

## **Marriage Ceremonies**

Before a marriage ceremony can take place, both parties must first obtain a marriage license from the County Clerk-Recorder's Office.

### **Religious Ceremonies**

If you wish to have a religious wedding ceremony with an ordained priest, minister or rabbi, etc., you must make the arrangements, including possible fees or donations directly with their representative.

### **Ceremony by Judge**

You may call the Superior Court at 408-882-2739 to schedule a ceremony with a Superior Court judge. Make arrangements, including fees, directly with the judge.

### **Weekday Civil Marriage Ceremonies**

Weekday civil marriage ceremonies are performed by a Commissioner of Civil Marriages in the Clerk-Recorder's Office Wedding Chapel at 70 W. Hedding St., E. Wing, Lower Level.

Ceremonies are conducted Tuesday through Friday from 10:30 a.m. to 3:40 p.m.

Appointments for marriage ceremonies must be scheduled in person. The cost is \$80.00 payable in advance to the Clerk-Recorder's Office payable by cash, check (out of State checks not accepted) or debit card (\$2.50 convenience fee applies). You will receive a receipt and a reminder slip. At the time of the your marriage ceremony you must

- Present a valid marriage license (ceremony can not take place without a license)
- Present your reminder slip and receipt
- Bring with you at least one witness (unless you have a confidential marriage license)
- Bring an interpreter if one or both parties are unable to speak and understand English

### **Qualified Notaries**

Qualified notaries are authorized to purchase and issue confidential marriage licenses and to perform marriage ceremonies. Some are Spanish-speaking and most are available for weekend weddings. If you already have a license, whether standard or confidential, you may choose to contact a qualified notary to perform the marriage ceremony. A list of qualified notaries is available at the marriage license counter upon request.

## Instructions for Marriage Licenses and Ceremonies

(Please read before completing the attached application)

Before a marriage ceremony can take place, both parties must first obtain a marriage license from the County Clerk-Recorder's Office. Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. A marriage license request must be completed and presented to the clerk for processing by 4:15 p.m.

### Applying for a marriage license:

To apply for a marriage license, two unmarried persons, must appear in-person and be 18 years of age or older. Government-issued picture identification is required. The license may be used only in the State of California, no later than 90 days after it is issued. If either party has had a divorce which became final in the last 90 days, bring a copy of the divorce judgment. If the divorce occurred more than 90 days before, the exact date must be provided.

### Standard License/Confidential License:

The fee is \$79.00 for a standard license and \$83.00 for a confidential license payable by cash, check (out of State checks not accepted) or debit card (\$2.50 convenience fee applies).

To qualify for a confidential marriage license, the parties must already be living together. Note that with a confidential marriage license the marriage ceremony may be performed **ONLY** in Santa Clara County. A confidential marriage license is effective immediately and is valid for 90 days. The marriage record will be maintained as a confidential record by the Clerk-Recorder's Office. Only parties to the marriage may obtain copies of the marriage certificate either in person or by mail. Requests by mail require a notarized signature of either party. **To apply for a confidential marriage license, please request an application from the clerk.**

You will receive the following documents from the clerk:

- License and certificate of marriage
- A copy of the license and certificate of marriage for your records only
- A blue commemorative certificate - this is a souvenir certificate it is not a legal document
- An envelope pre-addressed to the County Clerk-Recorder

You must give these items to the person performing your marriage ceremony. That person will complete the rest of the information on your license and have your witness(es) sign in the appropriate boxes. He or she will give you the commemorative certificate as a keepsake.

It is his/her responsibility to mail the license and certificate of marriage to the Santa Clara County Clerk-Recorder's Office for recording no later than 10 days after the ceremony. Be sure that postage is affixed.

For a certified copy of your marriage certificate, you must contact the Clerk-Recorder's Office, 70 West Hedding Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor, East Wing, San Jose, CA 95110; phone # 408-299-2481. You may order a certified copy by mail by completing the request slip attached to the bottom of your copy. Enclose a check for \$13.00 payable to the Clerk-Recorder Office and a self-addressed stamped envelope. Allow 10 -14 business days for processing your request.

