

Revision History

September 9, 2004

1. Page 9: Community responsibilities: Change "This is absolutely necessary" to "This is necessary".
2. Page 10: Imam rights and privileges: Change "The following are a minimal list ..." "The following are a list of items which should be considered while the Imam's contract is being drawn up."
3. Page 12: Change "the Imam search committee will prepare a contract" to "An offer should be prepared by EC for BT's approval."
4. Page 12: Change "The imam search committee may use the relevant documents in this set of documents....." to " EC may use the relevant documents in this set of documents... ".
5. Page 15: Item 6. Change "BT" to "EC" .
6. Page 15: Add an item 7 : "In case EC does not resolve the grievance satisfactorily, it should be forwarded to BT".
7. Page 17: Evaluation: Change "BT" to "EC".
8. Page 20. Evaluation template: Change rating categories to "Excellent, Good, Average, Poor, and Undecided."

Imaam Policies and Procedures

Islamic Center of Greater Austin

September 25, 2003



Preamble

"BEHOLD, Allah bids you to deliver all that you have been entrusted with unto those who are entitled thereto, and whenever you judge between people, to judge with justice. Verily, most excellent is what Allah exhorts you to do: verily, Allah is all-hearing, all-seeing!"

Soorat Annisaa (4), verse 58.

"And do not overlay the truth with falsehood, and do not knowingly suppress the truth;" Soorat Albagarah (2), verse 42.

" And do not conceal what you have witnessed for, verily, he who conceals it is sinful at heart; and Allah has full knowledge of all that you do." Soorat Albagarah (2), verse 283.

In an Islamic Community such as the **Islamic Community of Greater Austin (ICGA)**, the importance of an Imaam cannot be overemphasized. Besides leading prayers, an Imam is essential to guide people from the birth of a child to the death of a person. In short, an Imam is intimately associated with the spiritual well being of all people in an Islamic community. Thus, it is important that people in the community are consulted in all aspects of an Imaam's tenure in the community. However, without a systemic predefined process, this consultation can be chaotic, causing disputes rather than harmony in the society. Moreover, lack of guidelines and procedures could leave it up to the whims of a few individuals to determine the fate of an Imaam. It is with these primary objectives that the Board of Trustee of ICGA assigned a committee to develop policies and procedures for the recruitment, hiring, evaluation, and retention of an **ICGA** Imaam.

The committee that was formed is called **The ICGA Board of Trustees Ad Hoc Committee to Draft Imaam Policies and Procedures**. The members of this committee are listed with their signatures at the end of this preamble.

The committee started its work at the beginning of July 2003 and is concluding it at the end of September 2003. It started with some brain storming sessions, sought input from other Muslim communities, and finally sought input from the **ICGA Board of Trustees**, the **ICGA Executive Committee**, the **ICGA General Body** members, and **University of Texas Muslim Students Association (UT MSA)**.

The **ICGA** community input came in the form verbal input taken at meetings as well as written input that was handed to the committee on paper, e-mail, and online forms on the web. The committee had a meeting each with the **ICGA Board of Trustees**, the **ICGA Executive Committee**, and two of the **UT MSA** officers as

well as the **ICGA MSA Coordinator**. Two meetings with the **ICGA General Body** members: one at each of the two Masjid facilities (Neuces and Manor) was also held. Notes were taken from the verbal input given at the meetings. The written input is all gathered unedited and attached to this report as an appendix.

The committee identified nine areas, which the set of generated documents cover. These are given in the following list together with an introduction. Some of the documents are broken into subcomponents each designating a subdocument. The set of documents is as follows:

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Imaam Qualifications**
- 3. Imaam Responsibilities**
- 4. Community Responsibilities**
- 5. Imaam Rights and Privileges**
- 6. Imaam Recruiting and Hiring Procedures**
- 7. Managing The Relationship Between The Imaam and The ICGA Community**
- 8. Imaam Performance Evaluation Procedures**
- 9. Imaam Performance Evaluation Criteria**
 - a. The General Body Imaam Performance Evaluation Template**
- 10. Grievance Mechanism and Procedures**
 - a. Grievance Resolution Procedure**
 - b. Grievance Report Form**
 - c. The Judiciary Committee Procedures**
- 11. Appendix (contains all the raw written community input)**

This set of documents is the effort of the whole community as represented by those who chose to participate in it. We may or may not agree with all or some of its contents. Nevertheless, no effort has been spared in soliciting input, weighing each input, assessing what is needed, taking into consideration what the future may bring, and, above all seeking the help of **The Almighty Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta'aalaa** to come up with what we think is fair, just, and suitable for all the parties that will be affected by these policies and procedures.

We ask **Allah Subhaanahu wa Ta aalaa to** reward all those who contributed for their good intention and effort and to forgive all their shortcomings.

