

MARRIAGE IN NORTHERN IRELAND

GUIDANCE NOTES TO HELP YOU COMPLETE THE MARRIAGE NOTICE APPLICATION FORM

(These notes are not part of the Notice Form prescribed under the Marriage (NI) Order 2003)

If you are planning to be married in Northern Ireland, please read these notes carefully.

NOTE 1 - HOW AND WHEN TO GIVE NOTICE.

To help you complete Section A1.

Fill in your proposed date of marriage at A1. Remember that by law both parties to a proposed religious or civil marriage must submit marriage notice forms to the registrar of the district in which the marriage is to take place, informing the registrar of their intention to marry. Notice must be given in the twelve month period prior to the date of marriage and **NOT LATER THAN 14 DAYS BEFORE THE DATE OF MARRIAGE.**

Timing is important. You must submit the notices early enough to enable the registrar to be satisfied that you are free to marry one another. Normally notices should be with the registrar about eight weeks before the marriage but if either of you has been married before, the notices should be with the registrar ten weeks beforehand. **The minimum period is 14 days before the date of the proposed marriage, but if you leave things as late as this you could be faced with the need to postpone your marriage.** Only in exceptional circumstances will the Registrar General authorise a marriage to take place if 14 days' notice has not been given. It is important to make early arrangements for the date and time of your marriage. If you are having a **religious** ceremony contact the officiant who is to take the service, before completing the notice of marriage. For a **civil** marriage make advance arrangements with the registrar. This is particularly important in towns and cities, where large numbers of people want to be married at certain times of the year.

Although you need not both attend personally at the registrar's office to hand in your marriage notice, at least one of you must attend there personally before the marriage. You will need, in the case of a religious marriage, to collect the Marriage Schedule (see 8 below) or, in the case of a civil marriage, to finalise arrangements with the registrar. One of you may need to attend personally because the registrar may require further information before the marriage can proceed. You should note that if it is not clear from your marriage notice form the registrar might ask whether your parents were married. This is to enable registrars to insert your mother's maiden surname appropriately in your marriage schedule.

When you give notice you will be required to sign a declaration to the effect that the information given on your notice is correct. Do not delay giving notice simply because you are waiting for any of the documents mentioned at note 6 to come to hand. If time is getting short it is better to give notice first and then pass the documents to the registrar when they become available; but they must be made available to the registrar before the marriage can proceed as arranged.

NOTE 2 - PLACE OF MARRIAGE.

To help you complete Section A2.

Each of you must submit a marriage notice, along with the required documents (see below) and the appropriate fee, to the **registrar for the district in which the marriage is to take place.**

You can obtain marriage notice forms, and information about what the marriage will cost, from any registrar of births, deaths and marriages. You can get the address of your local registrar from the phone book. - See under 'Registration'.

Civil Marriages may be solemnised in the registrars' offices or in places which have been approved by the district councils. A list of approved places in each registration district where civil marriages may be solemnised may be obtained from the district registrars. A full list of approved places for Northern Ireland may be obtained from the General Register Office.

Religious Marriages, with the approval of the Religious Body, may be solemnised anywhere in Northern Ireland. If you are intending to marry by religious ceremony, the notice form should be **delivered/posted** to the registrar of the district in which the marriage is to be solemnised.

NOTE 3 - MARITAL/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP STATUS

To help you complete Section B.

Any two persons, regardless of where they live, may marry in Northern Ireland provided that:

- both persons are at least 18 years of age on the day of their marriage or persons over 16 and under 18 years of age have obtained the necessary consent for marriage;
- they are not related to one another in a way which would prevent their marrying - if in doubt please consult the local registrar;
- they are unmarried (any person who has already been married must produce documentary evidence that the previous marriage has been ended by death, divorce or annulment);
- they are not part of any civil partnership (any person who has already been in a civil partnership must produce documentary evidence that the previous civil partnership has ended);
- they are not of the same sex;
- they are capable of understanding the nature of a marriage ceremony and consenting to marrying.

NOTE 4 - THE OFFICIANT.
To help you complete Section E.

