

## MARRIAGE LICENSE/INTENTION FAQs

**Q: How do we apply for a marriage license?**

**A:** Both parties must appear in person to apply for a marriage license. This requirement is applicable to both residents and non-residents of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. According to Massachusetts law, you must jointly file intentions to marry, and may do so with the city or town clerk in any community in the state.

**Q: How long is a marriage license valid?**

**A:** A marriage license, once it is obtained, is valid for 60 days from the date on which the intentions are filed and may be used in any Massachusetts city or town.

**Q: Is there a waiting period from the date of application to the date the license is issued?**

**A:** Yes, there is a mandatory three-day waiting period. While weekends and holidays are included in the three days, the day the application is made is not. For example, if you apply on Friday, your license will be issued on or after Monday.

**Q: What do we do after the “Three-Day Waiting Period” has passed?**

**A:** Prior to the ceremony, the marriage license will need to be picked up *in person* by one of the applicants. The individual who picks up the license must verify that all of the information on the license is correct. We *do not* mail marriage licenses prior to the ceremony. (Sorry, no exceptions).

Please remember that you *must* pick up the license before your marriage ceremony; the person performing the marriage may not legally marry you without this important document.

**Q: May we marry before the “Three-Day Waiting Period” for a good reason?**

**A:** If you are unable to wait the three days and need your license issued immediately, both parties must apply for a waiver at the probate court. After a hearing, the court may issue a certificate allowing the marriage license to be issued. The certificate must be brought back to the City Clerk. Both parties must then apply for a marriage license. The marriage may then be performed without delay.

If you need to waive the three-day waiting period, you will need to contact:

**BROOKLINE DISTRICT COURT**  
360 Washington Street  
Brookline, MA 02445  
(617) 232-4660

**Q: What is the cost of a marriage license?**

**A:** The cost for applying for a license in Town of Brookline is \$50.00, Payable by cash, check or money order, please make checks payable to the Town of Brookline.

**Q: What is the minimum age to marry?**

**A:** Massachusetts law requires the parties to be 18 years of age or older. A photo ID or birth certificate may be required to show as proof of minimum age. If either applicant is under the age of 18, a court order from a probate or district court, where the minor resides, must be obtained before the marriage intentions may be filed.

**Q: Are blood tests still required in order to get married?**

**A:** Pursuant to [Chapter 388 of the Acts of 2004](#), ***BLOOD TESTS ARE NO LONGER REQUIRED*** for any couple applying for their Marriage License on or after January 28, 2005.

**Q: What if one or both of us has been divorced/widowed?**

**A:** You are not required to present a divorce certificate when filing intentions to marry. However, it is extremely important that an individual who has been divorced be certain that his/her divorce is absolute. If you are uncertain as to the absolute date of your divorce, you should contact the court where the divorce was granted. In Massachusetts, a divorce does not become absolute until 90 days after the divorce nisi has been granted, regardless of the grounds for divorce.

There are no special requirements for a widow or widower who is remarrying.

**Q: Do we need any witnesses present at the ceremony?**

**A:** Massachusetts statute does not require that witnesses be present at your ceremony.

**Q: What are the responsibilities of the Member of Clergy or Justice of the Peace?**

**A:** The person performing the marriage ceremony must complete and sign the original license (*in black ink*) and return it to the City Clerk who issued the marriage certificate.

**Q: What should be done if an out-of-state Member of Clergy is to perform the marriage?**

**A:** The clergyperson must obtain a Certificate of Authorization from the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth prior to the ceremony. This certificate, which is issued by the Public Records Division of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, is to be returned to the clerk of the city or town where the license was issued.

Non-Resident Clergy information can be found by clicking [here](#).

**Q: Is it possible for a layperson to solemnize a wedding?**

**A:** Yes, it is possible for a non-minister or non-justice of the peace (such as a relative or family friend) to obtain special permission to perform a marriage from the Governor.

One-day solemnization certificate information can be found by clicking [here](#).

For more detailed information, please call (508) 945-5101 - or - visit the [Secretary of State's website](#).

**Q: Do we need to bring in a picture ID when applying for a marriage license?**

**A:** No, a picture ID is not required; however an ID may need to be shown if there is a question regarding the age of the applicant.

**Q: Do we need proof of residency?**

**A:** No, proof of residency is no longer required. The marriage intention is being signed under the pains and penalties of perjury.