

GENERAL INFORMATION

When a marriage ceremony is performed in Maine, there are certain procedures that must be followed by the officiant. The State Registrar or municipal clerk who issued the license will have already made sure that the parties to be married have complied with the laws of Maine. However, there are several duties for which the person performing the marriage (officiant) is directly responsible:

1. The parties to be married must present a valid State of Maine marriage license to the officiant.
2. The officiant should verify the identity of the parties prior to performing the ceremony. Marriage by proxy is not permitted in the State of Maine.
3. The officiant must review the license to ensure that the parties' signatures are present and that the license has not expired.
4. Once the marriage has been performed, the officiant must have the two witnesses sign the license.
5. The officiant must complete the ceremony section of the marriage license and file the completed license with the State Registrar or the municipal clerk who issued the license within 7 working days.
6. The officiant must keep a copy of the completed marriage license that was filed with the State Registrar or municipal clerk.



Please remember, BLACK INK is preferred when completing the marriage license.

It should be clearly understood by all parties and officiants that there are severe penalties for violation of the laws that relate to vital records. A marriage certificate is a vital record. It is an important legal document. All parties and officiants should be aware of the laws about performing marriage ceremonies and their responsibilities.

The parties to be married are responsible for obtaining a copy of the marriage license and presenting it to the officiant prior to the ceremony. Once the officiant receives the marriage license from the parties, the license is then the responsibility of the officiant.

A Maine marriage license is valid for 90 days from the date the intentions are filed. The marriage license may not be used outside the State of Maine, nor does a license issued by another State or Country authorize marriage in Maine.

PERSONS AUTHORIZED TO SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGES IN MAINE

- If the officiant is a resident of this state:
 1. A justice or judge;
 2. A lawyer admitted to the Maine Bar; or
 3. A marriage officiant licensed under Title 5, section 90-G
- Whether the officiant is a resident or nonresident of this State and whether or not a citizen of the United States:
 1. An ordained minister of the gospel;
 2. A cleric engaged in the service of the religious body to which the cleric belongs; or
 3. A person licensed to preach by an association of ministers, religious seminary or ecclesiastical body.
- A nonresident of Maine who has a temporary registration certificate issued by the Maine CDC vital records office.

BEFORE THE CEREMONY

Verify the identity of the parties, make sure the license has not expired, and the parties have signed the marriage license.

The parties' signatures on the marriage license may be obtained at the time the marriage license is issued by the State Registrar or municipal clerk, or in the presence of the marriage officiant at the time the marriage is solemnized. It is recommended to check with the State Registrar or the municipal clerk to see what the policy is and if an appointment may be needed (or required).

The marriage license is valid for 90 days (not three months) from the date of filing.

The age of consent in Maine is 18 years of age for both the parties to be married. The officiant should not perform the marriage if there is reason to believe that either of the parties is under the age of 18 and there is not written consent of the parents that shows permission has been granted.

Once the parties have obtained a copy of their marriage license, they are free to marry anywhere within the State of Maine.

The residence of the parties to be married determines where the intentions of marriage may be filed:

- a) If both the parties reside in Maine, in the same municipality, then the license must be obtained from the State Registrar or their municipal office.
- b) If both the parties reside in Maine, in separate municipalities, then the license must be obtained from the State Registrar or one of their municipal offices (they do not have to file in both).
- c) If either party resides in the State of Maine, and the other is a non-resident of Maine, then the license must be obtained from the State Registrar or the municipal office where the Maine resident resides.
- d) If both parties reside outside the State of Maine, then the license must be obtained from the State Registrar or from any municipal office in the State of Maine.

AFTER THE CEREMONY

After the ceremony, the officiant must complete the 'ceremony' section of each marriage license. Please print or type all information clearly except for signatures fields. Necessary signatures include those of the parties, officiant, and the two witnesses.

Two witnesses must be present during the ceremony and sign the marriage license in the State of Maine. The officiant **CANNOT** be a witness. Witnesses do not have to be 18 years of age. They must be able to read, write and understand what they are signing.

***NOTE: Do not add or correct any information already on the license. All corrections must be done through a legal process at the Maine CDC vital records office.**

After the ceremony section of the license is completed, the **officiant must return the marriage license** to the State Registrar or the municipality where the license was issued within **seven working days** after the marriage took place. The completed license is to be either mailed or delivered personally by the officiant. Under no circumstances should this duty be assigned to the individuals who are married or any member of the wedding party.

Don't forget to keep a copy of the completed marriage license for every marriage solemnized.

QUESTIONS?

If any questions arise that are not covered in this pamphlet, please feel free to contact this office at:

Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention

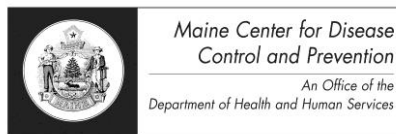
(Maine CDC)
Vital Records Office
220 Capitol Street
11 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
(207) 287-6490

DHHS

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To order additional copies of this publication or if you have questions about the content, please call: Maine CDC, Data, Research, and Vital Statistics at 207-287-5500. "TTY users call Maine relay 711".



R 08/2023

A GUIDE FOR OFFICIANTS

PERFORMING A MARRIAGE CEREMONY



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