## Marriage Certificate Requirements

California Health and Safety Code 10004.5, dealing with marriage certificates contains the following provisions:

“All certificates of registry of marriage shall be written legibly and shall be photographically and micro graphically reproducible. A certificate of registry of marriage is not complete and correct that does not supply all of the items of information called for or satisfactorily account for their omission.”

The person performing the ceremony and the witness(es) must sign in **black** durable ink. The non-signature parts of the license may either be typed or printed legibly in **black** durable ink.

There cannot be any **changes, alterations, strikeouts, or whiteouts** on the marriage license. Any of the above defects will render the marriage license/certificate unrecordable, in which case a duplicate license must be purchased. The fee for a duplicate license is \$25.00 payable by cash, check (out of State checks not accepted) or debit card (\$2.50 convenience fee applies).

**Under no circumstances must the date of the wedding ceremony be earlier than the date the marriage license was issued.**

### **What to do if:**

#### **License expires:**

You must purchase a new license. The expiration date cannot be extended.

#### **License lost/destroyed before wedding ceremony:**

You must purchase a new license. A duplicate license cannot be issued.

#### **License lost/destroyed after wedding ceremony:**

A duplicate license can be issued for a fee of \$25.00. At least one of the parties to the wedding ceremony, groom, bride, or the person who performed the ceremony must appear at the Clerk-Recorder's office in person. The person who performed the ceremony must sign the duplicate License. All other data on the license (names, signatures, dates, addresses, etc.) may be typed or printed. Thereafter, submit the duplicate license to the County Clerk-Recorder for recording.

# A CONFIDENTIAL MARRIAGE LICENSE

## Requirements:

- Parties must be at least 18 years of age and already living together.
- License is valid for 90 days
- Confidential Record maintained by the Clerk-Recorder's Office
- Ceremony must take place in the County of Santa Clara
- No witness is required for the ceremony
- Fee is \$83.00
- Certified copies (\$13.00 per copy) may only be obtained by the parties to the marriage, with valid identification. Written requests must have the notarized signature of both parties
- Requests for the record by anyone other than the parties to the marriage will require a court-order to access the marriage certificate

# Changing Your Name

**Social Security Card:** Contact your local Social Security Office  
Phone# 1(800) 772-1213 or visit their website [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)

**Driver's License:** Contact your local DMV office. Inform them you have changed your name and you need their records to reflect the change

**Federal Income Taxes:** Complete your tax return with your new name. Social Security will forward the information regarding your name change to the IRS. Confirm that the IRS has received this information.

**State Taxes:** Send a letter to:  
Taxpayer Services  
Franchise Tax Board  
P.O. Box 942840  
Sacramento, CA 94240-0000  
Inform them that you have changed your name. Include prior name, new name and Social Security number.

**Passport:** San Francisco Passport Agency  
95 Hawthorne Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105-3901  
1-877-487-2778

**Also contact companies related to your:**

- Bank accounts
- Credit cards
- Insurance
- Investments
- Legal Documents
- Other Bills
- Any other place where your name is listed

# Instructions for the Marriage Officiant

## Marriage License Requirements

California Health and Safety Code 10004.5, dealing with marriage licenses contains the following provisions:

“All certificates of registry of marriage shall be written legibly and shall be photographically and micro graphically reproducible. A certificate of registry of marriage is not complete and correct that does not supply all of the items of information called for or satisfactorily account for their omission.”

- The person performing the ceremony and the witness(es) must sign in **dark** durable ink.
- The non-signature parts of the license may either be typed or printed legibly in **dark** durable ink.
- Make no additions or corrections to any preprinted information.
- All entries must be within the item boxes and not on or across the lines.
- Dates must be completed using mm/dd/yyyy format (e.g. 01/01/2008)

To ensure that this marriage license is accepted for registration, there cannot be any **changes, alterations, strikeouts, or whiteouts** on the marriage license. If you make an error, do not attempt to correct it. The marriage registrar will suggest the best method to make corrections to the license if necessary. Any of the above-defects will render the marriage license un-recordable, in which case a duplicate license must be purchased from the Clerk-Recorder's Office by the marriage officiant. The fee for a duplicate license is \$25.00 payable by cash, check (out-of-State checks not accepted) or debit card (\$2.50 convenience fee applies).

**Under no circumstances must the date of the wedding ceremony be earlier than the date the marriage license was issued.**