

STATES OF JERSEY



DRAFT COVID-19 (GATHERINGS) (JERSEY) REGULATIONS 202- (P.157/2020): COMMENTS

**Presented to the States on 20th November 2020
by the Comité des Connétables**

STATES GREFFE

COMMENTS

Covid-19 has presented unprecedented challenges this year for the entire community.

This is no less true for the Connétables and Parishes.

We have been committed to supporting Parishioners, particularly the vulnerable and those needing to shield, whilst at the same time ensuring Parish business continues to be conducted and restrictions do not preclude the normal democratic activities and process.

However, arrangements for – and possible restrictions on – the conduct of the business of the Parish Assembly remain a concern to all Connétables.

These draft Regulations, relating to gatherings and to workplace restrictions, are of course essential to ensure government has a toolkit of powers which it can use to limit the spread of Covid-19 generally.

The Government has also revised regularly the guidance issued to the public to ensure appropriate public health guidelines as required at different stages of the pandemic.

We appreciate the difficulty in preparing guidelines which cover every scenario, however the Parish Assembly does, in our view, need special consideration.

The Parish Assembly is required to be held, by law, for a number of purposes including the election of officers, consideration of applications for an alcohol licence and other business. In some cases the date on which such business is to be decided is also specified in law.

We would welcome the Minister's assurance that public health guidelines, Gathering Orders (under P.157/2020) and Workplace Restrictions (under P.158/2020) will not preclude normal democratic activities. In particular, they must permit attendance at a Parish Assembly of such a number as may be accommodated on the premises whilst maintaining the relevant physical distance between households.