Respectfully submitted:

Abdul Azeem Ahmed

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Date:



Introduction

The nine areas where the work of the committee covered generated the following set of documents. Some brief justifications as to the need of having to define such policy or procedure is given below.

Needless to say that the, "**Imaam Qualifications**", is one of the first required documents. It is recognized that some of the qualifications are essential. Some other qualifications are highly desired. So this document list each set of desired qualifications separately.

The next document is, "**Imaam Responsibilities**". For fairness to both parties, the Imaam and the **ICGA** community, the expected set of responsibilities that a community seeks in a full time Imaam must be predefined.

It must be acknowledged that an Imam cannot effectively deliver the required services, unless the community shoulders its responsibilities. The community responsibilities include establishing the necessary infrastructure and institutions. Thus the need for the "**Community Responsibilities**" document.

Any person hired to do a job must not only have responsibilities, but also some rights and privileges, thus the need to define an "**Imaam Rights and Privileges**" document.

A procedure for hiring an Imaam is outlined next in the document "**Imaam Recruiting and Hiring Procedures**". The procedures define the process by which an Imaam is recruited and hired and stipulates the involvement of the **ICGA** community in the process. The representation of the community in the selection committee and in the evaluation of the candidates is necessary since the recruited Imaam will be leading all in prayers. The necessity of the community involvement can be derived from the following Hadeeth of the Prophet Salla Allahu 'Alayhee Wa Sallam:

'Abdullah ibn 'Amr relates that the Prophet Sallallahu 'Alayhee wa Sallam said:
"Allah does not accept prayers from three [types of] people: a man who leads a people and they dislike him, a man who attends the prayers after their time is finished, and a man who re-enslaves his freed slave." (Abu Dawud and Ibn Majah)

Once the decision is made to hire an Imaam, it is required to mutually agree on the terms of the appointment and the language of the binding contract. Whereas the committee did not propose a sample contract, it has emphasized what need to be included in it in the "**Imaam Recruiting and Hiring Procedures**" document

The Imaam functions are multifaceted. Besides leading regular prayers, an Imam might teach classes, deliver lectures, conduct training sessions, make social visits, or reconcile differences between people. At times, there might be conflicting needs requiring an Imam to be at different places at the same time. To avoid these conflicting situations from arising, and to avoid other possible misunderstandings, it is important that the Imaam time is managed through an activity manager. The role of the **Manager** is described in the document "**Managing The Relationship Between The Imaam and The ICGA Community**".

The performance of the Imaam must be evaluated by the community at some intervals to make sure that the Imaam remains effective and that the community is forthcoming in helping to be effective. These evaluations are essential to recognize the areas of strength and to strengthen the areas where weaknesses are observed. The evaluations are also helpful in deciding whether to retain the Imaam or not. Thus the document "**Imaam Performance Evaluation Procedures**" is defined. The frequency of the evaluation process and the involvement of the community at large in the evaluation process are outlined.

The evaluation has to be conducted based on predefined evaluation criteria, thus the need for defining the "**Imaam Performance Evaluation Criteria**" document. Another document, "**The General Body Imaam Performance Evaluation Template**" was drafted as an example of how the evaluation criteria can be used to get the general membership input in the evaluation process.

It is recognized that an Imam, being a human being, could have problems arising when dealing with other members of the community. A general grievance mechanism and procedures are defined not only to help solve problems involving the Imaam and other community members but also all other community members. This issue is covered by the "**Grievance Mechanism and Procedures**" document and its subdocuments: "**Grievance Resolution Procedure**", "**Grievance Report Form**", and "**The Judiciary Committee Procedures**".

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it is important that the Imaam time is managed through an activity manager. The role of the **Manager** is described in the document "**Managing The Relationship Between The Imaam and The ICGA Community**".



Imaam Qualifications

The desired qualifications for an ICGA Imaam are grouped into the following two categories:

Must Have Absolute Requirements:

1. He must hold the beliefs of Ahl-u-Sunnah Wa-aljama ah
2. He must have rigorous education in Islamic Studies through acceptable means which may include recognized Islamic institutions and other traditional methods
3. He must have adequate Fiqh knowledge to fulfill the responsibilities required by the position of an ICGA Imaam
4. He must have comprehensive understanding of Islam
5. He must be a Hafiz of the entire Qura an
6. He must have mastered tajweed rules (to facilitate correct recitation of qiraat in salaah)
7. Practices Islam as a total way of life according to the Qur'aan and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammed (Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam) (abides by the Faraidh, the Waajibaat, the Sunnah, the Mustahabbat & refrains from the Muharramaat and the Makroohaat).
8. He must have effective English Communication Skills
9. He must have effective Arabic Communication Skills

Desirable To Have Requirements:

