

# Playing & Performing Music in Church

This FACT FILE has been created by CCLI as a guide to the copyright implications for playing and performing music in a public place such as your church building. If you do not find all the information you need in this FACT FILE, please visit [www.ccli.co.uk](http://www.ccli.co.uk) or contact CCLI (details overleaf).

## COPYRIGHT AND THE LAW

Those playing or performing music in churches are responsible for ensuring that copyright permission has been obtained before any performance takes place.

## MUSIC PERFORMANCE

There are two distinct types of music performance that may take place during your church activities:

- **Live Performance** - when an individual or group of people sing and/or play musical instruments in a public place, such as a church building or open-air event.
- **Sound Recordings** - when music is played from a mechanical format such as a CD, cassette or MP3 player etc. in a public place. This includes background music used in coffee mornings, youth groups, parent/toddler groups and music contained on the soundtrack of a DVD/Video. etc.

## LICENSING ORGANISATIONS

- **PRS For Music** - represents the rights of composers, copyright owners and music publishers in the live performances and sound recordings played in a public place. Music played through media such as radio, TV and streamed directly from the Internet is also included. Sound recordings are currently protected by copyright for 50 years, however a recent change in legislation means that this is due to be increased to 70 years.
- **Phonographic Performance Ltd (PPL)** - represents the rights of performers and record companies for the public performance and broadcast of sound recordings and music videos.
- **Christian Copyright Licensing International (CCLI)** - acts as an agent to both PRS for Music and PPL to license churches for playing/performing live and pre-recorded music. For details and licence fees visit [www.ccli.co.uk](http://www.ccli.co.uk).

## MUSIC WITHIN WORSHIP

Music which is played or performed within an act of divine worship (either live or from a sound recording) currently does not require the cover of a licence because both PPL and PRS for Music choose not to charge for this activity. The term "act of divine worship" includes all main Sunday services, special festivals, weddings & funerals. This exception does not include civic Christmas carol concerts or any other public performance.

Copyright is an intellectual property right given to the creators of original musical, literary and dramatic works. The Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (CDPA) is the legislation that currently operates in the UK and provides the creator with two main rights:

- **Economic** - this allows the creator to charge anyone who wishes to copy, perform or record their work for any commercial or non-commercial use.
- **Moral** - this allows the creator to protect their work from any change which might be considered offensive or not in keeping with their wishes.

## COPYRIGHT LICENCES

If music is performed live or played from a sound recording on your church premises, outside acts of worship, then your church is required to hold the appropriate performance licences.

Activity	Licence Required
If live music is performed outside acts of worship	PRS for Music Church Licence
If sound recordings are played outside acts of worship	PRS for Music Church Licence PPL Church Licence

**PRS for Music Church Licence** - available from CCLI, this provides cover for your church to play live music outside acts of worship. If you hold more than six concerts or recitals per year your premises may be deemed a 'concert venue' and you will need to contact PRS for Music direct.

This licence also, in-part, covers your church for the public performance of sound recordings outside acts of worship, but a PPL Church Licence will also be required. Both licences are required because PRS for Music and PPL each represent the performance rights of different groups and organisations associated with the sound recording.

**PPL Church Licence** - available from CCLI, this provides cover for your church to play music from sound recordings (CD, DVD, cassette etc.) during church activities, outside acts of worship. A PRS for Music Church Licence is also required. No dubbing rights are included in the PPL Church Licence.

Note: Neither of these licences is currently required for sound recordings if they are only played during acts of worship.

## MUSIC ON HOLD

If your church plays music on its phone system whilst callers are on hold, the PRS for Music Church Licence and the PPL Church Licence cover this activity.

## SEPARATE CHURCH BUILDING/HALL

If your church hall is an integral part of your church building, then a PRS for Music Church Licence will cover the entire premises - church and hall. However, if your church hall is a separate building from the main church premises (eg a community building or school hall), then you may need an additional licence from PRS for Music directly. Details can be found at [www.ccli.co.uk/playing-music](http://www.ccli.co.uk/playing-music)

## MUSICALS

Musicals are protected by a provision called Grand Rights, which protects all the aspects of a musical, including lyrics, performance, choreography etc. and as such they fall outside the scope of PRS for Music. Therefore, you will need to obtain permission from the production company to perform the musical.

## REPORTING USAGE

You do not need to report the use of songs played or performed under the terms of your PRS for Music Church Licence. Reporting is required for the PPL Church Licence – this process will be included in your CopyReport software.

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*The information included in this Fact File is provided for information purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. If in doubt you should consult a legal expert. Whilst CCLI aims to provide information that is accurate, CCLI accepts no responsibility for any errors or omissions in the information provided.*

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