

## Advice for Clergy and Readers

1. **Those who are “clinically extremely vulnerable”** as defined by the government should follow the shielding advice set out here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19/guidance-on-shielding-and-protecting-extremely-vulnerable-persons-from-covid-19>

The government guidance strongly advises those in this group not to attend ‘any gathering... including religious services’. Accordingly, we advise that an ordained or lay minister who is clinically extremely vulnerable should not officiate at public worship or the occasional offices.

2. **Those who are “clinically vulnerable”** as defined by section 8 of the government advice below should follow the guidance set out here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing/staying-alert-and-safe-social-distancing>

Please note that anyone over 70, and anyone under 70 with one or more specific underlying health conditions (broadly, those instructed to have an annual flu jab on medical grounds), is deemed to be clinically vulnerable. Those in this group are advised by the government to stay at home ‘as much as possible’ and if they do go out, to ‘take particular care to minimise contact with others’ outside their own household.

Clergy and Readers who are clinically vulnerable must make their own decisions about whether to take services in a church building, churchyard or crematorium, weighing the personal risks and following both current government social distancing advice and guidance on the Church of England website.

If clinically vulnerable ministers who are beneficed or licensed to a particular responsibility decide that for their own protection they cannot take services, they will need to work with the rural dean and other colleagues to ensure that services are covered.

3. **Those who are fit and well** (i.e. neither “clinically vulnerable” nor “clinically extremely vulnerable” as defined by the government) may take services in a church building, churchyard or crematorium, provided they follow current government social distancing and hygiene advice and guidance on the Church of England website.

4. **For all Clergy and Readers:** if they or anyone in their household shows coronavirus symptoms, they should follow the government guidance on self-isolation: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

Clergy and Readers with Permission to Officiate are under no obligation to officiate at any service and must not be put under any pressure to do so. We strongly urge those over 70 to take extra care, but it is now up to each individual to decide whether to take services or not, always at the invitation of the incumbent.

*Archdeacons Andrew, Douglas, Mark and Nick*