

Covid-19 Response: Guidance on Weddings and Civil Partnership Ceremonies

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Purpose of guidance

This guidance sets out priority control measures that should be considered when organising or attending weddings and civil partnership celebrations in the light of rising cases of the omicron variant of Covid-19.

Detailed national guidance can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-wedding-and-civil-partnership-ceremonies-receptions-and-celebrations>

Who this guidance is for

This guidance is aimed at:

- Members of the public organising or attending weddings or civil partnership celebrations
- Venues hosting such celebrations
- Celebrants, registrars and others officiating at such celebrations

Background

The omicron variant of Covid-19 is known to be much more transmissible than the previous dominant strain of the virus, and to have greater potential to evade both vaccination and the immune response from prior infection. As a result it is spreading quickly throughout the population, and case rates have started to rise again in Cumbria, and outbreaks are again being seen associated with parties and larger gatherings.

Key control measures

The virus spreads most easily in crowded, poorly ventilated spaces; risk can be reduced by improving ventilation, enabling physical distancing, wearing face coverings, good hand hygiene, and testing before attending events.

- People with symptoms of Covid-19 (a new cough, a high temperature, and/or loss of sense of taste or smell) should not attend events.
- All those attending such events should be asked to take a Lateral Flow Test as close to the time of the event as reasonably practicable, and not attend if the result is positive.
- Venues should be arranged so as to enable 2m distancing from the registrar and the rest of the wedding party at all times including the ceremony.
- The wearing of face coverings is mandatory in public areas of venues. It should also be encouraged in private function rooms including during the actual ceremony. Exceptions are made during the ceremony for the ceremony officer and the couple themselves, when signing the schedule masks should be worn.
- Face coverings and hand sanitiser should be available in ceremony venues.
- Where possible, rooms should be well ventilated – even if only by opening windows.

These simple measures will help to reduce risk not only to those who attend ceremonies and venue staff, but also crucially to ceremony officers, who are regularly required to attend several events over a short period of time.

Please note if the attending officer feels appropriate safety measures are not in place, they reserve the right to refuse to proceed with the ceremony until the safety concerns are addressed.