A religious marriage, may be solemnised only by a religious Officiant authorised to do so under the Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. You should contact an officiant to confirm that s(he) is willing to solemnise your marriage and the officiant should sign one of the notice forms before notice is given to the registrar.

NOTE 5 - OTHER PARTY TO THE MARRIAGE.
To help you complete Section F.

Each of you must complete a marriage notice to be submitted to the registrar.

NOTE 6 - DOCUMENTS YOU WILL NEED TO PRODUCE.
To help you complete Section G.

When giving or sending the marriage notice forms to the registrar each of you must supply the following documents:

- G26 Your genuine **full birth certificate (long version) and passport**. An authorised photocopy is not acceptable. If you are unable to produce your birth certificate, state the reason.
- G27 If you have been married before and the marriage was dissolved, a certificate of **divorce** or **annulment** or a certified copy decree. If you have previously formed a civil partnership, a court order of **dissolution of the civil partnership**. A decree of divorce must be absolute or final - a decree nisi is not acceptable. If you have been married more than once, only the document relating to the termination of the most recent marriage is required. If you are unable to produce the official decree of divorce or annulment, state the reason for not doing so. The registrar will require proof of the termination of the earlier marriage.
- G28 If you are a **widow, widower or surviving civil partner** the **death certificate** of your former spouse/civil partner. If you are unable to produce a death certificate of your previous spouse, state the reason for doing so. The registrar may require proof of the death.

NOTE 7 - NATIONALITY.

Your **Passport**.

If you are a citizen of a non European Economic Area, living in the United Kingdom and you have not been granted permission to remain in the UK, you must produce a **Certificate of Approval** which can be obtained from the Home Office:-
Telephone Number: 0870 6067766.
Website: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk

If you are a citizen of a non European Economic Area and reside outside the United Kingdom, you should apply for a marriage visitor/fiancé(e) visa from the Nearest British Embassy, High Commission or Consul in your area.

If any document is in a language other than English, you must also provide a certified translation into English

NOTE 8 - MARRIAGE SCHEDULE

When the registrar is satisfied there is no legal impediment to the marriage, he or she will prepare a Marriage Schedule from the information you have given. It is a most important document - **no marriage ceremony can proceed without the Schedule.**

If you are having a religious marriage, the registrar will issue the Marriage Schedule to you. The registrar cannot issue the Schedule more than 14 days before the marriage and will advise you when to call to collect it. **The Schedule cannot be collected on your behalf by a relative or friend - the registrar will issue it only to the prospective bride or bridegroom.**

The Marriage Schedule must be produced before the marriage ceremony to the person solemnising the marriage. Immediately after the ceremony the Schedule must be signed by both spouses, by the person solemnising the marriage and by the two witnesses. Thereafter you must arrange for it to **be returned to the registrar within three days** so that the marriage can be registered.

If you are having a civil marriage the registrar will not issue the Marriage Schedule to you in advance, but will have it available at the marriage ceremony for signature, and will subsequently register the marriage.

For a civil marriage you will need to pay the appropriate fee to the registrar before the ceremony.

NOTE 9

Be sure to let the officiant or the registrar know if you change your plans or decide to postpone your marriage.

For further information contact any local registrar of births, deaths and marriages - or Marriage Section, General Register Office, Oxford House, 49 - 55 Chichester Street, Belfast BT1 4HL. Telephone: 028 9025 2000. Email: groreg.nisra@dfpni.gov.uk

NOTE:- Forms and documents should be sent to the registrar in the district where the proposed marriage is to take place and not to Marriage Section, General Register Office.

MARRIAGE NOTICE APPLICATION FORM

(Marriage (Northern Ireland) Order 2003)

Must be served on the Registrar at least 14 days before the date of the intended marriage.

A About the Intended Marriage

1. Date of marriage	Day	Month	Year
2. Place of marriage			

This space for Registrar's use only Marriage Notice Reference
..... Date documents returned
.....