1. Previous experience as Imaam
2. Previous experience as Imaam in the West
3. Previous experience in Da wah activities
4. Previous experience in leading Jum'ah prayer and giving the Khutbah
5. Previous experience in leading Eid Prayers and giving the Khutbah
6. Previous experience in leading the Taraweeh prayers
7. Previous experience in providing matrimonial and divorce services
8. Previous experience in providing counseling and guidance services
9. Previous experience in reconciliation efforts
10. Previous experience in providing funeral services and guidance in body preparation, Janaazah prayer and burial
11. Previous experience in teaching and organizing activities for Islamic School
12. Previous experience in fund raising activities
13. Previous experience in teaching children
14. Previous experience in teaching youth
15. Previous experience in teaching adults
16. Previous experience in delivering motivational speeches

17. Previous experience in speaking with Jews, Christians and other non-Muslims about Islam
18. Previous experience in representing Muslim community and speaking to the media (Newspapers, Radio, TV, etc)
19. Previous experience in organizing Islamic conferences
20. Pleasant voice (Recitation of Qura an)
21. Communication Skills in the language spoken by the majority of ICGA community
22. Car driving skills

Imaam Responsibilities

The following are some of the Imaam responsibilities in addition to any that the **ICGA Board of Trustees** chooses to add in the contract with a particular candidate:

1. Leading the daily prayers at the Masjid.
2. Leading Jum'ah prayer and giving the Khutbah except when there is a guest Khateeb.
3. Leading Eid Prayers and giving the Khutbah except when there is a guest Khateeb.
4. Leading the Taraweeh prayers.
5. Providing funeral services and guidance in the following areas:
 - a. Train and supervise the community funeral committee and others in body preparation.
 - b. Perform Janaazah prayer.
 - c. Train and supervise the community funeral committee and others in burial.
6. Provide matrimonial and divorce services as needed.
7. Provide counseling and guidance services as needed.
8. Help with reconciliation efforts as needed.
9. Quranic Studies, Tajweed, Tafseer, Hadeeth, Seerah, Figh, and other Halaqas as will be determined and scheduled by the various community committees.
10. Participate in the Austin community at large (non-Muslim) activities that further Da'wah and good public relations for Islam and Muslims.
11. Be a ready resource for other activities that the community organizes.

In addition to the above responsibilities that are functional in nature, the following general requirements pertaining to routine activities and general conduct must be observed by the Imaam:

1. The Imaam is expected to work about 40 hours a week, although additional time will be needed during Ramadhaan, 'Eeds, and other occasions.
2. The Imaam is expected to maintain regular and convenient office hours at the Masjid for members of the community to consult and seek guidance. However, such counseling may be needed at times outside the office hours and away from the Masjid.
3. The Imaam shall interact with all persons and organizations, Muslim and non-Muslim, in a manner that reflects positively on the **ICGA**.

4. The Imaam shall conduct himself at all times in ways that foster unity and a sense of inclusion among all members of the local Muslim community, and promote broad participation in Islamic and community activities.
5. The Imaam shall not discriminate against any ICGA member nor against any other Muslim on the basis of Islamic school of jurisprudence (Mathaahib), gender, race, national or ethnic origin, citizenship or immigration status, political affiliation, class, or economic status.
6. The Imaam shall conduct himself at all times in a manner that is respectful of the history and diversity of the local Muslim community and that shows sensitivity to the needs of the local population.



Community Responsibilities

The **Ad Hoc Committee** felt that there is a need for defining some **ICGA** community responsibilities with respect to the Imaam related responsibilities. The reason is that the Imaam function and responsibilities can only be fulfilled, evaluation criteria and procedures can only be accomplished, and other issues can only be accurately and reasonably resolved when the community responsibilities are also defined.

This is necessary to avoid vagueness and misunderstanding. The Imaam **should not** and **cannot** replace the **ICGA** community governing bodies and its various activity entities. Whereas the Imaam can be utilized by the community bodies in helping with these responsibilities as a resource, it should be clearly stated here that these **ARE** the **ICGA Community Responsibilities** and **NOT** the Imaam's.

It is with the above understanding that the following ICGA community responsibilities are specified:

1. The **ICGA** must have a day-to-day management body for Opening/ Closing, Cleaning, Security, and Maintenance of the Masjid. This entity can either be hired or volunteered.
2. The **ICGA** must have a **Da'wah Committee** to organize and provide various needed services and/or programs (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).
3. The **ICGA** must have an **Education Committee** to organize needed educational programs (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).
4. The **ICGA** must have a **Youth Activities Committee** to organize needed educational and training activities and/or programs (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).
5. The **ICGA** must have a **Women Activities Committee** to organize needed educational and training activities and/or programs (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).
6. The **ICGA** must have a **Social Services Committee** to organize and provide various needed services and/or programs (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).
7. The **ICGA** must have a **Media and Public Relation Committee** to organize and provide various needed services and/or programs (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).
8. The **ICGA** must have a **University Activities and Coordination Committee** to organize activities with the **MSA**, provide facilities,

programs, and generally coordinates between those important segments of the **ICGA** community (Can use the Imaam as a Resource).

