



August 2020

COVID19: Anand Karaj Guidance

The Government has issued guidance on the safe use of Places of Worship, including for wedding ceremonies. In the case of Gurdwaras, this means the religious Anand Karaj ceremony, as well as the Civil Registration that happens in some Gurdwaras. The purpose of this document is to set out the terms and conditions that apply at Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara (Gravesend) to ensure the safety of the *Sangat* and prevent the transmission of the virus, consistent with the guidance issued by the Government. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience caused by the necessary precautions that we have had to implement.

Please note that all visitors to the Gurdwara must enter through the main doors at the front, use the marked one-way system within the Gurdwara, and leave by the side doors.

The terms and conditions described in this document affect all couples and families planning to hold their Anand Karaj at the Gurdwara until further notice.

If the couple or family fail to follow the measures outlined below, the Management Committee reserve the right to cancel the Anand Karaj and Civil Registration, up to and including on the day of the wedding.

Terms and Conditions

Number of guests

We will be allowing guests to the Gurdwara for the religious ceremony of the Anand Karaj in line with Government guidelines for Places of Worship. You will be informed of the maximum number of guests for your event, which will depend on the size of the Diwan Hall that is booked and current Government guidance. It is your responsibility to inform invitees to stay at home and not attend the Anand Karaj if they are symptomatic of Coronavirus, and for those attending to adhere to social distancing. Markers have been placed for social distancing. When Langar is served, a minimum two metre distance is kept between tables, and 1m distance between persons on each table. People must be seated and remain within their families or social bubbles only.

Catering

For everyone's safety, any external catering is not permitted on the Gurdwara premises (either for morning tea or lunch). The Gurdwara will provide Langar (blessed food prepared at the Gurdwara for everyone), and the menu can be discussed several days before the Anand Karaj with a member of the Management Committee.



Test and Trace

The Government has asked venues such as Places of Worship to keep a record of all those visiting, their contact details and the time and day when they visited, in case they need to be traced after someone with COVID-19 is known to have been at the same place. The Gurdwara has implemented this through a free mobile app called GOACO, and through paper forms that can be completed on arrival at the Gurdwara. For wedding guests, we require the Groom and Bride to keep/maintain a list of their guests and their contact details and provide these to the data controller (mydata@gurunakdarbar.org), no later than two days before the Anand Karaj. Any information collected for this purpose will be destroyed 21 days after the event.

Wedding day

1. **Arrival of Baraat:** Under no circumstances should the Groom arrive at the Gurdwara on a horse. The *Baraat* (Grooms side) should not dance or play Dhols (drums) when they enter the Gurdwara complex.
2. **Face coverings:** The Government has announced that from 8th August onwards, everyone attending a Place of Worship must wear a face covering or face mask. At weddings, the only exception will be the Bride and Groom. The other exemptions are those with a medical reason not to wear a face-covering or children under 12 years old. We advise that you bring your own face covering. For those who do not bring their own, masks will be made available at the entrance to the Gurdwara.
3. **Milnee:** Only one Milnee will take place in the area in front of the entrance or the lobby, depending on the weather. This Milnee will be between the fathers (or family elders) of the Bride and Groom. Both individuals will need to stand separately and say "Gur Fateh". No hugging or exchanging of garlands is allowed. Ardaas will be performed, during which the Sangat must continue to maintain social distancing.
4. **Breakfast:** No external catering is permitted. The Gurdwara will provide refreshments. These will be served in line with safe practice. Guests must eat whilst maintaining social distancing which has been put in place by the Gurdwara. No additional food can be brought in by the Sangat.
5. **Darbar Hall:** All guests must promptly be seated within the appointed Darbar Hall after breakfast. Those not from the same household must maintain social distancing from each other in the Darbar Hall. Face coverings **must** be worn in the Darbar Hall, with exceptions as listed in para 2 above.
6. **Bridal Room:** Only the same household members are permitted to sit with the Bride in the Bridal Room before the Anand Karaj.



7. **Kurhmai:** One member of the Bride's family may come to the Groom and perform the *Kurhmai* ceremony if it has not already taken place earlier. Any gifts must be wrapped in cellophane and not opened on the Gurdwara premises. These gifts should be promptly moved to recipients' cars after the Kurhmai.
8. **Anand Karaj:** Upon entering the Darbar Hall, the Bride must only be accompanied by immediate family from the same household. The cultural practice of having children proceed as "bridesmaids" must not take place unless they are from the same household.
9. Sisters living in the same house as the Bride and Groom can sit directly behind or close to the Bride and Groom. Social distancing must always be maintained.
10. **Palle Di Rasam:** The father (or another elder) of the Bride will hand the "Pala" to the Bride. This can safely be completed by the father at arm's length.
11. **Lavaan:** The Granthi will read Lavaan the Paath, and then one member of the Kirtan Jatha will sing/recite the Lavaan, as the Bride and Groom perform each of the four Parkarma.
12. Only the Bride and Groom are to do Parkarma of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. No one else should stand around the Parkarma to 'assist' the Bride.
13. After the Lavaan, during the singing/recitation of Anand Sahib, guests must refrain from hugging or shaking hands to congratulate one another. Social distancing must be maintained for *kirtan bheta*.
14. When the Ardaas is performed, the Granthi will always maintain distance from the couple.
15. After the Lavaan, the tradition of giving *Sagan* must be limited to just the parents of the couple. No one else should partake in this as it involves guests coming close to the couple and one another.
16. **Civil Registration of Wedding:** If the Civil Registration of the wedding is to take place at the Gurdwara after the Anand Karaj, this will take place in the Lecture Theatre. A maximum of 30 persons is allowed to be present at this time. This includes the Registrar, photographers, videographers, witnesses and guests. Please make sure that this limit is strictly adhered to and you have informed those who will be joining you for this ceremony. We recommend that these numbers are kept to the absolute minimum.
17. **Lunch:** No external catering is permitted. Simple Guru ka Langar will be served to guests in the Langar Hall on the Ground Floor after the Anand Karaj, following social distancing guidance. Guests will be asked to go to the counter to be served.



18. **Wedding Cake:** The Bride's and Groom's families can themselves bring a cake for cutting at the Gurdwara. Cake making companies or suppliers are not allowed to attend to set up the cake, which should be kept as simple as possible. Cakes must be vegetarian and egg-free.
19. **Photography/Video:** We advise no more than two photographers/videographers are permitted per wedding. They must follow the protocols that apply throughout the Gurdwara.
20. **Decorations:** No external decorations (flowers, ornaments) or external decorators are permitted. However, the Gurdwara has some limited décor that can be used for a small fee, which includes cleaning, sterilising, storing and setup.
21. **Doli:** If the Doli ceremony is carried out at the Gurdwara, throwing of rice and/or flowers and singing is prohibited. Social distancing must be maintained.
22. The couple and their family must follow all instructions provided to them on the day.

Signed : _____

Print Name: _____

[BRIDE/GROOM/PARENT/FAMILY MEMBER Delete as necessary]

Signed on Behalf of Management Committee: _____

Date: _____

Guru Nanak Darbar Gurdwara Management Team