

Copyright Licence Essentials for Australian Celebrants

What copyright covers

Copyright protects literary works such as poems, readings, stories, prayers, articles and excerpts from books in Australian ceremonies.

Any time you copy, print, email, project, store, or communicate a copy of someone else's work, you are using copyright material.

Why celebrants need a licence

Ceremonies regularly involve:

- Poems emailed to families
- Readings included in scripts
- Slideshows or projected text
- Stored readings for future ceremonies
- Printed orders of service

These activities involve copying or communicating someone else's work.

Under the Copyright Act 1968 (Cth), permission is usually required.

A licence is a form of permission.

What the licence does not cover

- Song lyrics and sheet music
- Audio/sound recordings, broadcasts, film or music
- Copying entire books
- Stand-alone photographs or other artistic works
- Use outside Australia (the licence only covers use within Australia)

When you don't need a licence

- Your own creation
- Public domain works (very old texts)
- Works where the copyright owner has given permission
- Where an exception applies (not likely to apply to ceremonies)

Quick examples

COVERED:

- Readings for weddings and funerals
- Emailing a poem to a family
- Printing readings for a funeral
- Including a copy of a reading in your ceremony script

NOT COVERED:

- Printing song lyrics
- Copying a whole book
- Posting a poem on social media or a website