



Secretary for Marriages Newsletter

Introduction

Hello and welcome to the sixth edition of the Secretary for Marriages Newsletter.

In this issue, you will find information on the forthcoming changes resulting from the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019 in relation to the registration of civil partnerships.

As of 2 December 2019, the changes extend eligibility to allow two people of the opposite sex to register a civil partnership.

Other than extending eligibility, the processes to register a civil partnership remain as at present, and with religious protections maintained.

We hope you find this information useful.

**The Training and
Business Improvement
Team
General Register Office**

Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019

- Secretaries for Marriages may be aware that on 26 March the Civil Partnerships, Marriages and Deaths (Registration etc) Act 2019 received Royal Assent.
- The Act contains powers to make regulations to extend civil partnerships to two people of the opposite sex. The Civil Partnership (Opposite-sex Couples) Regulations 2019 were made on 5 November, and come into force on 2 December 2019. This means the first civil partnerships for opposite sex couples can be registered from 31 December.
- A religious venue that is already approved for civil partnerships will continue to be approved for the registration of civil partnerships between same sex couples. If the holder of the approval wishes to modify it to allow civil partnerships between couples of the opposite sex, then an application will first need to be made to the registration authority. As now, necessary consents for the building to be used for the registration of civil partnerships by opposite sex couples will be required.
- Any new applications or renewals must specify whether the approval is for same sex couples, opposite sex couples or both.
- Religious organisations and persons acting on their behalf cannot be compelled to allow religious premises to be used for civil partnerships. If religious organisations choose to apply to have premises approved for civil partnerships, then as with marriages they can decide the extent of the approval required (i.e. whether to allow civil partnerships of same sex couples, opposite sex couples or both).

Any comments about this newsletter?

Please contact GROCasework@gro.gsi.gov.uk