

Ceremony Booking Terms & Conditions

Civil Marriage & Civil Partnership Ceremony Bookings

Your marriage or civil partnership ceremony booking is accepted on the condition that:

- No legal impediment exists;
- Legal civil preliminaries (Giving Notice) are duly completed, as required by statute;
- Any foreign divorce/dissolution papers are accepted by GRO, where appropriate; and
- All fees due are paid in full.

Civil Marriage & Civil Partnership Pre-Ceremony Interview

It is our duty in statute to verify the information to be entered into the legal record of the marriage or civil partnership at the time of the ceremony. East Sussex Registration will require both parties to the marriage or civil partnership to be interviewed immediately before your ceremony, either together or separately, on the date of your ceremony, and at the venue booked for the ceremony. Interview times are as follows:

- Where the ceremony is taking place at one of our Register offices, we will ask party 1 to arrive 20 minutes before the start time of your ceremony, and party 2 to arrive 10 minutes before the start time of your ceremony. If you are being seen together, we will ask you to both arrive 15 minutes before the start time of your ceremony.
- Where the ceremony is taking place at a licensed venue, we will ask party 1 to be available 30 minutes before the start time of your ceremony, and party 2 to be available 15 minutes before the start time of your ceremony. If you are being seen together, we will ask you both to be available 20 minutes before the start time of your ceremony.

Any exceptions to the above will only be considered in extenuating circumstances and will be at the discretion of East Sussex Registration.

Ceremony Fees

Ceremony fees must be paid in full at the time of booking **1**, which includes a £100 non-refundable booking fee:

- We will accept your booking at the price subsisting on the date you make the booking, regardless of the date of your ceremony. We will accept bookings for any date up to 3 years into the future from the date you make your booking. We regret that we are unable to accept bookings more than 3 years into the future.
- When you make your ceremony booking we will include in the price we charge you the cost of 2 marriage certificates (£11 each) and 1 commemorative certificate (£6). If you wish these to be removed from your booking please inform us and we will be happy to do so.
- Fees are subject to change on 1st April each year.

Amendment Fees

An amendment fee of £50 will be payable on each occasion **2** that you change the details of your booking.

This includes changing the time, date or venue of a ceremony:

- All details changed at the same time are only subject to one amendment fee.
- Where applicable this may require an updated or additional ceremony fee to be paid. It may also require you to complete fresh civil preliminaries (Giving Notice) if the venue changes or if there is a significant change to the date of the ceremony.
- Amendments made less than twelve weeks ahead of the date of the ceremony will be considered by East Sussex Registration to be a 'cancellation' of the booking and fees will be refunded accordingly, as detailed below in the section entitled 'Cancellation of a booking by the couple'.

Cancellation of a booking by East Sussex Registration

Your ceremony will be cancelled if:

- Civil preliminaries have not been, or cannot be, completed in good time.

Cancellation of a booking by the couple **3**

In the event that you need to cancel your ceremony you will be required to notify us in writing. The following refund protocols will apply:

- Cancellation more than twelve weeks before your ceremony – you will receive a full refund of your ceremony fees, excluding the £100 non-refundable booking fee which will be forfeited.
- Cancellation between six and twelve weeks before your ceremony – you will be refunded 50% of the ceremony fees you have paid, excluding the £100 non-refundable deposit which will be forfeited.
- Cancellation less than six weeks before your ceremony, or failure to notify us of the cancellation in writing – you remain liable for 100% of the balance of the ceremony fees, and so no refund will be made.

Postponement of a booking by the couple

- A booking may only be postponed if there are twelve weeks or more before the ceremony date, and if a new date is proposed immediately and that date is available for East Sussex Registration staff to attend, at the point in time of notifying East Sussex Registration of the postponement. This will be treated as an ‘amendment’ and so will incur an amendment fee; as detailed above in the section entitled ‘Amendment Fees’.
- In the event of a postponement where no future date is proposed, or in the event of a postponement less than twelve weeks before the date of the ceremony, East Sussex Registration will consider this to be a ‘cancellation’ of the booking and fees will be refunded accordingly, as detailed above in the section entitled ‘Cancellation of a booking by the couple’.

Liability

East Sussex Registration will not accept liability for:

- The failure of any music provided by you or a third party;
- Any delay or loss caused by your late arrival;
- Any loss caused by a request from you or your representatives to delay the ceremony; or
- Any loss or compensation where a ceremony is stopped from proceeding because
 - It would be void if it went ahead; or
 - An offence under the Marriage or Civil Partnership Acts would be committed; or
 - Where it would be against the public interest for the ceremony to proceed.

