

Memorandum

TO: Clergy, Parish Leaders, Parish Leadership Teams, Parish Staff

CC:

FROM: Fr Andrew Doohan VG

DATE: 11/10/2021 ATTACHMENTS: 0

SUBJECT: Funerals and Weddings During Phase One of 'Roadmap to Reopening'

Dear Colleagues,

With effect from today, phase one of the 'Roadmap to Reopening' is in effect in NSW. This phase indicates that 70% of the eligible population of NSW are now fully vaccinated.

The regulatory regime which governs restrictions has been simplified. The overwhelming majority of restrictions that now directly impact on parish life are governed by the *Public Health (COVID-19 General) Order 2021* ('the Order'), which took effect from the beginning of 11 October 2021.

While the decision has been taken for churches to remain closed until phase 2 (80% fully vaccinated), the arrangements for funerals and weddings have been changed. The purpose of this brief memo is to outline the changes for funerals and weddings.

Weddings

A wedding is considered a 'significant event' under the Order, and so the maximum number of people who can attend a wedding is the lesser of:

- (a) the capacity of the church building based on the 4sq metre rule, or
- (b) 100 persons.

However, if anyone who might be attending the wedding is unvaccinated, the wedding becomes a 'small wedding service', and the number who can attend drops to:

- (a) the persons legally necessary for the conduct of the wedding (i.e., the couple, the two witnesses, and the celebrant), plus
- (b) one person to record the service, plus
- (c) up to 5 guests.

Funerals

A funeral is considered a 'significant event' under the Order, and so the maximum number of people who can attend a funeral is the lesser of:

- (a) the capacity of the church building based on the 4sq metre rule, or
- (b) 100 persons.

However, if anyone who might be attending the funeral is unvaccinated, the funeral becomes a 'small funeral or memorial service', and the number who can attend drops to:

- (a) the person conducting the service (i.e., the priest, deacon, or lay minister), plus
- (b) any person necessary for the conduct and preparation of the service (e.g., funeral director's staff, musicians, altar servers, etc.), plus
- (c) no more than 10 mourners.

Singing at Weddings and Funerals

Singing at weddings and funerals is permitted when undertaken by a small choir of not more than 10 fully vaccinated persons. Only the members of the choir are permitted to sing.

I hope the above advice is some help to parishes. As always, if there are any concerns about the restrictions or requirements under the current Order, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards,



(Fr) Andrew Doohan VG