

CIVIL REQUIREMENTS

GENERAL

Persons wishing to be married in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas must obtain a marriage license from the Government of The Commonwealth of The Bahamas. Couples coming from outside of the Bahamas must be in the Bahamas for one (1) day before application for a marriage license can be made.

Application forms for a marriage license are available in the parishes throughout the Archdiocese of Nassau. The priest or deacon who has agreed to assist at your wedding will help you fill out the application form. After this form has been filled out and signed, the couple must bring it to the Registrar General's Office along with your passports, birth certificates or a valid driver's license. At present, the fee for the local marriage license in The Bahamas is \$100.00 US Dollars.

A. BAHAMIANS

I. Both parties must appear before the Registrar General (in Nassau or Freeport) or Family Island Administrator for that district, and must present photo identification in the form of either a voter's card or a passport – an approved civil service identification card or government corporation identification card is also acceptable (along with a certified copy of the birth certificate).

II. If either party is divorced then that party must present before the Registrar (or Administrator) a certified copy of their divorce decree absolute and final. The certified copy will be retrieved by the Registrar General.

III. If either party is widowed then the individual must present a certified copy of the spouse's death certificate. It is essential that the surviving spouse's name be printed on the certificate as the spouse of the deceased.

B. US CITIZENS

For identification: U.S. Citizens can present passport, State or Federal identification cards or a birth certificate and valid driver's license.

I. If either parties are single and never married, then they must obtain an affidavit to that effect, sworn before any Notary Public or Justice of the Peace here in The Bahamas.

II. If either party is divorced he/she must present a certified copy of the Decree Final (not a photocopy). This document will be retained and kept by the Registrar General. This document must be certified by the court or registry where it was issued – an Attorney or Notary Public cannot certify the divorce document.

III. If widowed, the surviving spouse must present a certified copy of the spouse's death certificate, which should make mention of the applicant as being the surviving spouse. In some jurisdictions the death certificate does not include a provision for the surviving spouse; in these cases we allow the applicants to swear to an affidavit (before a notary public here in the Bahamas) stating that although his/her name does not appear on the certificate, that he/she was indeed the spouse of the deceased.

C. CANADIANS

For identification: Canadian citizens can present a passport or birth certificate and a picture driver's license.

I. If either parties are single and never married, then they can present an affidavit from a Canadian Solicitor/Commissioner for Oaths.

II. If either party is divorced he/she must present a certified copy of the Decree Final (not a photocopy). This document will be retained and kept by the Registrar

General. This document must be certified by the court or registry where it was issued – an Attorney or Notary Public cannot certify the divorce document.

III. If widowed, the surviving spouse must present a certified copy of the spouse's death certificate, which should make mention of the applicant as being the surviving spouse. In some jurisdictions the death certificate does not include a provision for the surviving spouse; in these cases we allow the applicants to swear to an affidavit (before a notary public here in the Bahamas) stating that although his/her name does not appear on the certificate, that he/she was indeed the spouse of the deceased. He/she may also present an official death certificate as issued by the undertaker or funeral home (this is the accepted official practice in some areas of Canada).

D. UK AND THE COMMONWEALTH CITIZENS

For identification: UK and Commonwealth citizens can present official passports.

I. If either parties are single and never married, then they can present an affidavit from a Solicitor.

II. If either party is divorced then that party must present before the Registrar (or Administrator) a certified copy of their divorce decree absolute and final. The certified copy will be retrieved by the Registrar General.

III. If either party is widowed then the individual must present a certified copy of the spouse's death certificate. It is essential that the surviving spouse's name be printed on the certificate as the spouse of the deceased.

E. JAMAICANS

For identification: Jamaican citizens can present passports or travel documents. If they have valid work permits, a copy should be presented (original copy will not be kept), but it is not mandatory.

I. If either parties are single and never married, then they can present an affidavit from the Jamaican Consul here in Nassau.

II. If either party is divorced then that party must present before the Registrar (or Administrator) a certified copy of their divorce decree absolute and final. The certified copy will be retrieved by the Registrar General.

III. If either party is widowed then the individual must present a certified copy of the spouse's death certificate. It is essential that the surviving spouse's name be printed on the certificate as the spouse of the deceased.

F. HAITIANS

For identification: Haitian citizens can present passports or travel documents. If they have valid work permits, a copy should be presented (original copy will not be kept) but it is not mandatory.

I. If either parties are single and never married, then they can present an affidavit from the Haitian Embassy.

II. If either party is divorced then that party must present before the Registrar (or Administrator) a certified copy of their divorce decree absolute and final. The certified copy will be retrieved by the Registrar General.

III. If either party is widowed then the individual must present a certified copy of the spouse's death certificate. It is essential that the surviving spouse's name be printed on the certificate as the spouse of the deceased.

G. EUROPEANS

For identification: most European countries – passport

Please note that in most European countries there is a system of registration called “The Family Register” where vital information regarding births, deaths, marriages, divorces, places of residency of each individual are kept in one central place.

We will accept certified copies of entries in these registers as proof of single, divorced and widowed status. Divorcees can also present certified copies of their Final Divorce Decrees.

If the certified copy of any document is in a language other than English, then the applicants must present both the original as well as the certified translation which must be under oath and authenticated (by apostille).

If there are any questions concerning these Civil Requirements, please write to the:

Registrar General
PO Box N532
Nassau, NP
The Bahamas

OR

Tel: (242) 322-8038