

Policy for the Use of the Parliamentary Precincts for Marriage Ceremonies

Introduction

This guidance is issued by the Speaker of the House in accordance with his/her duties and responsibility for the general direction and control of the precincts of Parliament.

2. It focuses on the detailed processes for the use of the precincts and the conditions associated with its use for the purpose of marriage ceremonies. It is not intended to provide information more generally on the legal requirements for marriage in Trinidad and Tobago.

Priority Usage

3. The Red House and its adjoining Cabildo Chambers is the home of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago (referred to as “*the parliamentary precincts*”). Therefore, the priority use of these buildings is intended for sittings of the House of Representatives or the Senate, Parliamentary Committee meetings, Parliament related conferences or training and all administrative functions related to the operations of the Parliament.

4. The following are the primary users of the precincts:
a) Members of the House of Representatives and Senators of the Parliament of the Republic Trinidad and Tobago;

- b) Staff of the Office of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago;
and
- c) Staff and agents of Members of the House of Representatives
and Senators.

Venue, Time and Days for Marriage Ceremonies at the Parliamentary Precincts

Registrar General

5. The solemnizing of marriages within the City of Port of Spain may be conducted by the Registrar General at the parliamentary precincts as an alternative venue to the current location at the Government Campus.

6. The Registrar General shall ordinarily be permitted to conduct marriage ceremonies on **Mondays and Thursdays only**, between the hours of **10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.**

7. The venue for marriage ceremonies to be conducted on weekdays by the Registrar General shall ordinarily be the **South Eastern Terrace, Ground Floor of the Red House or such other place as designated by the Speaker.**

8. The entrance to the parliamentary precincts for marriage ceremonies on weekdays shall be via the **Abercromby Street entrance** or the **St. Vincent Street entrance** to the Red House.

Other Marriage Officers

9. Ceremonies to be conducted by any other Marriage Officer shall be permitted on **weekends only**, on the days and times designated by the Speaker.

10. Marriage ceremonies to be conducted on weekends shall be permitted on the 1st and 3rd Saturday and 4th Sunday of every month, between the hours of **10:00 a.m. and 12:00 a.m. or 1:00 and 3:00 p.m.**
11. The venue for marriage ceremonies to be conducted on weekends shall be the **St. Vincent Street courtyard** or the **Abercromby Street courtyard** of the Red House.
12. The entrance to the parliamentary precincts for marriage ceremonies on weekends shall be the **Abercromby Street entrance** to the Red House.
13. A maximum of **six (6)** ceremonies shall be permitted on any day approved and designated by the Speaker.
14. Marriage ceremonies which are conducted on weekends shall be at a nominal fee as approved by the Speaker¹, which will cover *inter alia* the cost of cleaning and the provision of basic amenities.

Applications for Use of the Parliamentary precincts for a marriage ceremony

Weekday Marriages by the Registrar General

- 15 Applications for use of the parliamentary precincts for a marriage ceremony to be conducted by the Registrar General must be made to the Registrar General's Department, the Ministry of the Attorney General and Legal Affairs, Government Campus, Port of Spain.
16. The Registrar General shall be required to give the Marshal of the Parliament **five (5) days' notice** of his/her intention to use the Red House as an alternative venue for a marriage.

¹ To be determined

Other Marriage Officers

17. Applications for use of the parliamentary precincts for a marriage ceremony to be conducted on a weekend by a marriage officer (other than the Registrar General) must be made to the Marshal of the Parliament. Application forms for use of the Red House for such marriage ceremony can be accessed via the Parliament's website or may be obtained at the Office of the Marshal of the Parliament, Parliamentary Complex, Cabildo Building, St. Vincent Street, Port of Spain. Such applications must be submitted **seven (7) days** before the scheduled day for the marriage ceremony.

Number of Guests

18. Ordinarily, the maximum number of attendees allowed for each marriage ceremony is **eight (8)** (exclusive of the Marriage Officer).

19. The Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago reserves the right to restrict the number of persons allowed on the parliamentary precincts for a marriage ceremony at any one time.

20. Upon the submission of an application for use of the parliamentary precincts for a marriage ceremony, the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago shall be provided with details of the expected number of persons attending the marriage ceremony, including the name of the Marriage Officer who shall conduct the marriage ceremony.

21. A final typed list of attendees' names must be supplied by the Registrar General or Marriage Officer to the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago a minimum of **forty-eight (48)** hours in advance of the marriage ceremony.

