



**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
ARCHDIOCESE OF PORT OF SPAIN**

Health, Safety and Environment Team
c/o Archbishop's House, 27 Maraval Road, Port of Spain

HSE Bulletin # 15
Date of Issue – April 22, 2021

PUBLIC HEALTH ORDINANCE, Ch. 12.No. 4
REGULATIONS
THE PUBLIC HEALTH [2019 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (2019-nCoV)]

Legal Notice # 107

Effective April 22, 2021

“(9) A religious or ecclesiastical organisation or any other religious organisation may conduct religious meetings, services, funeral services, wedding services, christenings, baptisms or such other religious gatherings where the gathering of persons at any place used for that purpose does not exceed twenty-five per cent of the allowed capacity of the place.”

“(10) During the period set out in section 17, the number of persons in attendance at a burial, cremation or wedding reception shall be limited to ten persons.”

The captioned Legal Notice pertains to changes in the protocols pertaining to COVID-19 Regulations with effect from 22nd April, 2021. We present below, clarification on those regulations that relate directly to the operations of the R.C. Archdiocese of Port of Spain.

PLACES OF WORSHIP

“...gathering of persons at any place used for that purpose does not exceed twenty-five per cent of the allowed capacity of the place.”

This should be interpreted as: 25% of the full seating capacity of the church building prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March, 2020. Thus, if the full (normal) capacity of your parish church prior to the emergence of COVID-19 is 400, the new 25% regulation will allow you to accept 100 persons into the church where seating is subject to the ‘six-foot’ physical distancing.

Members of the congregation who live in the same household may sit immediately next to one another as they do not have to observe the six-foot physical distancing. Each household member must be counted as one(1) individual when tallying a ‘running total’.

WEDDINGS, FUNERALS & BAPTISMS

“....persons in attendance at a burial, cremation or wedding reception shall be limited to ten persons.”

The maximum number of persons allowed inside the church for the religious aspect of weddings, funerals and baptisms is the same as for Mass i.e. 25% of the capacity of the church, subject to physical distancing. However, the maximum for the wedding reception, the

baptism reception and the gathering at the burial ground or crematorium is only ten (10) persons.

REMINDERS

At funerals, weddings and baptisms there will be a mixed congregation of persons some of whom are unfamiliar with the protocols of the church. Hospitality members must be courteous but also vigilant about enforcing the protocols for the safety of all in attendance.

- a) Stay home if you are ill. Any individual with a body temperature of 37.5C or higher is not permitted entry into the church.
- b) Individuals must cover their coughs and sneezes.
- c) Masks must be worn at all times by all who are in the church building including the celebrant, lectors while reading and especially all musicians and choir members even while singing. An individual wearing a face shield must also wear a face mask which is close-fitting and covers the nose and mouth.
- d) Upon entry, each individual must wash his/her hands with water or sanitise with a 70% alcohol-based sanitising solution.
- e) A safe, physical distance of six-feet apart must be maintained by all persons not from the same household.

END