

Approved Venue Ceremonies - Guidance for Couples

During the current pandemic we have had to adjust the way we conduct our ceremonies to ensure the safety of both you and our registrars.

Please do not invite anyone to attend other than those included in the numbers permitted at your venue. You can check the current attendance number restrictions for small marriages and civil partnerships on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk). People who are working are not included in this number such as registrars, venue staff and professional photographer (if you have one). In addition to the restrictions on numbers, all attendees should wear a face covering (unless exempt). The couple and registrars are exempt but may choose to wear one if they wish.

All ceremonies will be short to minimise the risks of people being in the same room for any longer than necessary.

The following information gives you an idea of how we are currently working.

A day or two before your ceremony

The registrar will call you to go through some personal details. They will need to speak to both of you to do this. This information is checked against the details you gave us at your notice appointment and is used to prepare your legal documents to ensure the event is recorded accurately.

On the day

- The registrar will place the marriage certificate/civil partnership schedule on a table with clear instructions on how to check it thoroughly. They will stand back at a safe distance to be able to answer any questions you have.
- Before the ceremony begins, you will be shown where to stand to ensure that social distancing is observed and there is a safe space between the registrars and the couple and all other attendees, as appropriate.
- Once the ceremony is complete, you and your witnesses will be asked to sign the register/schedule and then the registrars will sign.

Weddings & Ceremonies *in West Sussex*

- Your certificate will be placed on the table for you to collect as you leave.

Please note, although the ceremony will be short you will still be able to exchange rings if you wish.

You can arrange with your venue to have music played at the beginning and end of your ceremony and during the signing. Please check with your venue what their current guidelines are on operating music during your ceremony as they will need to ensure this can be done safely. Please remember that any music must be non-religious.

Registrars will have the full support of West Sussex County Council in refusing to conduct a ceremony if a member of a wedding or civil partnership party do not comply with the safety protocols in place when requested, compromising the safety of our staff.

We hope you enjoy your ceremony.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will be more than happy to advise you.

Please do not attend if you are experiencing any COVID-19 symptoms or are subject to quarantine/isolation restrictions.

We will rearrange bookings if you need to postpone.

Updated December 2020