The above list is not intended as an exhaustive list, but only as examples of things that are clearly the domain of the ICGA Community Responsibilities and **NOT** the Imaam's.

Imaam Rights and Privileges

The Imaam holds a sensitive position in the **ICGA** community. He is considered a leader in the community but he is also an employee of the **ICGA** community. Like any member of ICGA community he has human limitations and needs. Sometimes these conflicting community expectations, of being a leader and an employee at the same time, can overwhelm the limited capacity of the Imaam, making him unable to fulfill his duties and responsibilities. To address this sensitive issue the **ICGA Board of Trustees** should have a formal mutually negotiated contract with the Imaam detailing not only the responsibilities but also the rights and privileges of the Imaam.

The following are a list of items, which should be considered while the Imaam s contract is being drawn up:

1. **Housing** — Adequate accommodation should be provided for the Imaam. The shelter need not be lavish, yet it should reside in a safe neighborhood, should be equipped with necessary commodities (e.g. phone) and it should be close to the Masjid.
2. **Health Insurance** — Adequate health and dental insurance should be provided for the Imaam. If family coverage is needed and is not provided it should be clearly communicated to the Imaam.
3. **Transportation** — Adequate transportation should be provided for the Imaam. This may be achieved via either physical transportation or thru monetary compensation or allowance.
4. **Monetary Compensation** — Equitable salary should be provided to the Imaam and it should take into consideration the cost of living in the Austin area.
5. **Schedule** — The Imaam possesses the right to a reasonable schedule that is aimed at satisfying both the community s needs as well as the immeasurable responsibilities of the Imaam.

A number of sick days in which the Imaam is allowed to take adequate time off when the need arises; **Leave of Absence** — Based on a mutually agreed to contract by the **ICGA Community** and the Imaam, the Imaam shall have the right to the following:

An ample amount of time for a yearly vocation the length of which should take into consideration whether the Imaam is recruited from overseas (in which a longer vacation time should be provided to allow for travel) or recruited within the continent of North America (where the need for a lengthy vacation cannot be justified);

One (or two) weekly day(s) off.

- 6. Rights to Consultation on Programs — TheDCGA Community**
governing and activity entities should consult the Imam about programs that are to take place in the Masjid.



Imaam Recruiting and Hiring Procedures

The **ICGA Board of Trustees** should establish an **Imaam Search Committee** that would be responsible for recruiting and hiring an Imaam. The **ICGA Board of Trustees** should appoint decent, unbiased, and pious community members to the **Imaam Search Committee**. At least one of the members of this committee must not be a member of the **ICGA Board of Trustees** or the **ICGA Executive Committee**. This committee should follow the following procedure:

1. **Advertisement:**

Using the **Imaam Qualifications** and the "**Imaam Responsibilities**" documents as a guideline an advertisement should be crafted to solicit applicants. The goal for advertisement activity should be to find the maximum number of candidates available. Here are some of the guidelines:

- a. **Personal Contact:*** Contact Muslims in Austin and other communities who could be potential resources for providing information related to finding a suitable Imaam.
- b. **Media:*** Run advertisement on leading Islamic magazines, newspaper, web sites, etc.
- c. **Wall Posting:*** Create a flyer with the qualifications of an Imaam and post it on Masjid bulletin boards in Austin and others cities.

2. **Initial Screening:**

Using the following processes an initial screening of all applicants should be conducted to narrow down the choices:

- a. **Telephone Interviews:*** Telephone interviews can be helpful to determine if the candidate meets some of the qualifications such as language skills, recitation of Quran, etc.
- b. **References (Background Checks):*** Use all available means to check the background of the candidates including contacting any references.

3. **Short Listing:**

Use the **Imaam Qualifications** and the "**Imaam Responsibilities**" documents as a guideline to make a short list of candidates who should be called for on site interviews.

4. **Interview Process and Program:**

Each short listed candidate should be invited for a series of one-on-one interview sessions as well as a series of public activities to allow the general ICGA community members to see and interact with the candidates. The interview process should involve both of the following activities:

- a. **Face-to-Face Interviews:** A set of questions needs to be prepared to ask all candidates by the **Imaam Search Committee** members. Each member of the search committee can add other questions during that member's interview session with a candidate. The **Imaam Search Committee** can enlist the help of others beside its members to conduct some interviews for any or all candidates when a particular area of expertise is needed.
- b. **Public Programs:** Potential candidates should be given a chance to conduct a Khutba, a Halaqa, and/or a lecture etc to give members of the ICGA community a chance to experience and evaluate the candidates.