Occasions when the Parliamentary Precincts will not be available as a venue

22. The parliamentary precincts shall not be available as the alternative venue for the solemnizing of marriages within the City of Port of Spain by the Registrar General if a sitting of the House of Representatives or the Senate is scheduled on any day designated for marriage ceremonies.

23. The parliamentary precincts will also be unavailable during periods when:

- a) the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago is hosting any Parliamentary conference, training or other event on any day designated for marriage ceremonies; or
- b) any area within the parliamentary precincts is closed due to circumstances outside its control which precludes the ceremony taking place.

24. The Speaker reserves the right to revoke permission for the solemnizing of a marriage to be conducted on the parliamentary precincts if the terms and conditions contained in this policy are breached or if the ceremony may, in the opinion of the Speaker, damage or prejudice the reputation and/or good name of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago and/or its Members.

The Parliamentary Precincts, Entry and Security

25. Access to the parliamentary precincts is granted at the sole discretion of the Speaker.

26. The Speaker reserves the right for any duly authorised representative of the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago to enter any area of the parliamentary precincts at any time, including those areas which have been designated for use for a marriage ceremony.

27. In respect of the high security requirements and considerations in relation to the parliamentary precincts and its primary users, the Speaker reserves the right to refuse entry to any person, vehicle or piece of equipment onto the parliamentary precincts, or to remove any person, vehicle or piece of equipment from the parliamentary precincts, at any time and for any reason.

28. Any individual granted access to the parliamentary precincts must at all times comply with the security and health and safety rules governing conduct on the parliamentary precincts and with the instructions of relevant Parliamentary and security personnel.

29. All persons and equipment are subject to security searches at any time. Attendees shall not bring equipment or bags larger than hand luggage through any pedestrian security entrance point and such items will be screened.

Use of the Venue

30. The Speaker shall also take into account all circumstances in relation to the safety and comfort of Members of Parliament, Senators and all other occupiers of the parliamentary precincts, including crowding of common spaces, ingress and egress and any other activities which may be scheduled on any day designated for marriage ceremonies.

31. Attendees will be allowed access to the area identified for use for a marriage ceremony space **fifteen (15)** minutes before the appointed time for the marriage ceremony.

32. No loitering and/or lingering shall be permitted on the parliamentary precincts before or after a wedding ceremony.

33. No food or drink (including alcoholic drinks) may be used or brought into the parliamentary precincts.

34. Live performances, loud music or other activities likely to cause a noise nuisance are not permitted.

35. No car parking facilities are available on the parliamentary precincts.

Dress Code

36. The Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago is a business environment and therefore all visitors to the parliamentary precincts on weekdays are subject to its dress code.

37. Upon the submission of an application for use of the parliamentary precincts for a marriage ceremony, the dress code which is in effect at the parliamentary precincts shall be provided to Marriage Officers and attendees and shall be strictly enforced.

Signs, Placards and Advertisements

38. No placards or other articles are to be fixed to any part of the Parliamentary precincts or fabric of the building.

39. No posters, boards, signs, flags or other emblems or advertisements are to be displayed in any part of the parliamentary precincts.

40. The Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago shall not be responsible for the publication of the banns of marriage between the parties.

Equipment including Electrical Equipment

41. No lighting, air conditioning, heating, power, cabling or other electrical fittings or appliances in the parliamentary precincts are to be altered, moved, or in any way interfered with.

- a) No additional air conditioning, heating, power, cabling or other electrical fittings or appliances are to be installed or used within the parliamentary precincts without prior consent of the Speaker.
- b) No additional lighting, or any high intensity or halogen lighting are to be installed or used within the parliamentary precincts.
- c) The Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago shall not be responsible for the provision of audio, video or lighting equipment, tents, photography or videography services, or any staff or technicians to assist with the aforementioned services/equipment. The aforementioned items shall not be permitted within the parliamentary precincts without prior consent of the Speaker.

Publicity, Photography and Media

42. Cameras may be brought onto the parliamentary precincts for private purposes only within the confines of the area identified for use for a marriage ceremony provided that no obstruction and/or impediment, nuisance or annoyance is occasioned.

43. Video/photographic cameras must be hand-held with no tripods or trailing cables and any filming or photography is restricted to the confines of the area identified for use for a marriage ceremony.

44. No broadcasting or filming rights related to the marriage ceremony shall be granted without the prior written consent of the Speaker.

Speaker of the House

Parliament of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Revised February 12, 2020