

# HM Government on Weddings/Funerals/Face Coverings

## WEDDINGS

### Restrictions on capacity

For the purposes of a marriage ceremony or civil partnership formation, the number of attendees should ideally be kept to a minimum as far as possible. The lower the number of attendees, the lower the risk of spreading the virus.

However, we understand the unique significance that marriages and civil partnerships hold in people's lives.

For this reason, **up to 30 people, but no more**, can attend a marriage or civil partnership, where this can be safely accommodated with social distancing in a COVID-19 venue. This maximum number includes all those at the ceremony, including the couple, witnesses, officiants and guests. It also includes any staff who are not employed by the venue, which may include photographers, security or caterers. It does not include staff employed by the venue.

Strict adherence to social distancing is strongly advised (see above for social distancing measures). A distance of 2 metres should be kept wherever possible.

### Singing, chanting and the use of musical instruments

People should avoid singing, shouting, raising voices and/or playing music at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult or that may encourage shouting. This is because of the potential for increased risk of transmission from aerosol and droplets.

Therefore, spoken responses during marriages or civil partnerships should also not be in a raised voice.

Activities such as singing, chanting, shouting and/or playing of instruments that are blown into should be specifically avoided. This is because there is a possible additional risk of transmission in environments where individuals are singing or chanting as a group, and this applies even if social distancing is being observed or face coverings are used.

Where required for the marriage or civil partnership, only one individual should be permitted to sing or chant, and the use of plexi-glass screens should be considered to protect guests, as this will further prevent transmission and the screen can be easily cleaned.

We recognise the importance of communal singing in marriages or civil partnerships, and as this should not happen at this time, we suggest you consider using recordings that may be available to you.

You are advised only to play musical instruments that are not blown into. Organs can be played for a ceremony, as well as general maintenance, but should be cleaned thoroughly before and after use.

Professional singing will be allowed in limited circumstances and outdoors only. Please see the performing arts guidance on this.

The government and the medical and scientific communities are urgently engaged in research around transmission risk and how such activities can best be managed safely, and further guidance will follow when available.

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## FUNERALS

Those organising a funeral should adhere to the following:

- ensuring venue capacity and attendance numbers allow at least 2 metres (3 steps) to be maintained between individuals
- the size and circumstance of the venue will determine the maximum number that can be accommodated while also facilitating social distancing, but numbers should be minimised. Venues will need to consider how best to manage this, including through use of remote live-streaming, where possible. Attendees should be enabled to follow the guidance on staying alert and safe
- it is advised that the number of attendees should be restricted to **30 persons** for public health reasons.
- the Regulations set out a maximum 30 people limit in respect of private homes, including gardens
- venues that are able to follow COVID-19 Secure guidelines may host larger groups. Separate guidance on places of worship is available
- this is also the case for events in public outdoor spaces that are organised by businesses, charitable or political organisations, and public bodies, provided they take reasonable steps to mitigate the risk of transmission, in line with COVID-19 Secure guidance and including completion of a risk assessment. Any other gathering in an outdoor space must not be any larger than 30 people
- if there is limited capacity for remote access, priority should be given to mourners who are clinically extremely vulnerable
- activities such as singing, chanting, requiring raised voices or playing of instruments that are blown into should be specifically avoided. This is because these activities pose a possible additional risk of infection even if social distancing is being observed or face coverings are used
- venues should ensure that steps are taken to avoid activities needing or causing people to project their voices loudly. This includes - but is not limited to - refraining from playing music or broadcasts that may encourage raised voices, including if played at a volume that makes normal conversation difficult
- venues should communicate and encourage compliance with limits on gatherings, for example on arrival or at booking. Mourners who attend should be signposted to the advice on social distancing and informed that they should not attend the funeral if they are unwell with symptoms of COVID-19
- venue managers should ensure that handwashing facilities with soap and water or hand