5. Evaluation:

Two evaluation forms must be prepared ahead of time. One form for the one-on-one interview sessions, to be filled by each interviewer. The other to be filled by individual ICGA community members to evaluate each candidate based on their interaction during the public programs. The **Imaam Search Committee** must collect all copies of both evaluation forms, tally the results into two summary reports one for each of the two modes of interaction, rate all candidates, and create an ordered list of the candidates based on their performance.

In case that no candidate have all the must have qualifications outlined in the **Imaam Qualifications** document, the committee must prioritize the ones that are met and make a determination to see if these are sufficient to continue the process.

6. Recommendations:

After evaluating all the potential candidates, make the final recommendations to the **ICGA Board of Trustees** for their decision. The final recommendations and all generated materials during the process must be included in the final report of the **Imaam Search Committee**. These include advertisements, filled applications, initial screening reports, interview forms, and community input forms.

The **ICGA Board of Trustees** after evaluating the **Imaam Search Committee** report should decide what to do with respect to hiring a new Imaam. If the process

clearly found a good candidate or candidates, it should instruct the **Imaam Search Committee** to start the negotiation process with the potential candidate to reach an agreement. If however, the process did not result in finding an acceptable candidate, the process can be repeated.

It must also be noted that a candidate with all the must have set of qualifications outlined in the **Imaam Qualifications** document may not be found, and that the community may decide to make do with the best available candidate on either temporary or permanent basis.

Once the **Board of Trustees** decides to hire an Imaam, an offer should be prepared by EC for BT s approval. The contract should describe the Imaam s responsibilities, his rights and privileges, salary, term of contract, etc. EC may use the relevant documents in this set of documents (the one prepared by this **Ad Hoc Committee**) as guidelines when preparing the contract.

It is imperative that the contract should also include a provision for the **Board of Trustees** to dismiss an Imaam when he commits a major sin. If the Imaam commits such an act, the **Board of Trustees** after ascertaining the facts as required by Islamic law, has the authority to dismiss the Imaam without going through the proposed evaluation procedure. Here are some examples of such offences:

1. The Imaam proclaims a belief which is contrary to the 'Aqeedah of the Ahlu-Sunnah Wa-aljamaa ah.
2. He does not refrain from the Muharramaat. For example, he commits a major sin (Kabeerah) such as adultery, fornication, drinking, stealing, practicing usury, cheating, lying, etc.
3. Refuses to abide by the Faraaidh and the Waajibaat

Managing The Relationship Between The Imam and The ICGA Community

It is felt that some mechanism for achieving a smooth and productive relationship between the Imaam and the ICGA governing and activities entities need to be established. In the absence of such mechanism there will be a lot of confusion, misunderstandings, schedule conflicts, etc.

The ICGA Board of Trustees should appoint an **Imam-Community Relationship Manager (ICRM)**, who must be an individual with some assistants as needed. In this set of documents this person will henceforth be referred to as the **Manager**. The ICGA Board of Trustees should consult with the Imam and/or take into consideration any personal issues when appointing the **Manager**; this is essential for having a smooth productive relationship. The **Manager** will be the principal contact between the ICGA community and the Imam.

The **Manager** has two types of responsibilities: (1) Making sure that the Imam s personal needs are met by the community and (2) Making sure that the community s expectations of the Imam are fulfilled.

The **Manager** should make sure that the Imam s personal needs are met by the community as outlined in the **Imam s Rights and Privileges** document. In addition, the **Manager** should be informed about the welfare of the Imam and make sure that the necessary care and attention are being provided. For example, if he is sick, make arrangement for his proper care; if he needs a ride, make arrangement for a ride; etc.

In order to satisfy the community s expectation of the Imaam, the **Manager** should use the following guidelines:

The Manager Goals:

1. Set a realistic and reasonable demand on the Imaam as a resource.
2. Set a reasonable expectation of the Imaam s time and availability to the community.
3. Resolve any contention between the Imaam and community within the guidelines.
4. Resolve any activity schedule conflicts that may arise.

The Manager Guidelines:

1. The **Manager** must use wisdom and proper etiquette in carrying out its functions.
2. The **Manager** must be in contact with the Imam on a regular basis, preferably, daily. This can be accomplished by physical meetings, phone calls, e-mail, etc.
3. The **Manager** must make sure that the responsibilities of the Imam as outlined in the **Imaam Responsibilities** document and the contract are carried out smoothly. This can be accomplished by providing a weekly or monthly activity chart for the Imam to be worked out in consultation with the Imaam and the **ICGA** community governing and activity entities.
4. The **Manager** must take legitimate grievances from the community members and try to resolve them using the guidelines outlined in the **Grievances Mechanism and Procedures** document.
5. The **Manager** must take legitimate grievances from the Imam and try to resolve them using the guidelines outlined in the **Grievances Mechanism and Procedures** document.
6. In cases when the **Manager** cannot resolve grievances, it should communicate such grievances to the **ICGA Executive Committee (EC)** in a timely manner.
7. In case EC does not resolve the grievance satisfactorily, it should be forwarded to BT.

