

Thurrock Register Office

Ceremonies

Bookings terms and conditions – for bookings made after 1 April 2024

Your ceremony booking is accepted subject to the terms and conditions set out in this document and on the basis that you agree to the terms and conditions in their entirety.

A ceremony for the purpose of the booking policy is either a:

- i. marriage ceremony
- ii. civil partnership ceremony
- iii. renewal of vows ceremony
- iv. naming ceremony
- v. commitment ceremony

A non-refundable deposit must be paid at the time of the booking to secure a date for your ceremony in our diary.

If the ceremony is in less than 3 months' time full payment must be made at the time of booking.

The balance of the ceremony fees is payable either at the time of the booking or no less than 3 months prior to the date of the ceremony

It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that they complete the legal preliminaries to the marriage correctly, and within the statutory time limits.

If at any point it is alleged that a legal impediment to a marriage or civil partnership exists, the Superintendent Registrar has a legal duty to investigate before the ceremony can take place. Thurrock Register Office cannot be held accountable for any resulting delay, postponement or cancellation of your ceremony and financial loss that may occur.

If either party has gone through a foreign divorce/dissolution of a previous marriage/civil partnership and decide to book a ceremony against the advice of Thurrock Register Office, before the divorce/dissolution has been approved, no refunds or financial compensation will be given if the marriage cannot take place due to the processing times or decision of the Registrar General.

Both parties must be available to meet with the Registrars at the ceremony venue no later than 30 minutes before the ceremony start time. In the event of late arrival your ceremony may be subject to rebooking and the full fee for the ceremony will apply.

Thurrock Register Office will not be held responsible for any financial loss, delay, postponement, or cancellation caused by the late arrival of the couple or guests. The registrars attending your ceremony have other ceremonies to attend throughout the day and cannot allow the lateness of one ceremony to impact upon another.

The ceremony must be legally compliant and of a dignified nature. Thurrock Register Office shall have the final decision on any wording and the content of the ceremony from start to finish.

Your registrar reserves the right to stop your ceremony from proceeding if:

- i. either of the parties to a marriage or civil partnership appear to be acting under duress

- ii. either of the parties to a marriage or civil partnership are clearly seen to be unable to understand the nature and purport of the ceremony
- iii. either of the parties to a marriage or civil partnership appear to lack the mental capacity to understand the nature and purport of the ceremony
- iv. a lawful objection is made before or during the ceremony

No food, drink – including alcohol – or animals, with the exception of assistance dogs, are permitted in the ceremony rooms at Thurrock Town Hall.

Any gifts, flowers or general goods delivered to, or left at, the Town Hall in conjunction with your ceremony are not the responsibility of the staff at the Town Hall.

Thurrock Register Office will allocate staff to attend your ceremony but is unable to guarantee the attendance of an individual registrar and reserves the right to substitute other qualified staff in the event of sickness or other unforeseen circumstances on the day.

You must provide two witnesses who are over the age of 16 and can speak and understand English to witness the marriage/civil partnership. Thurrock Register Office staff cannot act as witnesses. It is your duty to provide witnesses for your ceremony.

It is an offence under section 25(1) of the Immigration Act 1971 to enter into a marriage to help facilitate a stay in the United Kingdom. If a ceremony or appointment does not go ahead due to UK Visa and Immigration intervention, no refund shall be payable or financial compensation given for any losses incurred.

If you do not comply with the above conditions, we reserve the right to halt the ceremony until these conditions are met. It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure that their guests are informed of, and observe, these conditions.

If the ceremony cannot take place due to any of the above terms and conditions, you are subject to the cancellation and amendment fees set out below.

Appointments terms and conditions

An appointment for the purpose of the booking policy is defined as but not limited to

- i. notices of marriage
- ii. notices of civil partnership
- iii. private citizenship ceremonies

Your appointment booking is accepted subject to terms and conditions set out in this document and on the basis that you agree to the terms and conditions in their entirety.

All customers who have appointments with Thurrock Register Office must arrive at the agreed time of their appointment.

Customers who arrive late for their appointments will not be seen and are subject to the rescheduling and rebooking policy below.

Customers agree to provide all original documents required (as per the guidance offered before your appointment) at the time of their appointment. Customers arriving without the correct documents may not be seen and are subject to the rescheduling and rebooking policy below.

Customers with foreign divorces agree to provide the documentation required by the General Register Office to assess if their divorce is valid in England and Wales.

Thurrock Register Office will not be held accountable for processing times of outside bodies e.g., UK Visa and Immigration, the General Register Office.

General terms and conditions

Customers for appointments, or ceremonies and their guests may not occupy the rooms at The Town Hall, earlier than the time agreed, and must vacate the room and/or the premises no later than the time agreed.

For safety the maximum capacity of all our rooms may not be exceeded. If the number of guests exceeds the capacity of the room some guests will be excluded.

