

Church Insurance Made Simple



Martyn's Law explained

A simple guide for places of worship

Introduction

Your church now has extra responsibilities when it comes to protecting your congregation and visitors from acts of terrorism through new legislation called Martyn's Law, which is now in place and aims to help keep people safe.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025, commonly referred to as Martyn's Law, is named in memory of Martyn Hett, who was tragically killed during the terrorist attack at the Ariana Grande concert in May 2017. The law aims to make public spaces safer, calling for clear, workable steps to protect people at venues and events.

For help, call our dedicated customer services team (please have your policy number available)

on **0345 777 3322**

(Monday to Friday 8am-6pm excluding bank holidays)

Email us at

churchteam@ecclesiastical.com

For more information and guidance, go online at

www.ecclesiastical.com/church

What is the aim of the legislation?

Martyn's Law is designed to make public spaces across the UK safer. It asks those responsible for venues and events to think ahead and plan how they would respond if the worst happened. For bigger gatherings, there's an extra step, putting sensible measures in place to identify and reduce risk and keep people safe.

The law uses a tiered approach, so requirements depend on how many people are likely to be on site. If your venue usually welcomes 200 or more people, you'll need to meet the standard measures. For very large events of 800 or more, extra steps are required to keep everyone safe. Locations with a capacity of fewer than 100 individuals fall outside the scope of the legislation. Nevertheless, all organisations are encouraged to adopt positive security practices voluntarily, in line with the requirements of the standard tier.

We know this may feel like a big change for staff and volunteers, but the aim is simple: keeping everyone safe – and you have until April 2027 to comply, so there's plenty of time to plan and build confidence in your approach.

The Security Industry Authority (SIA) will oversee the rollout of Martyn's Law. Their role is to provide guidance and support, helping organisations feel confident about meeting the requirements. After April 2027, they'll also check compliance and may issue notices or fines where needed, but their focus is on helping you get it right.



Standard duty premises

Venues where between 200 and 799 individuals (including staff) may reasonably be expected at the same time fall into the standard tier.

Places of worship will always be considered a standard tier premises, regardless of their maximum capacity for day-to-day events or functions. This applies across the full range of activities, from small services to large weddings, fetes or concerts.



Standard tier obligations

For places of worship, obligations focus primarily on procedural measures rather than physical alterations to the premises or buying and installing additional electronic security equipment. The expected public protection procedures include:

- **Evacuation** – safely guiding people out of the premises.
- **Invacuation** – moving people safely into the premises or to secure areas within it.
- **Lockdown** – securing the premises to restrict the entry of an attacker.
- **Communication** – alerting individuals on site to move away from danger.
- **Training and awareness** – ensuring staff and volunteers are adequately trained to implement these procedures and respond effectively in the event of a terrorist attack.

Link to your fire risk assessment

Since 1st October 2006, Places of Worship are required to undertake a Fire Risk Assessment in accordance with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. In Scotland fire safety duties are contained in part 3 of The Fire (Scotland) Act 2005, as amended and The Fire Safety (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

It's a good idea to link the new security steps with your existing fire safety plan. Doing so keeps things simple and makes your overall response clearer and easier to manage.

Making security part of your everyday life

Beyond compliance

Ecclesiastical recommend a positive approach to this legislation to help embed safety and security into your culture. While a standard tier venue may only need basic evacuation procedures and staff training, a more proactive approach might be to conduct live evacuation drills, to collaborate with local emergency services, and to learn from these useful exercises. Legal compliance is one step - but going further sends a powerful message about valuing life and community safety.

Empowering frontline people

A strong preparedness culture should be endorsed by your people. Frontline staff and volunteers are the first line of defence. Their calm, informed response during an emergency can be lifesaving. You should invest time in regular training to help them identify suspicious activity, understand escape procedures, and respond decisively under pressure.

Leadership commitment

Leadership support is vital. It is important to treat security as a core operational priority, not just a cost. This includes allocating time and resources for training, procedural reviews and drills. When leaders visibly support these efforts, staff and volunteers feel more confident and motivated. Open communication channels should be encouraged so concerns can be raised and addressed promptly.

Looking ahead

Places of worship have until April 2027 to comply with standard tier. The SIA has committed to providing guidance and support throughout the rollout, and many networks are already working together to share best practices.

Now is a good time for leaders to take the next step. By adopting Martyn's Law, places of worship can help keep their communities safe and welcoming, while honouring the memory of those we've lost.

You have until April 2027 to comply with the standard tier requirements

A **tiered approach** is linked to the number of people at the venue.

- **Standard duty premises:** Venues where 200–799 people may reasonably be expected.
- **Enhanced duty premises:** Venues expecting 800 or more individuals at any time.
- **Below 100 capacity:** Locations under 100 are outside the legislation, though all organisations are encouraged to adopt positive security practices voluntarily.

Places of worship are always considered standard duty premises, regardless of their day-to-day capacity. This applies across all activities, from small services to large weddings, fetes, or concerts.

Useful links

- **Ecclesiastical counter terrorism guidance**
- **Church of England – Safety and security in church buildings**
- **Protect UK – Martyn’s Law overview**
- **Gov.uk – Terrorism (protection of premises) Act 2025**
- **Pool Re – Religious sites – Sector terrorism threat assessment**

How to make a legal expenses claim?

The insurance is arranged by us in conjunction with ARAG Legal Expenses Insurance Company Limited. You must contact the ARAG Commercial Claims Department before taking any action. ARAG can be contacted on

0345 266 0029

www.ecclesiastical.com/legalexpenses

For further information, call us on

0345 777 3322

(Monday to Friday, 8am-6pm excluding bank holidays)
We may monitor or record calls to improve our service.

You can email us at

churchteam@ecclesiastical.com

Or visit

www.ecclesiastical.com/church

Other useful contacts

Risk advice line

0345 600 7531

risk.advice@ecclesiastical.com

Ecclesiastical Financial Advisory Services

0800 107 0190

www.ecclesiastical.com/getadvice

Ecclesiastical home insurance

0800 917 3345

www.ecclesiastical.com/churchworker

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