Weekly Imaam Activity Chart Template

Date	Activity 1	Activity 2	Activity 3	Activity 4	Activity 5
Friday, October 3, 2003	Khatira after Fajr Topic: Dua Length: ~10 min	Jumuah Khutba 1 p.m.	Office hours 2 p.m. — 3 p.m.	Halaqa after Maghreeb Topic: Seerah Length: 45 min	
Saturday, October 4, 2003	Khatira after Fajr Topic: Dhikr Length: ~10 min	Office hours 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.		Halaqa after Maghreeb Topic: Raising Children Length: 45 min	
Sunday, October 5, 2003	Khatira after Fajr Topic: Virtues of Salat Length: ~10 min	Sisters Halaqa 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.		Halaqa after Maghreeb Topic: Fiqh Lessons Length: 45 min	
Monday, October 6, 2003	None	None	None	None	None
Tuesday, October 7, 2003	Khatira after Fajr Topic: Virtues of Dawah Length: ~10 min	Office hours 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.		Halaqa after Maghreeb Topic: Tafseer Length: 30 min	
Wednesday, October 8, 2003	Khatira after Fajr Topic: Morals in Islam Length: ~10 min	Office hours 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.		Halaqa after Maghreeb Topic: Beginning Arabic Length: 30 min	

Thursday, October 9, 2003	Khatira after Fajr Topic: Open Length: ~10 min	Office hours 11 a.m. — 1 p.m.		Halaqa after Maghreeb Topic: Advanced Arabic Length: 30 min	
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Imaam Performance Evaluation Procedure

The **ICGA EC** should either appoint an **Imaam Evaluation Committee** or assigns itself the task. In either case we will refer to such body as the **Imaam Evaluation Committee** in this and other documents of this **Ad Hoc Committee**. It must be emphasized that the members of this committee must:

1. Include at least one member who is neither an **ICGA Board of Trustees** member nor an **ICGA Executive Committee** member
2. Be unbiased, decent, and above all Allah fearing Muslims.

Evaluation Frequency:

The evaluation should be conducted every six months and at any other time that the **ICGA EC** deems necessary.

Evaluation Participants:

The evaluation should involve the following groups within the **ICGA** community:

1. All members of the **ICGA General Body**.
2. The **ICGA Board of Trustees**.
3. The **ICGA Executive Committee**.
4. All **ICGA** specialized committees that are in charge of the organization and the conduct of the various activities.

Evaluation Criteria:

For group 1, the members of the **ICGA General Body**, the form titled "*The General Body Imaam Evaluation Questionnaire*" should be used (please see the attached form).

Each of groups 2 to 4 above should formulate their evaluation criteria and forms based on their areas of interaction with the Imaam. These can be modeled after *The General Body Imaam Evaluation Questionnaire*.

Evaluation Procedure:

The **Imaam Evaluation Committee** should follow the following procedure in carrying out the evaluation task:

1. Collect all evaluation input forms from the above evaluation participants.
2. Categorize the input.
3. Consolidate the various evaluations for each category.
4. Weigh each category.
5. Evaluate each category's weight against the corresponding requirement as outlined in the *Imaam Responsibilities* document.
6. Summarize the evaluation results according to the following three categories:
 - a. **Areas of Excellence**
 - b. **Areas of Improvements over the last Evaluation**
 - c. **Areas to be improved upon**
7. Submit its report to the **ICGA EC**.

The **ICGA EC** after an initial study of the report should have a private meeting with the Imaam to go over the results and give the Imaam a chance to defend himself or explain the results as needed.

After this initial meeting with the Imaam over the evaluation report, the **ICGA EC** can decide what course of action it needs to take with respect to the retention of the Imaam.

Imam Performance Evaluation Criteria

For the purposes of this document, a criterion is defined to be a set of areas on which the Imam should be evaluated on. The evaluation committee should ensure that all of these areas are covered under any evaluation that is submitted.

Following areas must be covered:

1. Adherence to the Qur aan and the Sunnah
2. Islamic Knowledge:
 - a. Aqeedah
 - b. Fiqh
 - c. Quraan
 - d. Hadith
 - e. Quraanic Recitation (Tajweed)
3. Prayer Services
4. Social Services
5. Communication Abilities
 - a. Communication in a language the majority of the community understands.
 - b. Communication in other languages, if required.
6. Teaching Abilities
7. Guidance and Counseling Abilities
8. Public Relations
9. Behavior
 - a. Ability to address sensitive issues
 - b. Ability to carry himself
 - c. Attitude and general treatment of people
 - d. Availability
 - e. Promptness
10. Da'wah to Muslims and Non-Muslims
11. Other Commitments as an Imaam
 - a. Specific Commitments specified in the contract
 - b. Specific Commitments that the community needs of the Imam
 - c. Any other commitments that are expected of the Imam

Under each of the above areas, the evaluation committee may evaluate on a variety of different issues. An example evaluation is defined in **The General Body Imaam Performance Evaluation Template** document.