Ceremonies can only take place in venues that have been licensed for this purpose. Thurrock Register Office cannot take responsibility for any failure on the part of licensed venues to provide additional services, not covered by this licence.

We strongly recommend that you take out ceremony insurance to cover losses or expenses incurred in the case of events outside our control.

Rebooking and rescheduling

Booking fees and deposits

A non-refundable deposit for ceremonies, or booking fee for appointments, is payable at the time of booking for all services.

If you attend the appointment/ceremony, the fees paid in advance will be used towards payment for the service.

If you are unable to attend your appointment or ceremony, please see the rescheduling and cancellation details listed below.

Rescheduling appointments

Appointments can be rescheduled, subject to availability. A change of date will incur a charge as stated on our website.

Appointments can be rescheduled either by:

- writing to – Thurrock Register Office, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL
- emailing to – register.office@thurrock.gov.uk
- phoning – 01375 375 245

Rescheduling ceremonies

Ceremonies at the Town Hall can be rescheduled, subject to availability. A change of date will incur a charge as stated on our website.

If the change is made less than 56 days before the original ceremony date, the booking is subject to our cancellation policy. A fresh booking would need to be made and paid for in full.

If the alternative date or room incurs a higher fee, the difference must be paid at the time of rescheduling. If your alternative date or room has a lower fee the difference will be refunded providing this is at least 56 days before the original ceremony date.

Once you change or reschedule a ceremony you lose your rights to a refund at a later date.

Appointments can be rescheduled either by:

- writing to – Thurrock Register Office, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL
- emailing to – register.office@thurrock.gov.uk
- phoning – 01375 375 245

Cancellations

An appointment booking may be either cancelled by:

- i. you
- ii. Thurrock Register Office

Booking fees are non-refundable in all circumstances.

A ceremony booking may be either cancelled by:

- i. you
- ii. Thurrock Register Office

In the event that you need to cancel your ceremony, you will be required to notify us in writing or by email. Cancellation requests should be sent either by:

- writing to – Thurrock Register Office, Civic Offices, New Road, Grays, RM17 6SL
- emailing to – register.office@thurrock.gov.uk

You must include the full details of the ceremony booking including the date, time, venue, your full names and, if possible, the method of payment and receipt numbers.

To cancel a provisional or confirmed ceremony booking, you must give us a minimum of 56 days' notice before the date of the ceremony. This will incur a cancellation fee equivalent to 50% of the ceremony fee.

If you cancel fewer than 56 days before the ceremony date or fail to cancel in writing to Thurrock Register Office, no refund will be paid.

Your ceremony may be cancelled by the Thurrock Register Office for a number of reasons, including but not limited to the following:

- i. failure to attend your ceremony without sufficient notice
- ii. the total fees have not been paid
- iii. legal preliminaries have not been completed
- iv. lateness

Limitation to liability

Thurrock Register Office will not accept liability for:

- any delay or loss caused by the late or non-arrival of your wedding party – in this situation:
 - the registrars attending your ceremony have other ceremonies to attend throughout the day, so cannot delay the pre-agreed start time of the ceremony
 - if it is necessary for the registration team to leave the venue and attend their next ceremony, they will make reasonable efforts to return and conduct your ceremony
 - if this is not possible and the registration team needs to return to conduct your ceremony on another day, you would be liable to pay any additional fees incurred, which may include giving new notices
- any loss caused by a request from you or your representatives to delay the ceremony – any decision to delay the ceremony is entirely at the discretion of the Thurrock Register Office
- any loss or compensation where a ceremony is stopped from going ahead due to there being a legal impediment or such. Including but not limited to:
 - it would be void if it went ahead
 - an offence under the Marriage or Civil Partnership Acts would be committed
 - it would be against the public interest
- any ceremony that has to be cancelled as a result of events that are outside our control including but not limited to circumstances of 'Force Majeure'
- the failure of any equipment/system and/or services provided by the wedding party/venue or a third party including but not limited to music systems
- failure, neglect, non-compliance or omissions caused by any venue that is not owned by the Thurrock Council, or for any agreement between you and the venue for the use or provision of any services – approval of the venue is granted only in connection with the provision of ceremonies

Any decision to delay the ceremony is at the discretion of Thurrock Register Office.

Force Majeure

Force Majeure means war, civil war, armed conflict, terrorist attack, governmental action, fire, flood, severe weather conditions, pandemic or epidemic or any other act or matter which notwithstanding the reasonable diligence and foresight of Thurrock Register Office and our partner providers, is beyond our reasonable control.

In the event of a Force Majeure, Thurrock Register Office will endeavour to perform your ceremony on your chosen day. We strongly recommend that you take out ceremony insurance to cover losses or expenses incurred in the case of events outside our control.