



HM Passport
Office



General Register Office

Authorised Persons Newsletter Issue 7 March 2015

Introduction

Hello, and welcome to the seventh edition of the Authorised Persons Newsletter.

We really do value your feedback, so it has been wonderful to receive your comments and views on previous issues. It's helpful to know that you are finding the articles both informative and useful in your day to day duties as an Authorised Person.

In this issue you will find information on the changes to the marriage and civil partnership notice period, the new requirement for some couples to provide photographic evidence of their identity when giving notice and an item about our Marriage Keying Team, and the vital role you play to ensure that records are completed accurately.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue.

The Training and Improvement Team

General Register Office

The notice period for marriages and civil partnerships is increasing to 28 days.



HM Government

Change is here....

You will be aware from our previous newsletter that on Monday 2 March 2015, major changes to the process for giving notice of marriage or civil partnership came into effect.

From this date, the notice period for all couples wishing to marry following civil preliminaries or form a civil partnership in England or Wales, has been extended from 15 days to 28 days.

The changes, which are part of the Immigration Act 2014, will ensure that the Home Office has more time to identify and investigate suspected sham marriages and civil partnerships.

For couples where one or both of the parties is a non EEA national with limited or no immigration status, the Home Office may extend the notice period to 70 days to investigate whether the case is a sham.

Couples who have already given notice of a marriage or civil partnership before 2 March 2015, will not be affected by these changes.

Further information about the change is available on GOV.UK at <https://www.gov.uk/marriages-civil-partnerships/giving-notice-at-your-local-register-office>

Revised Guidance for Authorised Persons

We have updated the GRO “Guide for Authorised Persons” handbook to reflect the changes to marriage and civil partnership legislation. This includes changes to the notice period, as well as the new requirement for both parties to a proposed marriage to provide a passport sized photograph of themselves to the superintendent registrar when they give notice of marriage, where one or both parties is a non EEA national and subject to immigration control (including those with a marriage visa). These photographs will be sent to you by the register office, along with the superintendent registrar’s certificate, to provide reassurance that the couple, who gave notice, are the same couple who later marry.

The Guide for Authorised Persons can be found on the GOV.UK website.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-for-authorised-persons>

Marriage Keying Team

Did you know?

It is now four years since GRO started capturing marriage registrations electronically onto the “Registration On Line” system. This system is affectionately known as RON.

The team are responsible for capturing approximately 65,000 to 70,000 religious marriage registrations accurately onto the RON system each year.

Whilst the team have seen a significant reduction in the number of occasions we have cause to contact you in relation to a query about your quarterly copies, there is still further scope to reduce the volume of contact and we would be grateful if you would take note of the following guidance.

- **Signatures/Legibility.** We appreciate that not everyone’s signature is legible and request that you print (in pencil) any unclear signatures for witnesses to the marriage, in the margin. Likewise, we ask that all fields are clearly written.

- **Certification.** Please ensure all quarterly copies are certified; this is a legal requirement of the Marriage Act 1949.
- **Fathers details.** If the fathers details are not being entered, please insert a dash in both columns (-). If the columns are left blank, we would need to investigate to confirm if there has been an omission.
- **Registration District.** Please ensure this is completed.
- **Quarterly returns.** Only marriages from the same quarter should be entered on the quarterly copy form.
- **Timeliness.** Please submit your return to your Superintendent Registrar by the required date even if it is a nil return. Again, this is a legal requirement of the 1949 Act.
- **Method of solemnization.** The correct description should always be used i.e. by certificate.
- **Registration ink.** As the marriage returns are to be kept as a permanent copy, please use Registration ink.
- **True copy.** The marriage return that you submit and certify, must be a true copy of the register including any marginal notes.

Further information on your responsibilities can be found within the GRO “Guide for Authorised Persons” which can be found at:-

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-for-authorised-persons>

Finally...

If you have received a copy of this newsletter and you are no longer a Responsible Authorised Person, please could you let us know so that we can amend our records.

Any comments on this newsletter?

Please contact
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