The General Body Imaam Performance Evaluation Template

"BEHOLD, Allah bids you to deliver all that you have been entrusted with unto those who are entitled thereto, and whenever you judge between people, to judge with justice. Verily, most excellent is what Allah exhorts you to do: verily, Allah is all-hearing, all-seeing!" Soorat Annisaa (4), verse 58.

"And do not overlay the truth with falsehood, and do not knowingly suppress the truth;" Soorat Albagarah (2), verse 42.

" And do not conceal what you have witnessed for, verily, he who conceals it is sinful at heart; and Allah has full knowledge of all that you do." Soorat Albagarah (2), verse 283.

Date: / /

Please, using one of the following choices, mark at the left margin next to each item what your evaluation is. You can add further comments to the right hand side of the item.

E- Excellent G- Good A- Average P- Poor U- Undecided

1. Is he pleasant with people in general?
2. How he treats the children?
3. How he treats the youth?
4. How he treats the grown ups?
5. His general appearance?
6. How is his general availability to people?
7. Is he on time?
8. Does he give clear instruction when needed?
9. Are you confident in his views on religious matters?
10. Does he follow what he teaches?
11. How is his Quranic recitation?
12. How is his Islamic knowledge level?
13. How do you rate his ability to resolve disputes and/or problems?
14. How patient is he with people in general?
15. How do you rate his teaching ability and skills?
16. How good is he in training others?
17. How do you rate the content of his Khutab?
18. How do you rate the delivery style of his Khutab?
19. How convenient are his office hours?
20. How do you rate his availability to attend meetings and activities?
21. How do you rate his availability to lead regular prayers?

22. How do you rate the community reaction to him in general?
23. How do you rate the community cooperation with him in general?
24. How do you rate his out reach to the Austin Muslim Community at large?
25. How do you rate his cooperation with other Imaams in the Austin Muslim Community?
26. How do you rate his relation with the Masjid neighbors?
27. Demonstrates fairness in dealing with people of differing gender, race, nationality, social status, political affiliation and Islamic jurisprudence.

Other comments and notes you wish to add:



Grievance Mechanism and Procedures

Prophet Muhammed (Sallallahu Alaihi wa Sallam) said that Every son of Adam makes mistakes, and the best of the ones who make mistakes are those who turn to Allah in sincere repentance. (*at-Trimidhi* #2499 and *Ibn Maajah* #4251)

Every human being is susceptible to making mistakes that could tread on the rights of other human beings. As a result there is a need to define an adequate process by which such mistakes and grievances can be rectified and the parties involved and/or the community at large is saved from any adverse effects.

The defined process addresses the resolution of grievances between any members of the **ICGA** community in general. It can therefore be used to resolve any grievance of an individual **ICGA** member against the Imaam and vice versa.

As part of the process and for the harmony of the society, it is suggested that an initial attempt should be made to resolve all minor and major issues by the parties involved. The formal process of grievance resolution should only be invoked if these initial attempts fail. We pray to Allah, Subhanahu wa Ta alaa, that He gives us the Tawfeeq and the understanding to resolve our issues, forgive each other for our mistakes, and repent to Allah for our shortcomings.

The formal process is outlined in the following three documents:

- 1. Grievance Resolution Procedure:** This document outlines the whole process of resolving any grievance between members of the **ICGA community** and refers to the **Grievance Report Form** and **The Judiciary Committee Procedures** wherever appropriate. This document must be used as a guideline for the effective implementation of the grievance resolution process.
- 2. Grievance Report Form:** This document provides a form to be filled out by all parties involved in the grievance and will be used initially by the **Manager** (see **Managing the Relationship between the Imam and the ICGA community**) for ascertaining the facts.
- 3. The Judiciary Committee Procedures:** The document outlines the procedures that must be followed by any **Judiciary Committee** that is formed by the **ICGA Board of Trustees** to adjudicate any conflict.



Grievance Report Form

For ICGA Use Only	Case #: _____ Signature (ICGA Rep): _____
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"BEHOLD, Allah bids you to deliver all that you have been entrusted with unto those who are entitled thereto, and whenever you judge between people, to judge with justice. Verily, most excellent is what Allah exhorts you to do: verily, Allah is all-hearing, all-seeing!"

Soorat An-Nisaa‘ (4), verse 58.

"And do not overlay the truth with falsehood, and do not knowingly suppress the truth;" Soorat Al-Baqarah (2), verse 42.

" And do not conceal what you have witnessed for, verily, he who conceals it is sinful at heart; and Allah has full knowledge of all that you do." Soorat Al-Baqarah (2), verse 283.

