

Tuesday 3rd August 2021

To all ministers and Circuit Stewards in the Republic of Ireland

Dear all,

Warm Greetings.

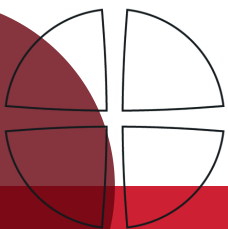
We have received an update from the Taoiseach's office setting out the changes to the Regulations from 5th August as they affect churches.

Weddings

From Thursday 5 August, the maximum number of guests permitted to attend a wedding will increase from 50 to 100 - current protective measures apply see below:

Where the size of the premises allows for a capacity of greater than 50 this may be permitted only where:

- social distancing guidelines are adhered to
- the premises can be subdivided into distinct sections (cordoned or marked appropriately) of not more than 50 persons in each section
- there is a minimum of 4 metres between sections
- each section has its own entrance and exit route
- there are separate arrangements for elements of the service involving close contact, for example the distribution of Holy Communion
- strictly no movement of people between sections before, during or after the service
- the premises is well-ventilated



Funerals

The number of mourners permitted at funerals continues to be limited to 50, regardless of the size of the Church.

Attendance at wakes in private homes and at funeral homes is for family only and related family gatherings should adhere to the current health advice on household mixing.

The current information which applies to services of worship is here

We continue to liaise with the Taoiseach's office, particularly making the case for some congregational singing.

As always, your District Superintendents are available for questions and any support which they can offer as you continue to navigate the Pandemic.

God bless

Rev Dr Heather Morris (on behalf of the CMT)

General Secretary and Secretary of Conference

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UPDATE

Wednesday 4th August 2021

In response to our questions, we have received an update and clarification from the Taoiseach's office that congregational singing is now permitted in services of worship, in accordance with the following conditions and mitigations:

- (i) Congregational singing is limited to 'essential acts of worship'.
- (ii) All public health mitigations must be in place, including face coverings, 2 m social distancing and good ventilation
- (iii) Singing should be softer than normal and hymns/songs and times of sung worship kept short
- (iv) Those leading from the front should be 4 m away from the first row of the congregation.

