



Date 28 July 2020

Dear Sir/Madam

I write to notify you of an error in our letter of 17 July 2020 regarding The Marriage and Civil Partnership (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2020, where information was sought in relation to your church's preferences for performing religious same-sex marriages.

As explained in that letter, the information will enable the officiant database to be updated in advance of the Regulations coming into effect on 1 September 2020.

The letter asks that information requested in an accompanying form is returned to this office by 17 August and incorrectly states:

"If we do not receive any response by this date, it will be assumed that you and other members of the church no longer wish to be registered as officiants for any type of marriage. We will cancel the registrations on the officiant database accordingly, and you will not be able to carry out any marriage ceremonies in Northern Ireland."

For clarity, we confirm the position which is that all religious officiants currently on the Registrar General's register are opted out of performing same-sex marriages and will remain so unless we are notified otherwise by completion of the accompanying form. However, after the Regulations come into effect in September 2020, when a new church applies to register to solemnise marriages, that application must specify whether it is to perform only same-sex marriages, only marriages of opposite sex or both.

Please note that it was not and is not the intention to cancel registration of current officiants and we apologise unreservedly for this error.

If you do wish to carry out same sex marriages then please remember to return the form to GRO that was attached to the original letter.

Yours