New Jersey Department of Health
Office of Vital Statistics and Registry
PO Box 370
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0370

ENTERING INTO A MARRIAGE OR CIVIL UNION IN NEWJERSEY

If you are entering into a Marriage or Civil Union in New Jersey, you will find information in this brochure which will be helpful to you. Read it carefully. If you have any questions, please contact your local Registrar of Vital Statistics. A list of local Registrars is available at: www.nj.gov/health/vital/regbycnty.shtml.

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

The marriage or civil union license must be obtained from the registrar in the New Jersey municipality in which either applicant resides, if one or both is resident of New Jersey. (For these purposes, soldiers are residents of the posts at which they are stationed.) A license issued under the preceeding circumstances is good for use anywhere in the State of New Jersey.

If both parties are not residents 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 New Jersey marriage or civil union license may never be used outside of the State of New Jersey and a license issued in another state may never be used within the State of New Jersey.

Be sure to contact the Registrar well in advance of the ceremony to find out on what days and during what hours the Registrar will be in the office. ***The marriage or civil union license fee is $28.00.***

Who can perform a marriage or civil union ceremony?

Each judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit, each judge of a federal district court, United States magistrate, judge of a municipal court, judge of the Superior Court, judge of a tax court, retired judge of the Superior Court or Tax Court, or judge of the Superior Court or Tax Court, the former County Court, the former County Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court, or the former County District Court who has resigned in good standing, surrogate of any county, county clerk and any mayor or the deputy mayor when authorized by the mayor, or chairman of any township committee or village president of this State, and every minister of every religion, are hereby authorized to solemnize marriages or civil unions between such persons as may lawfully enter into the matrimonial relation or civil union; and every religious society, institution or organization in this State may join together in marriage or civil union such persons according to the rules and customs of the society, institution or organization (Title 37:1-13).

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

A local Registrar will not issue a marriage or civil union license sooner than 72 hours after the application for a license has been made, unless ordered to do so via a Superior Court order. If the ceremony 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 parties 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.

The application must be completed by both parties before the license will be issued. The application is valid for six months from the date filed.

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 the signed original certificate and a witness to apply for a remarriage or reaffirmation of civil union license.

What should you bring with you when you apply?

Required documents when applying for a marriage license:

1. Proof of identify by presenting your driver's license, passport or state/federal ID.
2. Proof of your residency.
3. Your social security card or social security number.*
4. A witness, 18 years of age or older.
5. The $28 application fee.

*Social security number is required by law for U.S. citizens and will be kept confidential.

Any documents in a foreign language must be accompanied by a certified English translation.

Requested additional documents (these documents are helpful but not required):

1. A copy of your birth certificate to establish your parents' names and related birth information.
2. If you are divorced, have had a previous civil union dissolved, domestic partnership terminated or have had a marriage or a civil union annulled, please bring the decree(s) or the annulment documents.
3. If your former spouse/civil union or domestic partner is deceased, please bring the death certificate.

Each applicant must supply valid identification that establishes name, age, date of birth and proof of residency. This may be supplied by one or more documents issued by a government agency, such as a certified copy of a birth certificate, driver's license, military identification, passport or state/county identification card.

Where should the marriage or civil union record be filed?

The person performing the ceremony must file the license and certificate with the Registrar of the municipality in which the ceremony was performed. Since failure to record the certificate may cause considerable inconvenience at a later date when proof of certificate is needed, you should make sure that this has been done.

Certified copies of the marriage or civil union event may be obtained from the local Registrar in the municipality where the ceremony occurred or from the State Office of Vital Statistics and Registry.