

Getting Married / Civil Union in New Jersey

- New Jersey Department of Health & Senior Services
- Vital Statistics
- P O Box 370
- Trenton, NJ 08625-0370

If you are getting married in New Jersey, you will find this information helpful to you and your future partner in planning your Ceremony. Read it carefully, if you have any questions please contact your local Registrar of Vital Statistics. If you plan to have your Ceremony in Township of Lower, please contact the Registrar of Vital Statistics, registrar@townshipoflower.org Patricia Harbora, at 609-886-2005 ext. 112.

Where should you apply for a marriage / civil union license?

If the either partner is a resident of New Jersey, the marriage license must be obtained from the Registrar of Vital Statistics in the municipality where either partner lives. If one partner is a non-resident of New Jersey and the other partner is a resident of New Jersey, the license must be obtained from the Registrar in the municipality in which the partner resides in New Jersey. (For marriage / Civil Union license purposes, soldiers are residents of the posts at which they are stationed.) A license issued under either of the preceding circumstances is good for use anywhere in New Jersey. If both Partners are nonresidents of New Jersey, the license must be obtained from the Registrar of the municipality where the Ceremony is to be performed and is only good for use in that municipality. A license may never be used outside of New Jersey and a license issued in another state may never be used in New Jersey. Be sure to contact the Registrar well in advance of the wedding to find out on what days and during what hours the Registrar will be in the office. The license fee is \$28.00.

Who can perform a marriage / civil union ceremony?

According to state law, judges of a Federal District Court, United States magistrates, judges of a Municipal Court, judges of the Superior Court, judges of a Tax Court, retired judges of the Superior Court or Tax Court, or judge of the Superior Court or Tax Court who has resigned in good standing, and any mayor or deputy mayor, village president of New Jersey, County Clerks, and every minister of every religion may solemnize a marriage.

When should you apply for a marriage / civil union license?

A local Registrar will not issue a license sooner than 72 hours after the application for a marriage license has been made, unless ordered to do so via an appropriate court order. If the marriage is scheduled for a Saturday or Sunday, the application should be made no later than the preceding Tuesday. If the application is made on a Wednesday or Thursday, the 72 hours will end on Saturday or Sunday, but the Registrar will probably not be available on those days or any public holiday. If both the partners are unavailable to complete the application at the same time, either applicant may complete his/her part of the application and start the waiting period.

The other applicant must return with the same witness (who must be at least 18 years old) to complete his/her part of the application. Both parties must complete the application before the license will be issued. Once the license is issued, it is good for 30 days from the date of issuance. A couple wishing to have both religious and civil ceremonies may be issued a license for both ceremonies on the basis of a single application. However, a couple wishing to have two religious ceremonies, and wanting to have a public record of each, may not have two licenses issued at the same time. They must apply for and use the first license. They must then return to the Registrar with signed original certificate of the marriage and a witness to apply for a remarriage license.

What should you bring with you when you apply?

A witness, who must be at least 18 years of age. Two forms of identification, preferably a birth certificate and including at least one photo ID. For example, you may use a birth certificate, state issued driver's license, employment issued ID, a passport, a voter's registration card, a U.S. military card. If one or both of the applicants are divorced, you should bring a copy of the final decree or decrees for examination by the Registrar or a statement by the judge as to when the final decree was signed (not the date of the final hearing). Both the bride and groom will provide their Social Security numbers (Married Persons Title 37:117). Consent of both parents is necessary if an applicant is under 18 years of age. Both parental consents and judicial approval of such consents are necessary if the applicant is younger than 16. These consents should be on forms supplied by the Registrar.

Where should the marriage / civil union record be filed?

The officiant performing the ceremony must file the license and marriage certificate with the Registrar of the municipality in which the marriage was performed. Since failure to record the marriage may cause considerable inconvenience at a later date when proof of marriage is needed, you should make sure that this has been done. Certified copies of the marriage event may be obtained from the local Registrar in the municipality where the ceremony occurred or from the Office of the State Registrar of Vital Statistics.