, this means not being able to enjoy or exercise fundamental freedoms in the political, social, economic, cultural and other spheres of life.

## Additional resources

- [How to Identify & Tackle Islamophobia in the Workplace](#)
- [Stream](#)
- [Inclusive Employers](#)
- [Islamophobia: Muslims describe abuse suffered at work](#)
- [How to create an inclusive workplace](#)
- [Recommendations for employers](#)
- [Islamophobia awareness resources](#)
- [NHS Muslim Network](#)

## Who is affected?

Adults and children who identify as Muslims as well as those who also share characteristics that have been racialised as 'Muslim', such as language, clothing or skin colour, could also be affected by Islamophobia.

## How is Islamophobia manifested in the workplace?

Islamophobia can take many forms in society at an individual or institutional level. Discriminatory acts can range from physical attacks against those perceived to be Muslim or damage of mosques and Islamic centres to making assumptions based on stereotypes which impact any aspect of life.

For pharmacists, Islamophobia could manifest in the form of discrimination in recruitment or in the workplace by the employer, how a patient or colleague interacts with them, career development and experiences in wider life outside of practice.

## Strategies to counter Islamophobia in the workplace

Employers should:

- Monitor available data which shows how individuals are treated and investigate differences between those with different protected characteristics - this includes different areas of the employment cycle and practices such as recruitment, training, appraisals, disciplinarys, grievances and pay gap reporting. It also includes monitoring absence data, workplace accidents, staff surveys and exit interviews.
- Invest in awareness training relating to faith and religion. Prejudice cannot survive experience and greater awareness of other faiths amongst managers and other employees will help prevent the ignorance that can lead to discrimination.
- Review the recruitment process to proactively challenge bias - for instance assumptions made about those with 'Muslim-sounding' names.
- Ensure equality policies are clear and include statements against Islamophobia in the workplace and enforce a zero tolerance of Islamophobia.
- Make sure all employees understand how to raise concerns safely and confidentially. Ensure that concerns or formal complaints about alleged Islamophobia are properly investigated and resolved and that any learning is actioned.
- Promote an inclusive culture that celebrates all parts of society - examples would be celebrating Islamic festivals such as Ramadan with Muslim staff and patients.
- Design company events to be inclusive - for example where dietary requirements and beverage choice (i.e non-alcoholic) options are met.
- Provide an appropriate physical space for Muslims and others to practice the daily prayers which form part of their religion.
- If not a Muslim, be an ally - learn more about Islamophobia and act against perceived forms of Islamophobic discrimination. Encourage employees to be allies too.
- Demonstrate to the current and potential workforce that the organisation is inclusive. For example, in images of staff or when profiling individuals at work.
- In larger organisations consider creating staff equality networks where employees can positively contribute to raising awareness and helping prevent discrimination.
- Avoid stereotyping - Muslims come from diverse backgrounds, ethnicities and countries and as such do not form a single homogeneous cultural group. It is therefore very important that colleagues always enquire if unsure about something and do not make assumptions. For instance, when a Muslim colleague is fasting, it is courteous to ask if they mind you eating around them.