

Marriage License in New Hampshire

The State of New Hampshire provides convenient on-line access to Granite State marriage laws. However, unless one is a legislator or attorney, deciphering the legal language can be quite challenging and time consuming.

With this in mind, here is a summary of the rules for applying for a marriage license.

Filing Procedures - The prospective bride and groom must appear at the town or city clerk office together. Exceptions may be made for individuals enlisted in the United States military.

Fee - The marriage license fee, at time of this print, is \$45. Be prepared to pay cash.

Valid Picture Identification - Acceptable forms of identification include:

- Valid driver's license or identification card from Department of Motor Vehicles
- Valid passport
- Valid military card

Original or certified birth certificate (Foreign birth certificates must be translated into English and notarized.)

Social Security Number - Applicants should be prepared to furnish their social security number.

Residency Requirements - Applicants do not have to be a resident of the Granite State. However, if both the bride and groom are not residents of the town or city they plan to be married in, their intentions must be filed with the appropriate clerk in the same town or city the marriage is to take place. If one of the applicants is a resident of New Hampshire, the intentions must be filed in the same town or city he or she resides in. If both applicants reside in New Hampshire, but in different towns or cities, intentions can be filed in either location.

Age Requirements - Applicants 18 and over can marry without parental consent. Non-residents under the age of 18 may not marry in New Hampshire. No female below the age of 13 or male below the age of 14 may be married in New Hampshire under any conditions. Female applicants between the ages of 13 and 17 and male applicants between the ages of 14 and 17 can only be married with a waiver and permission from their parent or legal guardian.

Marriage License Validity Period - It is always a good idea not to literally wait until the last minute, as a marriage license is not valid until three days after it is issued. On the other hand, do not apply too far in advance as marriage licenses do have an expiration date. A marriage license is only good for three months or 90 days after the issue date.

Solemnization or Marriage Ceremony Authority – “Solemnize” is to celebrate or observe with formal ceremonies or rites. For a marriage to be legal, it must be performed by one of the solemnization officials listed below:

- A justice of the peace commissioned in the State of New Hampshire.
- Any minister of the gospel in New Hampshire ordained according to the usage of his or her denomination, living in the Granite State, and in regular standing with the denomination.
- Any clergyman not ordained, but engaged in the service of the religious body to which he or she belongs, living in the Granite State, and licensed by the Secretary of State.

- Any minister residing outside of the Granite State, but granted a pastoral charge wholly or partly in New Hampshire, providing the marriage is performed within the parish, and a license has been obtained through the Secretary of State.
- An individual residing outside of New Hampshire, who is authorized or licensed by law in their state of residence to perform marriages.
- Judges of the United States appointed pursuant to Article III of the United States Constitution, or by United States magistrate judges appointed pursuant to federal law.
- Bankruptcy judges appointed pursuant to Article I of the United States Constitution.

No one can marry himself or herself, even if he or she meets the solemnization requirements stated above.

Divorced or Widowed - Divorced or widowed applicants must furnish certified copies of divorce or death certificates for any previous marriages.

Relationship and Same Sex Rules - For more information, call the Secretary of State's office at 603-271-3242 or the Bureau of Vital Records at 603-271-4651.

While these guidelines are based on New Hampshire state laws, some rules may vary from county to county. A call to the appropriate town or city clerk is advisable. State and county marriage license requirements often change.

The above information is for guidance only and should not be regarded as legal advice. It is important that you verify all information with your local marriage license office or county clerk before making any wedding or travel plans.

Source: www.state.nh.us