Please refer to the Grievance Resolution Procedure and the Judiciary Committee Procedure documents before filing this report.

I _____, the undersigned, file the following report as a grievance against:

Name Contact Information

Name Contact Information

Name Contact Information

I, hereby, testify that the information given, and the events and incidents described herein are as accurate as I can recollect and Allah Subhanahu wa Ta alaa is my witness and He Subhanahu wa Ta alaa is the best of all witnesses.

My Name

Address

Home Phone# Work Phone#

E-mail

Page 1 of 3

For ICGA Use Only

Signature: _____

Case #: _____

Signature (ICGA Rep): _____

Date(s) of Incidence(s) Time(s) of Incidence(s) Place(s) of Incidence(s)

Witnesses (if any) — please specify all witnesses:

Name

Contact Info

Name

Contact Info

Name

Contact Info

Any additional witnesses:

Detailed Description: Please make sure that you start from the very beginning. Please feel free to attach an extra sheet of paper, if this space is not enough for you.

Page 2 of 3

Signature: _____

For ICGA Use Only

Case #: _____

Signature (ICGA Rep): _____

Background to the incident:

I, the undersigned, hereby testify and affirm with Allah Subhanahu wa Ta alaa as my witness that this is the a justified and accurate recollection of the incident to the best of my ability.

Your name

Date

Signature



The Judiciary Committee Procedures

"BEHOLD, Allah bids you to deliver all that you have been entrusted with unto those who are entitled thereto, and whenever you judge between people, to judge with justice. Verily, most excellent is what Allah exhorts you to do: verily, Allah is all-hearing, all-seeing!"
Soorat Annisaa (4), verse 58.

The following procedure should be followed by any **Judiciary Committee** formed by the **ICGA Board of Trustees** to resolve any conflict and/or dispute among members of the **ICGA Community** that cannot be resolved through other mutually agreed to means.

In choosing a **Judiciary Committee** to adjudicate a particular conflict, the **ICGA Board of Trustees** **MUST** observe the following:

1. The **Judiciary Committee** members must be pious, fair, and acceptable to all the parties in the conflict.
2. Each party to the conflict **MUST** sign a written statement stating that they have full confidence in the fairness of the **Judiciary Committee** members and its procedures and that they will abide by its decisions.
3. The **Judiciary Committee** members must be sworn in before the **ICGA Board of Trustees**, given all the documents relating to the dispute (including the signed statements by the parties in conflict that state their commitment to abide by the committee ruling), and asked to resolve the problem in a timely manner.

The **Judiciary Committee** should follow the following procedure in resolving the issue at hand:

1. All the proceedings of the **Judiciary Committee** must be conducted in confidence and all records of its activities must be protected from all others except the **Judiciary Committee** members. The contents of any session held with any party to the conflict and/or witness must not be divulged to any other party and/or witness.
2. All the proceedings of the **Judiciary Committee** must be written while they are taking place.
3. Initially the **Judiciary Committee** must meet with every party and witness to the conflict/dispute separately; inform each participant of the purpose; and ask each to give a complete, accurate, and written report of

what has happened. The statement by each person must be signed and dated by that person with the members of the **Judiciary Committee** signing as witnesses.

4. The **Judiciary Committee** must then study in detail all the documents handed to it by the **ICGA Board of Trustees** and the signed statements of the previous step.
5. The **Judiciary Committee** must then meet with every party and witness to the conflict/dispute separately to depose each in detail in light of the study of the previous step. Every deposed party must take a testimony oath in the traditional Islamic manner. In this deposition process questions must be asked of the deposed to clarify and ascertain the facts in view of what others (parties and/or witnesses) have said. During this process every thing must be written. At the end of each session the deposed must be given the chance to thoroughly read what is recorded and change anything that does not accurately state what he/she has said. Then the deposed must sign the record testifying that it is accurate. The record must also state the time, place, and the people in attendance.
6. The **Judiciary Committee** must then conduct study sessions to analyze the case and determine the course of action it needs to take. It may be necessary to depose some or all of the parties and/or witnesses again on new or previously covered issues, in which case the deposition must be conducted as outlined above. The process can be iteratively repeated until all the facts are ascertained.
7. The **Judiciary Committee** must then summarize the case and determine who, if any, is at fault and decide the course of action that needs to be taken to remedy the situation. The **Judiciary Committee** could take an arbitration route to settle the issue unless all or some of the parties refuse such course of action. As a final resort it should render its judgment in writing and in the presence of all the disputing parties.
8. The **Judiciary Committee** must then submit a written report to the **ICGA Board of Trustees** that summarizes what it did and attach all the interim documents that it generated.
9. The **ICGA Board of Trustees** must then take any necessary action that needs to be done and file the **Judiciary Committee** report and its attachment in a secure and confidential venue.