B About Yourself

3. Current Forename(s)	Previous Name(s)
Current Surname(s)	& Surname Maiden Name
4. Present or last occupation	
5. Retired (<i>tick box</i>) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	6. Sex (<i>tick box</i>) Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
7. Status (<i>tick box</i>) Single <input type="checkbox"/> Widowed <input type="checkbox"/> Divorced/ Marriage Annulled <input type="checkbox"/>	8. Date of Birth
Civil Partnership Dissolution/Annulment <input type="checkbox"/> Surviving Civil Partner <input type="checkbox"/>	
9. Place of Birth	10. Country of Residence
11. Nationality	
12. Usual Residence & Postcode	
Contact Telephone No Email Address	

C About your Father

13. (a) Current Forename(s)
(b) Current Surname(s)
(c) Previous Name(s) & Surname(s)
14. Present or last occupation
15. Retired (<i>tick box</i>) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
16. Is he still living (<i>tick box</i>) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

D About your Mother

17. (a) Current Forename(s)
(b) Current Surname(s)
(c) Previous Name(s) & Surname(s)
18. Maiden Surname
19. Present or last occupation
20. Retired (<i>tick box</i>) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
21. Is she still living (<i>tick box</i>) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

E About the Officiant (complete this part if you intend to have a religious marriage)

22. Name, address and religious denomination of the officiant. Name
 Address
23. Signature of that person to indicate that (s)he is willing to act as officiant. Denomination
 Signature

F About the other party to the intended marriage

24. Forename(s) in full
Surname(s)
25. Usual Residence & Postcode

G Documents to be submitted by you with this Notice

<p>26. FOR ALL PERSONS</p> <p>Is your birth certificate enclosed? <i>(tick box)</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>If you are unable to produce your birth certificate, state the reason here.</i></p>
<p>27. IF PREVIOUS MARRIAGE OR PREVIOUS CIVIL PARTNERSHIP TERMINATED</p> <p>Is your decree of divorce/annulment or civil partnership dissolution/annulment enclosed? <i>(tick box)</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>The Registrar will require proof of the termination of the earlier marriage/civil partnership. If you are unable to produce the official decree of divorce/annulment or civil partnership dissolution/annulment, state the reason for not doing so as this will affect whether or not the registration can proceed.</i></p>
<p>28. IF YOUR PREVIOUS SPOUSE OR CIVIL PARTNER IS DECEASED</p> <p>Is the death certificate of your former spouse/civil partner enclosed? <i>(tick box)</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>The Registrar will require proof of the death. If you are unable to produce a death certificate of your previous spouse/civil partner, state the reason for not doing so.</i></p>
<p>29. NATIONALITY</p> <p>Have you enclosed your passport or other document(s) to prove your nationality? <i>(tick box)</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If you are a non European Economic Area national have you a marriage visitor/fiancé(e) visa or an unrestricted right to remain in the United Kingdom stamp in your passport? <i>(tick box)</i></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>If for any reason you are unable to enclose documentation to prove nationality please state the reason. If you are a United Kingdom Citizen, who does not have a passport, your birth certificate may be sufficient.</i></p> <p><i>If you are not a European Economic Area National and you have not got unrestricted right to remain in the United Kingdom you will have to apply to British Consul/High Commission for a marriage visitor/fiancé(e) visa before you travel. If you are already in the UK you should apply for a Certificate of Approval from the Home Office. The registrar cannot accept notice if the proper documents cannot be produced.</i></p>

H

30. DECLARATION

I solemnly declare:-

- (i) that I am the person named at B3;
- (ii) that I and the person named at Part F intend to be married on the date entered in Part A/* and by the officiant named at Part E;
- (iii) that there is no impediment caused by being within the prohibited degrees of relationship, affinity or adoption that I know of no other legal impediment to our marriage;
- (iv) that all the particulars and other information given by me on this notice are correct to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (v) that each document submitted by me in accordance with Part G of this notice is genuine.

Signed:.....

Date:.....

NOTE:- A person who supplies false information to a Registrar or uses, gives or sends any certificate, document or declaration required for the purposes of this marriage notice which is false or has been forged in any way is liable for prosecution.

** delete as appropriate*