



HOST A VIRTUAL IFTAR FOR POLIGON!





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This Ramadan, gather your friends and families virtually for a good cause! By hosting a virtual iftar you'll raise awareness and funds to support the critical work of a groundbreaking non-profit dedicated to amplifying Muslim American and ally voices in Congress. In this toolkit, you'll learn more about Poligon, hosting a virtual event, and where your donations will go. It's important for our communities to stay united during these trying times and we hope you can join us virtually to celebrate a wonderful time of year.

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STEPS**



FIRST THINGS FIRST: ANSWERING YOUR **BURNING** QUESTIONS

WHAT IS RAMADAN?

Ramadan is the 9th and holiest month of the Islamic calendar. During this holy month, many of the nearly two billion Muslims around the world fast from sunrise to sunset. In addition to fasting, Muslims focus their attention on worship and acts of charity (zakat).

WHAT IS AN IFTAR?

Iftar is the sunset meal Muslims eat to end their fast every day during Ramadan.



SO YOU CAN'T EVEN DRINK WATER?

Not even water.



DO I NEED TO BE MUSLIM TO HOST AN IFTAR?



Nope! Anyone may host an iftar, and you can invite both Muslims and non-Muslims. If you care about equal access to power for religious minorities, promoting social justice, stopping racial injustice, fighting economic inequality, and combating Islamophobia, then you can definitely host or attend an iftar.



1

Founded by millennial Muslim leaders with backgrounds in government, advocacy, law, and policy research, Poligon Education Fund (Poligon) is a national non-profit which aims to amplify the voices of America's 3.4 - 8 million Muslims on Capitol Hill.

WHO ARE WE? & WHAT IS POLIGON?



2

Poligon offers Congressional advocacy trainings, weekly legislative updates, and policy guidance to help increase the community's political acumen. Poligon also educates policymakers, often with interfaith coalitions and advocacy groups, on issues of concern to Muslims and other marginalized communities such as civil rights, Islamophobia, and social, racial, and economic justice.

3

Poligon hopes to create an America where all people, regardless of background, are empowered in the policy making process, treated with justice and dignity, and can live together in peace and security.

4

Poligon Education Fund is a 501c3 non-profit organization. All donations are tax deductible and zakat eligible.





We hope you and your families are staying safe and healthy during this time. Ramadan won't be the same without our large gatherings with friends, family, and community, but you can still host a virtual iftar to celebrate this special time. Your virtual fundraising Iftars will directly support Poligon's efforts to advocate for policies that protect and provide economic relief to those who need it most during this time of crisis.

Follow the steps below to host your virtual iftar:

Step 1: Plan the details of your virtual iftar

- Start by picking the date and time. Since Muslims break their fast at sunset, it is highly recommended to host an iftar just before sunset. Please refer to your local sunset times tables or a Google search can provide the exact time of sunset. Plan on having guests start the video call about 30 minutes prior to sunset.
- Pick a free video conference product such as:
 - [Skype](#): Up to 50 people
 - [Google Hangouts](#)*: You can have up to 25 people on a video call
 - [Zoom](#)*: Up to 100 people and limited to 40 minutes per video call
 - [CISCO's Webex](#)*: Up to 100 people and video call for as long as you want
 - [Microsoft Teams](#): If you own a Microsoft Office 365 subscription, you can host over 100 people with Microsoft teams

*these video conference products allow you to purchase a subscription to upgrade and host more people and increase duration of the video call

- Test out your conference before the day of your Iftar to be a bit more prepared. Need help? Reach out to us on info@poligonnational.org.
- Be creative and have a theme for the iftar. You could send recipes and challenge your guests to try to make a different dish. (For example, have a taco themed night and send around different taco recipes).



- Have a lot of people attending? Consider organizing small group conference video calls to make the break out the larger group and create a more intimate space for people to connect. Have a designated leader to set up and host the video call.

Step 2: Set a fundraising goal

- Use Poligon’s donation brackets to motivate people with individual goals
 - i. What do your donations support?

\$25	Action Alert with instructions on how to contact your Senator or Representative about a pressing policy issue
\$50	Weekly "Hill Happenings" newsletter with a rundown of recent activities in Congress
\$100	Advocacy 101 webinar, accessible anywhere
\$250	Development of a comprehensive policy or "How To" guide
\$500	In person training inside the DC/MD/VA area
\$1,000	In person training outside of the DC/MD/VA area (within the Continental U.S.)

- Set a goal for the evening. The more you’re able to raise the more impact we can make as an organization! Personalize your fundraising to let people know why the cause is important to you.



Step 3: Invite your guests and start fundraising

- Use this [invitation template](#) to send out to your email or phone contact list.



- Here are some other [social media templates](#) for you to use should you want to create a Facebook event* and share online. Be sure to add a line about your event, the date, time, webinar link, and any other relevant info.
 - i. Start your own online fundraising campaign for Poligon! Here are some ideas on platforms to use:
 1. Start a Facebook donation campaign, you can add “Poligon Education Fund” as your charity.
 2. Direct your guests to our [Launchgood](#) campaign
 3. Shopping on Amazon? Support Poligon with [AmazonSmile](#) (Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases)
 - ii. Share our one-pagers (<http://www.poligonnational.org/issues.html>) for your guests to get a sense of what issues we cover.



- iii. Also share our [COVID-19 Policy Update Center](#). There, our community members and allies can view information and actions you can take to understand and help shape policy on the pandemic.

Step 4: Host your Iftar for Poligon

- Iftar night has arrived! During your event, screenshare the welcome message video we will send you from our executive board. Take a moment to share with your guests why you support Poligon and why amplifying Muslim American and ally voices in Congress is so urgently needed (refer to handouts for inspiration).
- Before dinner is over, make a pitch for donations in order to meet your fundraising goal. Remember, people will not donate if you do not ask! Send a link of your fundraising page (if you have created one online) so people can make donations before and during the Iftar. You can send us a check and reach out by email at info@poligonnational.org to get address information:

Note that donations are tax deductible and Zakat eligible.

Spread some inspiration with #poligonnationaliftar

- We want people across the country to join together for to support this cause and prove that Muslim American voices matter in the policy making process. Sharing your success online is critical to that. Take a screenshot of your video conference! Use #poligonnationaliftar on Twitter and Instagram to share photos of the gathering. When your guests use the hashtag as well, you'll have a creatively curated collection of memories from the night. Besides Poligon liking and reposting any public photos, our Media Director will follow up with you after the iftar to discuss your success and collect photos from the evening.



Step 5: Thank your guests

Some suggestions on ways to do this:

- Personal thank you email
- Mailed thank you notes
- Post a thank you message on your Facebook fundraiser





THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING POLIGON!

Our team has the skills and expertise to help amplify your voice in Congress, but only you can make it happen. Thank you for investing in our community's future by hosting an iftar!



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Poligon Education Fund

DON'T BE A STRANGER! KEEP UP WITH US THROUGH OUR SOCIALS