



Political Affairs Digest

A daily summary of political events affecting the Jewish Community

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House of Commons Written Answer

Funerals: Coronavirus

Andrew Rosindell (Conservative) [178897] To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether he has made an assessment of the potential merits of removing covid-19 restrictions on funeral services before 20 April 2021.

Penny Mordaunt: We understand that losing a loved one is always a very difficult time. Throughout the pandemic, restrictions on funerals have sought to balance the needs of the bereaved with the need to minimise the spread of COVID-19. Therefore, the government has had to take the difficult decision to put measures in place to ensure funerals can continue whilst reducing risk, particularly if vulnerable people wish to attend.

The Government is taking a gradual and cautious approach to removing restrictions on end of life gatherings, guided by science and the data. Further information can be found in the guidance for arranging or attending a funeral during the coronavirus pandemic:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-12/178897>

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

Limit on mourners at funerals to be removed

... Families and friends will shortly be able to pay their respects to loved ones in greater numbers, with numerical limits on funerals to be removed.

After careful consideration, the legal limit of 30 mourners will be removed as part of Step 3 of the roadmap, to take place from 17 May at the earliest. As the Prime Minister has said, the current data does not suggest any need to alter the dates at which restrictions will next be eased.

Instead, the number of people who can attend a funeral will be determined by how many people the venue, such as the relevant place of worship or funeral home, can safely accommodate with social distancing. This includes both indoor and outdoor venues. ... Limits for other life or commemorative events at Step 3, such as weddings and wakes, are expected to remain as set out in the roadmap. ...

Communities Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said: ... Losing a loved one has been incredibly hard during the pandemic and I am pleased we are now in a position, thanks to everyone's continued efforts and the rollout of the vaccine, to remove these limits and allow more friends and family to come together and pay their respects.

I look forward to working with faith leaders responsible for places of worship, and those who manage venues such as funeral homes, to introduce the new arrangements in a way that continues to keep people safe.

To read the full press release see

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/limit-on-mourners-at-funerals-to-be-removed>

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Israel

House of Commons Written Answer

Jerusalem: Palestinians

Afzal Khan (Labour) [188152] To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs, what assessment he has made of the recent violent clashes in Jerusalem and reports of the use of violence by Israeli security forces against Palestinians.

James Cleverly: We are watching developments in Jerusalem closely, and call on all sides to reduce tensions, restore calm and avoid provocation. Israeli police and security forces must ensure that any and all use of force against civilians is proportionate and does not serve to further enflame the situation. We urge Israel to investigate any accusations of excess use of force.

<https://questions-statements.parliament.uk/written-questions/detail/2021-04-27/188152>

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Relevant Legislation ** new or updated today

UK Parliament

Assisted Dying Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2592>

Education (Assemblies) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2579>

Freedom of Speech (Universities) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2820>

Genocide Determination Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2621>

Marriage Act 1949 (Amendment) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2608>

Marriage (Approved Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2537>

Marriage (Authorised Belief Organisations) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2795>

Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/2584>

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Consultations

** new or updated today

**** closes in 2 days**

New Plan for Immigration (closing date 6 May 2021)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/new-plan-for-immigration>

Evidence for Equality National Survey (EVENS) (closing date 30 June 2021)

<https://evensurvey.co.uk/>

Social Distance, Digital Congregation: British Ritual Innovation under COVID-19

(closing date not stated)

<https://bric19.mmu.ac.uk/take-the-survey/>

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The Scottish Council of Jewish Communities (SCoJeC) is Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC029438