

To: Bodies listed in the Annex  
By email

23 June 2022

Dear Colleague

## MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP NOTICES

1. The Scottish Government and the Registrar General for Scotland appreciate that celebrants and wedding businesses already help to ensure that couples are aware of the need to submit their marriage or civil partnership notices to the appropriate local authority registrar not later than 29 days before their chosen date.
2. The purpose of this circular is to remind colleagues that the Registrar General's guidance on [marriage notices](#) and [civil partnership notices](#) suggests that couples should normally submit their notices ten to twelve weeks before the date of their ceremony.
3. There has been a significant rise in the number of marriages now taking place. According to [new figures published](#) by National Records of Scotland, there was a 21% rise in the number of marriages in the first quarter of this year. This rise is not surprising, given that many couples had to postpone their marriages and civil partnerships as a result of the restrictions and guidance in place during earlier phases of the coronavirus pandemic.
4. However, local authority registrars are also reporting that more couples are submitting their notices either very close to, or after, the 29-day deadline.
5. The Registrar General for Scotland can authorise a marriage or civil partnership if the required minimum notice period has not been given. However, he will usually only do so where there is a pressing need for the marriage or civil partnership to take place, such as where one of the couple is to be posted overseas with the armed forces or is terminally ill, or there is another such urgent consideration.
6. Other couples who do not submit their notices early enough may need to postpone their marriage or civil partnership.
7. We would be grateful if colleagues could continue, whenever they can, to make couples aware of the need to submit their notice well ahead of the 29-day deadline.

8. The Scottish Government will amend the mygov.scot pages [Marriage in Scotland](#) and [Civil Partnership in Scotland](#) to more strongly highlight the need for notices to be submitted in advance of the 29 day deadline.

Yours faithfully



**Sarah Duncan**  
Family Law Policy Unit

**List of Bodies**

The Baptist Union of Scotland  
Caledonian Humanist Association  
The Church of Scotland  
The Evangelical Alliance  
The Free Church of Scotland  
The Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland  
Hindu Forum of Britain  
Humanist Society Scotland  
Independent Humanist Ceremonies  
The Methodist Church  
Muslim Council of Scotland  
OneSpirit Interfaith Foundation  
The Religious Society of Friends Scotland (Quakers in Scotland)  
The Roman Catholic Church (Catholic Parliamentary Office the Bishops' Conference of Scotland)  
Scottish Council of Jewish Communities- SCOJEC  
The Scottish Episcopal Church and other Churches of the Anglican Communion  
The Scottish Unitarian Association  
The Salvation Army  
Sikhs in Scotland  
The Synod of Scotland of the United Reformed Church  
The United Free Church of Scotland  
Thistle Humanists

MyScotlandWedding  
The Scottish Wedding Industry Alliance

The Association of Registrars of Scotland