

GETTING MARRIED IN MASSACHUSETTS

From the Office of: Wendy L. Michel, Town Clerk, Westborough

If you are planning to be married in Westborough or any community in Massachusetts, you must apply for a license 60 days in advance. The rules and procedures for getting married are defined by [Chapter 207 of the Massachusetts General Laws \(MGL\)](#). Specific questions should be directed to the town or city Clerk, where you plan to file your marriage intentions.

You do not have to be a state resident to get married in Massachusetts, but you must obtain a valid marriage license issued by a Massachusetts city or town clerk. **An out-of-state marriage license cannot be used.**

There are a few restrictions to getting married in Mass:

- You must be 18 years of age or older. If either party is under 18, a [Marriage of Minors Application](#) form must be filed with [the probate court or district court](#) where the minor lives.
- You may NOT marry a close relative as defined specifically in [Mass General Laws](#).
- If either person was previously married, joined in a civil union, a registered domestic partnership or other legally binding relationship recognized by another state, this relationship must be legally dissolved (meaning your divorce must be final) before applying for a Mass marriage license.

Getting a Marriage License

Both partners in a marriage must go together, in person, to any city or town clerk to fill out a marriage license application (aka: Notice of Intention of Marriage) no more than 60 days before the wedding ceremony. In addition to paying the application fee (\$25 in Westborough), which varies in different communities, each person must bring proof of their age (a driver's license, birth certificate, passport or other document as defined by MGL Ch 207, Sec 33A along with their Social Security Number.

Once an application has been accepted, there is a three-day waiting period before you receive your marriage license. The license is then only valid for 60 days from the date the application was filed. In certain circumstances, one can see to have the waiting period waived by filing a request for a [Marriage without Delay](#) with the probate or district court in the city or town where you originally applied for the license. If you are not married within the 60 days after your license was granted, you must apply for a new license.

Who Can Legally Marry Us?

One of the most important parts of your wedding is determining who will perform the ceremony. There are three primary groups of people that can legally solemnize a marriage in Massachusetts:

- A resident Clergy member (defined in MGL Ch 207, Sec 38) provided they are registered with the Secretary of the Commonwealth.
- A friend or family member may perform the ceremony IF they are over 18. They can apply for a One Day Marriage Designation from the Governor's Office. The application must be in at least six weeks, but no more than three months, before the ceremony is to take place.
- A Justice of the Peace, by appointment of the Governor of Massachusetts. Most Town and City Clerk's are Justice of The Peace in their community. The Westborough Town Clerk is a JP. Call for more information.

After the marriage ceremony is complete, whomever you chose to perform the ceremony must sign and return your marriage license to the city or town Clerk where the license was issued so it can be legally recorded. You may receive copies as needed from the city or town where the license was issued or the Registry of Vital Records and Statistics.