

## Legal Basics

- You need a Marriage Licence. This authorises the celebrant to marry you at a stated venue. It is valid for three months from date of issue. Work backwards three months from your confirmed wedding date and make your application between those two dates.

You can either visit your local Births Deaths and Marriages Office and complete a "Notice of Intended Marriage" form or you can go online and fill in your details. However you will still need to visit an office to sign the document.

A licence costs \$150.00 (August 2017).

Processing your application takes roughly three working days.

Once you receive your documents CHECK them carefully as mistakes can happen. If there is a typo, date error, spelling or factual mistake, sort it immediately.

(NB: it is not recommended that you leave your application until the week of the wedding or "just three days before"!)

- You need two witnesses at the ceremony to sign the document. (They can be anyone, including children), providing they understand the implications of the role.
- During or after the ceremony, the two of you, your two witnesses and the celebrant must all sign the Particulars of Marriage. You receive a copy after the ceremony. The other copy is used by the Celebrant. As of September 2017 the Celebrant can now photo or scan the document and email it. Once they get confirmation of receipt they destroy their copy. (not your copy you can keep that!)
- Changing your surname after your marriage is a very personal decision. There is no legal requirement to do so, nor is there a legal process to follow if you choose one of the 4 potential legal names available to you once married: i.e. maiden, married or hyphenated either way. You simply ask your friends, family and workmates to start calling you by your chosen married name. Bear in mind this applies to men and women equally! Your surname upon marriage, if changed, is adopted through "usage and reputation".

However, to change your surname on bank accounts and official documents such as your driver's licence or passport, you will need to show your Marriage Certificate and ask for your name to be changed on their records. (Sometimes - rarely - the Particulars of Marriage will be sufficient, but don't rely on this to be the case.)