

Legal Requirements

Requirements For Obtaining A Marriage Licence In Barbados

Application for a marriage licence must be made by both (male and female) persons at the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information office. The marriage licence is valid for three (3) months only; therefore, couples can get married within three (3) months from the time they receive their marriage licence.

All couples are advised to peruse the information contained in this document and to ensure that they satisfy all the requirements for getting married in Barbados before making the actual application for a marriage licence.

DOCUMENTS REQUIRED FOR OBTAINING A MARRIAGE LICENCE:

- Nationals must present to the Officer at the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information their original birth certificates (in good condition) and national identification card/driver's licence or a valid passport (if available). All non-nationals must present their valid passports and/or birth certificates;
- Non-Nationals must present to the Officer at the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information proof of valid entry into Barbados;
- In the case of a widow or widower, the original death certificate and original marriage certificate must be submitted;
- If either party was divorced, an original Decree Absolute or Final Judgement or a certified copy of either document by a Notary Public* must be presented. The Decree Nisi is not acceptable; and
- An originally signed letter from the Marriage Officer or an official note from the Magistrate that states his/her intention to perform the wedding ceremony must be presented when applying for the licence.

***A Notary Public is a person authorized to perform certain legal formalities, especially to draw up or certify contracts, deeds, and other documents for use in other jurisdictions.**

- The letter from the Marriage Officer should be addressed to:

**The Permanent Secretary, Home Affairs
Ministry of Home Affairs and Information
Jones Building
Webster's Business Park
Wilkey
St. Michael
Barbados**

- It should be dated and include the following:
 - the date and time of the wedding
 - the names of the parties to be married
 - the place of the ceremony
 - an original signature of the official performing the wedding

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Persons who have been granted Barbadian citizenship either by descent or registration, immigration status or permanent residence, are required to produce the **original and valid** documents issued by the Immigration Department of Barbados or passports in which the relevant information has been stamped.

Non-nationals who have been granted work permits must produce the passport showing that a work permit was issued to them, or the relevant document issued by the Immigration Department. The application form or receipt will not be accepted.

Please note that a work permit does not confer permanent status and should be valid at the time of application.

Note also that a marriage licence will not be issued for a date beyond the expiry date of any visitor's stay or work permit in Barbados.

N.B. All documents (except passports and identification cards) not in English must be accompanied by an **English translation** that is certified by an authorized Notary Public (**NOT a Justice of the Peace**).

MARRIAGE OF MINORS

- If the parents are living together, either parent can give consent;
- If the parents are divorced or living apart, the parent having legal or actual custody, or where legal custody is given to each parent for part of the year, either parent can give consent;
- If both parents have been deprived of custody by order of a court, the person to whose custody the minor is committed by order of the court can give consent;
- Where one parent is dead and no other guardian exists, the surviving parent can give consent;
- If a guardian has been appointed by the deceased parent, the surviving parent or the appointed guardian can give consent for marriage of a minor; and
- Where both parents are dead or are non-compos mentis (mentally incapable of managing their affairs/unsound mind) a lawfully appointed guardian or acknowledged guardian who has raised the minor or who for at least three years immediately preceding the intended marriage has supported the minor can give consent for marriage of a minor.

If none of the foregoing options is possible, a Judge in Barbados may in his discretion on an application being made to him make an order to dispense with the consent required for the marriage of the minor.

Persons eighteen (18) years of age and older do not require parental consent.

MARRIAGE OF MINORS

- **Non-Nationals** - US\$200.00 cash and a US\$25.00 stamp (this does not apply to persons who have residence or citizenship in Barbados).
- **Nationals** - US\$200.00 cash and a US\$10.00 stamp (this applies if either party is a citizen or resident of Barbados).

The \$10.00 and \$25.00 stamps can be obtained from the Ministry at the time of application.

PER DIEM NOT INCLUDED

Legal Requirements

PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS

Arrangements should be made with a Marriage Officer (a Minister of Religion or a Magistrate who is authorized to perform wedding ceremonies in Barbados) before applying for a Marriage Licence. As was previously mentioned under 'Requirements' the couple must submit correspondence from the Marriage Officer who has consented to perform the wedding ceremony. One of the ways persons from abroad can obtain the services of a Marriage Officer resident on this island (a Minister of Religion) is to call the number of any of the churches operating in Barbados or the Supreme Court (for a Magistrate).

Please see contact information related to acquiring the services of a Magistrate, below. This Ministry is not authorized to arrange or execute weddings. However, many hotels in Barbados have their own Wedding Planners/Coordinators. It is therefore advisable to contact the hotel (if staying at one) to obtain the services of its Wedding Planner. If staying elsewhere, please contact the Barbados Tourism Marketing Inc. (BTMI) at (246) 535-3700, for the relevant assistance. **A non-resident Minister of Religion (who must also be a registered Marriage Officer, in the jurisdiction where he is currently serving)**, who has been requested to solemnize a marriage in Barbados, may, after satisfactorily fulfilling all of the necessary criteria be appointed as a **Temporary** Marriage Officer of Barbados. Information outlining this procedure can be obtained at www.gov.bb. For further assistance, please email haffairs@mha.gov.bb or call the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information at telephone number 1 (246) 535-7267. A marriage may be solemnized shortly after the issue of the licence.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION' OFFICE HOURS AND BOOKINGS

An appointment to obtain a marriage licence can be done between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. from Monday to Friday. The form can be downloaded, completed and submitted or brought together with the other relevant documents to the Ministry. The booking of an appointment is required to facilitate the granting of a Marriage Licence. To book an appointment, kindly visit the BGIS website gisbarbados.gov.bb/faqs or www.gov.bb under the heading Marriage Licence Appointments. The system will allow bookings from 8:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. at half (1/2) hour intervals. Appointments via the link above are preferred, however, applicants can also call to make an appointment at telephone number 1 (246) 535-7260. Additional queries can be directed to haffairs@mha.gov.bb or the Desk Officer at 1 (246) 535-7267.

SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Special arrangements can be made to grant a marriage licence on weekends, public holidays or in some situations where the couple is unable to visit the Ministry of Home Affairs and Information.

In such instances, an **additional fee** of US \$200.00 is required. Please contact the Marriage Licence Desk at 1 (246) 535-7285 or 1 (246) 535-7267 for further assistance.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE

A marriage certificate or a copy can only be obtained from the Registration Department. The address is:

**The Registrar of the Supreme Court
Registration Department
Judicial Centre
White Park Road
St. Michael
BARBADOS**

Telephone No.: (246) 535-9700

Fax No.: (246) 426-2405

Telephone No.: (246) 536-3507 / 3504 / 3631

E-Mail Address: registrar@lawcourt.gov.bb | correspondenceregistration@live.com

REGISTRATION DEPARTMENT'S OFFICE HOURS

Office Hours: Mondays to Fridays 8:30 a.m. - 3:45 p.m.

COURT FEES

(Magistrate to perform the ceremony)

Nationals - outside the precincts of the court is US\$125.00 or within the court US\$100.00.

Non-Nationals - outside the precincts of the court is US\$350.00 or within the court is US\$250.00.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE FEES

Nationals - US\$10.00

Non-nationals - US\$20.00

It is strongly advised that non-nationals and persons that intend to live/transact any legal business abroad obtain an apostille. A fee of US\$50.00 is charged by the Registration Department.