

INFORMATION ABOUT MARRIAGE LICENSE, CEREMONY AND CERTIFICATE

A person may not be joined in marriage in this state until a license has been obtained. No marriage is valid without solemnization (that is, a marriage ceremony). There is no common-law marriage in Alaska.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A MARRIAGE LICENSE

These instructions describe how to apply for a license at a court. You can also apply at a Vital Statistics office (in person or by mail). The application form is on the website of the Bureau of Vital Statistics: www.vitalrecords.alaska.gov.

1. Application Form.

Before a marriage license can be issued, an application must be completed. Each party must fill out part of the application form. If either party is out of town or out of state, contact the court for further instructions.

2. Waiting Period.

The waiting period is three days. It begins when either party applies by completing his/her part of the form at the court. The license can be issued on the FOURTH day. Both parties must complete and sign the form before a license will be issued.

3. Age Requirement.

Both parties must be at least 18 years old (or legally emancipated or a member of the armed forces of the United States on active duty).

If either party is 16 or 17 years of age, the written consent of the minor's (1) parents, (2) legal guardian or (3) parent who has actual care, custody and control of the minor is required. If only one parent has actual custody, proof of custody (divorce decree, custody order or death certificate) may be required. A certified copy of a birth certificate showing parentage may be required.

If either party is 14 or 15 years of age, a court order is required before the application can be made. Check with the court for more information. A person under the age of 14 may not marry in Alaska for any reason.

4. Identification.

Before the license is issued, each party may be required to present official picture identification showing name and birth date. A birth certificate is not sufficient.

5. Prior Marriages.

If either party has been married before, the name of the former spouse, the date and place of marriage and the date and place the marriage ended are required. If the marriage ended within the past 60 days, a copy of the divorce decree, signed by the judge, or a death certificate may be required before the license will be issued.

6. Blood Test.

No blood test is required.

7. Cost.

The cost of the license is \$60.00. It must be paid when the license is issued. The license must be used within 90 days. It can be used anywhere in Alaska.

MARRIAGE CEREMONY

8. Who Can Perform Ceremony.

A marriage ceremony may be solemnized (performed) by

- a. A minister, priest, or rabbi of any church or congregation in the state, or by a commissioned officer of the Salvation Army, or by the principal officer or elder of recognized churches or congregations that traditionally do not have regular ministers, priests, or rabbis.
- b. A judicial officer of the state anywhere within the state. Ceremonies may be scheduled at the Courthouse. Ceremonies are by appointment only, at the court, and only during regular business hours (8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.). Cost is \$25.00. You must bring two witnesses with you to the ceremony.
- c. A marriage commissioner appointed by the presiding judge of the judicial district.

An adult private citizen may obtain an appointment as a marriage commissioner. The appointment will be limited to performing a ceremony for two designated persons on a specified day at a specified place within the judicial district. The appointment order is valid only as completed. If any fact such as the date changes, a new appointment must be obtained. Every ceremony done by a marriage commissioner requires a separate appointment.

The cost to appoint a marriage commissioner is \$25.00. To apply for one, contact this court. The request for appointment as marriage commissioner must be made in person by the person wishing to be appointed. Alaska residence is not required. Picture ID may be requested. A sample marriage ceremony and an instruction sheet for completing the marriage certificate after the ceremony will be provided to the person appointed.

9. Multiple Ceremonies.

If a religious ceremony is to follow a civil ceremony, only one license is needed.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

10. Recording the Marriage Certificate

After the marriage ceremony, it is the responsibility of the person who performed the ceremony to return the completed marriage certificate to the Bureau of Vital Statistics at 5441 Commercial Blvd., Juneau, AK 99801. This must be done within seven days of the ceremony.

11. Certified Copies of Marriage Certificate.

After you are married, you may buy certified copies of your marriage certificate from the Bureau of Vital Statistics at their Juneau or Anchorage office. Instructions and a request form are available on the Bureau's website: www.vitalrecords.alaska.gov Please allow at least one week for the person who performed the ceremony to file the certificate with the Bureau.

The fee for certified copies is \$30.00 for the first copy and \$25 for each additional copy ordered at the same time. The \$60.00 fee for issuance of the license does not include the cost of a certified copy of the certificate.

The decorative certificates provided with the license cannot be used as proof of marriage.