

A Maryland Judiciary Production

My Laws, My Courts, My Maryland

Circuit Court Topics –

Title: How to Apply for a Marriage License

.

CHAPTER HEADINGS

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Let's Review

Hello. This video is about how to apply for a marriage license. First, let me say congratulations on your upcoming wedding. This is an exciting time, and I'm here to make the legal part as easy as possible. In this video, you will learn where to go to apply for a license, what you need to bring with you, the paperwork you need to complete, and when you can perform the ceremony. This is super exciting, Let's get started.

First, we will talk about Who Can Marry.

Chapter Heading: Who Can Marry ?

You may apply for a marriage license if you and your future spouse are 18 years old or older, are not closely related and are not currently married to another person. People under age 17 may not get married in Maryland.

If you are 17 years old, you may petition the court for authorization to marry under certain circumstances. Contact the clerk of the court or visit a Maryland Court Help Center for more information before you apply.

Now that we have that sorted out you need to know where to apply.

Chapter Heading: Where to Apply

You can apply for a marriage license at the circuit court clerk's office located in the courthouse in the Maryland county or city your marriage ceremony will take place. This is very important because the courthouse closest to you, may not be the correct location. It is best to appear in person to apply for the license. You may be able to apply without going to the courthouse depending on your situation. If you are unable to apply in person, call the clerk's office for further instructions.

Now let's discuss what to bring with you when you apply.

Chapter Heading: What to Bring When you Apply

Is your partner busy and unable to accompany you to apply in person? The good news is, only one party is required to apply for a marriage license. Make sure to bring the correct information for both individuals getting married. This includes:

- Each party's full legal name
- Age
- State and Country of birth
- Current address, and
- Social Security Number.

You will also need to bring official birth certificates or other official government-issued documents showing the age of both people to be married. This could be a driver's license.

Additionally, if either party was previously married, you will need to bring:

- The date of divorce along with the county and state where the divorce was granted.
- Or if the marriage ended because of death, the date of death, and name of the county and state where death occurred.

Lastly, be prepared to pay an application fee. Fees vary from county to county as well as acceptable forms of payment. Call the court or check the clerk's office website for more information.

Now, let's talk about Your Marriage Application and License

Chapter Heading: Your Marriage Application and License

When you go to the courthouse, the clerk will give you a marriage license application to complete. Or, they will ask a series of questions to complete the paperwork for you in the marriage license system, using the information discussed earlier in the video. Review the information provided for accuracy. You will then be asked to take an oath affirming that the information you provided to the clerk is true to the best of your knowledge and belief. If you cannot go to the court, you may be able to apply by mail using a non-resident affidavit. Call the court or check the clerk's office website for further instructions about how to do this.

Once the clerk accepts the completed application and fee, they will give you back three papers: the original marriage license, the officiant's copy, and a copy to be returned to the clerk after the marriage has taken place. Once this is returned, the marriage record will be complete. Each form is clearly marked so you know where it goes. You are now one step closer to getting married, but don't go down the aisle

yet! A license is not effective until 6:00 a.m. on the second calendar day after the license is issued. For example, if you plan to marry on a Saturday the license must be issued by close of business on the preceding Thursday. The license will expire 6 months after it is issued.

OK, NOW we can discuss the ceremony.

Chapter Heading: The Ceremony

You have a couple of options. You can ask the court to perform the ceremony. If you do, you will be instructed to return on a specific day where a judge, clerk, or deputy clerk will perform the ceremony. There is an additional fee for this service. Contact the clerk's office in the county or city where the ceremony is to take place for questions regarding ceremony fees.

Your other option is to arrange a ceremony yourself. In this case, you must choose someone to officiate the ceremony. This person must be an official of a religious group and authorized by the rules and customs of the group to perform the ceremony. Bring the marriage license and several copies with you to the ceremony. Ask your officiant to complete all paperwork. Instructions are printed on the forms. Finally, return the completed copies to the court. You may request a certified copy of the marriage license for a fee from the court.

OK, where almost there, Let's Review

Chapter Heading: Let's Review

Apply for your marriage license at the circuit court clerk's office in the county or city where the ceremony will take place. Only one person needs to bring information about both parties and be prepared to pay the application fee. The license cannot be used right away. You can return to the courthouse on a later date for a civil ceremony or bring the license to an official of a religious group

authorized by the rules and customs of the group to perform the ceremony. Complete the license following the instructions provided on the form and return the appropriate copy to the courthouse. If you have any questions, call the circuit court.

Again, congratulations on your plans to tie the knot. Thanks for watching ,and I hope this information has been helpful.