Licensed Venues

Approval of the venue is granted only in connection with the provision of civil ceremonies. East Sussex Registration cannot accept liability for the failure or neglect on behalf of the venue, of any agreement between you and the venue, and for the use or provision of any service and/or facilities at the venue.

Room Capacity

For fire safety and comfort, if the number of guests exceeds the capacity of the room which is stipulated in the venue license, some guests may need to be excluded from the ceremony.

Registration Staff

East Sussex Registration will allocate registrars to attend your ceremony and reserves the right to change which registrars will attend any particular ceremony in case of sickness absence or other unforeseen circumstances.

Ceremony Content

East Sussex Registration will provide registrars to conduct your ceremony:

- We will not use scripts provided by other sources.
- Ceremonies may be personalised to include music, readings and/or additional vows, and whilst every effort will be made to include these within the ceremony, please remember that the ceremony must remain ‘solemn and dignified’ by law and must contain no religious content or reference.
- East Sussex Registration will make the final decision on any wording that is used and will not accept liability for any omission which may be caused by reasons beyond its control.
- Religious blessings may not be included as part of the ceremony and any such blessing following the civil ceremony must be separate and may only take place after the registrars have left the ceremony room.
- East Sussex Registration will not be responsible for any breaches of copyright law for any music or readings used within the ceremony.

Timings

The time booked for the ceremony is the time the ceremony must commence:

- If the ceremony should commence late East Sussex Registration reserves the right to amend or shorten the ceremony in order to reduce its duration.
 - Should the ceremony not be ready to start within 20 minutes of the scheduled start time, and if the delay is not the fault of East Sussex Registration, we reserve the right to defer the ceremony until later that day, or cancel the ceremony altogether if there is no registrar availability later in the day; where the ceremony is cancelled in such circumstances the fees will not be refunded.
- East Sussex Registration reserves the right to charge an additional fee to cover its reasonable costs if the ceremony takes place more than 20 minutes after its scheduled start time.
- Any decision to delay the ceremony is strictly at the discretion of East Sussex Registration.

Animals

East Sussex Registration does not permit animals or wildlife at ceremonies within Register Offices, except for registered assistance dogs.

- If an approved venue permits a couple to have animals or wildlife at the ceremony, the venue is entirely responsible for the health and safety of the guests and any housekeeping issues which may arise as a result. East Sussex Registration must be informed of these arrangements in advance of the day of the ceremony.

Force Majeure

In the event of a 'force majeure' East Sussex Registration will use its best endeavours to perform your ceremony on your chosen day:

- *'Force majeure' means war, civil war, armed conflict, terrorist attack, governmental action, fire, flood, severe weather conditions, pandemic or epidemic or any other act or matter which, notwithstanding the reasonable diligence and foresight of East Sussex Registration, is beyond their reasonable control.*

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out ceremony insurance to cover any losses.

For Southover Grange (Lewes Register Office) Bookings Only:

① *Due to the extensive variety of additional packages available at Southover Grange we will only take payment for your £100 non-refundable deposit at the initial point of booking to secure your date. You will be invited to come and meet our Events Coordinator, within 14 days of your deposit payment, to discuss the content of your booking. At this meeting full payment will be taken for the ceremony and packages you agree upon. If we are unable to secure a meeting with you within this 14 day period, your saved date may be released, and your non-refundable deposit forfeited. Extension of this 14 day period is at the discretion of ESCC in exceptional circumstances only.*

② *If you have chosen to book any of the additional packages at Southover Grange, in addition to your marriage or civil partnership ceremony, you will be required to complete the additional booking form appropriate for the level of package you have booked. If you have booked a 'Gold/Gold Plus' or 'Platinum/Platinum Plus' Package and subsequently discover that none of our Approved Caterers are able to provide you with the wedding reception services you require, we will refund your fee for this element of the booking without charging you the aforementioned £50 Amendment Fee. If you initially book a marriage/civil partnership ceremony only and then subsequently decide you wish to add a package onto your booking, we will not charge you the aforementioned £50 Amendment Fee.*

③ *Southover Grange is a registered polling station. If we become aware of an election or referendum on a date you have booked your ceremony we will contact you as soon as possible and give you the option of continuing as planned or cancelling with a full refund of all fees, including your £100 non-refundable deposit. If you have booked a package involving the Newton Room we will have no option but to cancel and refund this part of your booking as that room is required for electors to vote in.*