

Covid 19 Risk Assessment For Officiants Taking Wedding Celebrations

Preliminary Information

For the purpose of this document, **Officiant** is the term used for any person(s) directly involved in the delivery of a legally binding or ceremonial celebration of a marriage, wedding ceremony or civil partnership in the United Kingdom. This could cover other terms including, but not limited to, registrars, celebrants, or religious officiants.

For clarity, where the word '**must**' is used, the action is required by law. Where '**should**' is used it is strongly encouraged. Where '**might**' is used, it is left to the discretion of the individual or organisation concerned.

This document is only intended to act as guidance to support the writing of a risk assessment and should not be used as a complete document. A separate risk assessment will need to be undertaken for each ceremony specific to that ceremony and location. It is meant to provide a guideline to best practice for all officiants.

A Risk Assessment is a live document and, as such, the situations it covers may and will change as the guidance from the Government, PHE, or other bodies itself changes. This document is designed to be used in conjunction with country specific as well as officiant specific guidelines. It is important to check the relevant guidance in both the area you live and will be working in on a regular basis.

Please ensure you refer to the specific guidelines that relate to your own role as provided by your own Country, County, Borough, Religious Council, or Celebrant Organisations.

*****This document ONLY relates to England, Wales & Northern Ireland, a separate document is being produced for use by Scottish Officiants*****

Venue managers are required by law to undertake a risk assessment for the location, but Officiants should check and should request a copy. This will include the provision of effective facilities for personal hygiene e.g., hand wash facilities and sanitising, seating arrangements and physical barriers, cleaning and disinfection etc. That provided by the British Institute of Innkeeping from the Shield Safe Group provides a good example.

The venue must be responsible for any Track and Trace, but it is the couple's responsibility to maintain the track and trace record for 3 weeks when a ceremony has not taken place inside a regulated venue (i.e., on open land). The Officiant may check and request a copy in certain circumstances.

There may be exceptions to the above such as when the ceremony is to be held in a private location or when there is no venue e.g., a private garden, beach etc. In this case a fuller risk assessment should be undertaken to cover all eventualities as it would when ceremonies were performed in this type of location in non-Covid situations. *If required, a sample form is located at the end of this document which allows for the collection of signatories.

*The onus is on the couple to complete and retain the form for track and trace purposes

The aim of any risk assessment should be to

1. Outline all aspects of the ceremony
2. Identify any special risk that Covid-19 presents
3. Identify the level, likelihood and impact of risk as high, moderate or low
4. Propose action to be taken to reduce the risk

Different systems are in place across the devolved nations. **Please ensure that you check for any special measures in the area where the ceremony is to be held. Please note these are likely to change at very short notice.**

The maximum number of people is defined by the devolved governments in your country and you should ensure that you check this for the area where the ceremony is to be held. It is the responsibility of the venue or organiser to ensure this is adhered to, but it may be worth explaining this to the couple when planning a ceremony.

Anyone testing positive or displaying symptoms is to be refused entrance by officiant/venue or nominated party.

Do not attend if you are displaying any COVID symptoms, or if you have been told to isolate.

For more information as to the guidance used to complete this document please refer to:

England Government Guidance for Small Marriages and Civil Partnerships

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships/covid-19-guidance-for-small-marriages-and-civil-partnerships#guidance-for-venue-managers>

Wales Government Guidance for Small Marriages and Civil Partnerships

<https://gov.wales/guidance-marriages-and-civil-partnerships-coronavirus>

Northern Ireland Government Guidance for Small Marriages and Civil Partnerships

<https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-regulations-guidance-what-restrictions-mean-you>

Translated COVID-19 Guidance

<https://www.london.gov.uk/coronavirus/covid-19-resources-and-services-your-language>

PPE:

Putting on

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/911311/PHE_Putting_on_PPE_Standard_infection_control_procedures.pdf

Removal of

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/911312/PHE_Taking_off_PPE_standard_infection_control_procedures.pdf

Personal Wellbeing

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

Music and Entertainment

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/working-safely-during-coronavirus-covid-19/performing-arts>

24th February 2021

Created by the Ceremony Working Group

UK WEDDING TASKFORCE