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- venue managers should ensure that handwashing facilities with soap and water or hand sanitiser are available and clearly signposted. Venue toilets should be kept open and carefully managed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19. This may include:
  - using signs and posters to build awareness of good hygiene and social distancing practices
- limited entry approaches while not creating additional bottlenecks
- setting up and monitoring more frequent cleaning schedules including waste management and collection

- venue managers should ensure that processes are in place to allow suitable time for cleaning and disinfecting the area in which the service takes place, both before and after each service, paying attention to frequently-touched objects and surfaces, using regular cleaning products
- venue managers should maximise ventilation rates of the premises by opening windows and doors where possible
- venue managers should consider how to manage the flow of groups in and out of their venues to minimise overlap between different groups and allow for adequate cleaning
- venues should consider the cumulative impact of movement on public transport and in public spaces. This means consideration of further mitigation including advising mourners to avoid particular forms of transport, routes or crowded areas in transit to the venue.

## FACE COVERINGS

**If you are legally exempt from wearing a face covering then download this**

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/903454/Exemption\\_from\\_face\\_covering\\_card\\_to\\_print.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903454/Exemption_from_face_covering_card_to_print.pdf)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/903452/](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903452/Exemption_from_face_covering_badge_for_mobile_phone.pdf)

[Exemption from face covering badge for mobile phone.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/903452/Exemption_from_face_covering_badge_for_mobile_phone.pdf)

### When to wear a face covering

Different regulations exist for wearing face coverings in different parts of the UK:

In England, **you must wear a face covering by law** in the following settings:

- public transport
- indoor transport hubs (airports, rail and tram stations and terminals, maritime ports and terminals, bus and coach stations and terminals)
- shops and supermarkets (places which are open to the public and that wholly or mainly offer goods or services for retail sale or hire)
- indoor shopping centres
- banks, building societies, and post offices (including credit unions, short-term loan providers, savings clubs and money service businesses)

**You are expected to wear a face covering immediately before entering any of these settings and must keep it on until you leave.**

**For members of the public, from 8 August the places where you will have to wear a face covering will be expanded to include:**

- funeral directors
- premises providing professional, legal or financial services
- cinemas
- theatres
- bingo halls
- concert halls
- museums, galleries, aquariums, indoor zoos or visitor farms, or other indoor tourist, heritage or cultural sites.

- nail, beauty, hair salons and barbers - other than where necessary to remove for treatments
- massage parlours
- public areas in hotels and hostels
- **place of worship**
- libraries and public reading rooms
- community centres
- social clubs
- tattoo and piercing parlours
- indoor entertainment venues (amusement arcades, funfairs, adventure activities e.g. laser quest, go-karting, escape rooms, heritage sites etc)
- storage and distribution facilities
- veterinary services.
- auction houses

**We recommend face coverings are worn in these settings now but this will not be mandatory until 8 August.** Further information will be available soon.

You are also strongly encouraged to wear a face covering in other enclosed public spaces where social distancing may be difficult and where you come into contact with people you do not normally meet.

Face coverings are also needed in NHS settings, including hospitals and primary or community care settings, such as GP surgeries. They are advised to be worn in care homes. Individual settings may have their own policies and require you to take other measures.

### **Where this law does not apply**

Face coverings are not required in restaurants with table service, bars, and pubs.

Face coverings should be worn in indoor places not listed in section two where possible, especially if it is a place where you may come in to contact with people you do not usually meet.

### **When you can remove a face covering**

You can remove your face covering in order to eat and drink if reasonably necessary (see Section 3). This should be in an area that is specifically for the purposes of eating and drinking, such as a food court.

If a shop or supermarket has a café or seating area for you to eat and drink, then you can remove your face covering in this area only. You must put a face covering back on once you leave your seating area.

The government's guidance for keeping workers and customers safe during COVID-19 in restaurants, pubs, bars and takeaway services clearly advises that designated indoor seating areas for customers to eat or drink should at this time only be open for table service, where possible, alongside additional infection control measures.

### **Enforcement measures for failing to comply with this law**

Measures can be taken if people do not comply with this law without a valid exemption.