**PRISONER MARRIAGE AND CIVIL PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATION**

Requests by prisoners to marry or register a civil partnership must be handled in line with PSI 14/2016 *Marriage of Prisoners and Civil Partnership Registration* (and PSI 33/2015 *External Escorts*, where applicable). In addition, the following Covid specific considerations will apply during the pandemic:

* In view of restrictions already in place and the need to manage infection risks, requests from prisoners at sites operating Stage 4 regimes to marry or register a civil partnership must only be approved by Governors in very exceptional circumstances. This would be, for example, where a prisoner or their partner has a terminal illness.
* Weddings and civil partnership registrations will continue to be available for prisoners at other regime stage sites, reflecting that from Stage 3 prisons can also resume social visits and make more use of ROTL. However, infection control measures such as social distancing must be followed by the prisoner and staff in line with the relevant community guidelines.
* In addition to the normal security assessment, Governors will need to consider the relative risks from COVID-19 of holding a ceremony/registration inside or outside of the prison and should ask the prisoner to take an LFD test in line with the attached guidance.



A review of PSI 14/2016 will be undertaken, which will include the current policy around prisoners in closed conditions marrying outside of a prison. **The PSI states that Category B prisoners will not normally be allowed an outside ceremony/registration; with immediate effect, the same approach must be applied to Category C prisoners**. **This change will be reflected in a revision to the PSI that will be published imminently.**

Please direct any queries about these provisions to the National Litigation Team (NLT@justice.gov.uk).