

## **HOW TO OBTAIN A MARRIAGE LICENSE**

### **How do we apply for a marriage license?**

You and your fiancé must both apply in person for a marriage license. You may do so with the city or town clerk in any community in the state of Massachusetts. If one of you is in the military, intentions may be filed by either party, providing one is a Massachusetts resident.

There are three forms to complete which takes about 15 minutes. In addition to basic information the forms also ask for the last name to be used after marriage for both members of the couple. No appointment is necessary in Sandwich.

A marriage license is valid for 60 days from the date intentions are filed and may be used in any Massachusetts city or town. It is not valid outside of the state.

### **At what age may a man or woman marry?**

A Massachusetts resident may marry if he or she is 18 years of age or older. A birth certificate may be required to show proof of age. If either party is under 18, a court order from a probate or district court where the minor resides must be obtained before the marriage intentions can be filed.

### **Is there a waiting period before the license can be issued?**

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

### **Can a waiver of the waiting period be obtained?**

Yes, if you are unable to wait three days you can apply to a judge of a Probate or District Court to have the license issued without delay. You should file your intentions first with the Town Clerk then apply for the waiver at the court house. After a hearing the court may issue a certificate allowing the marriage license to be issued. Fees for the waiver vary depending on the court.

### **What is the cost of a marriage license?**

Fees for a marriage license vary from town to town. The fee for a marriage license in Sandwich is \$25.00 which can be paid by cash or check.

**What should be done if an out-of-state member of the clergy is to perform the marriage?**

If an out-of-state member of the clergy or Justice of the Peace is to perform the marriage, he/she must obtain a Certificate of Authorization from the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth prior to the ceremony.

Check out: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/pre/premar/marnon.htm> for more information.

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

Yes, it is possible for a layperson (such as a relative or family friend) to obtain a one-day solemnizer certificate to perform a marriage ceremony from the Governor.

Check out: <http://www.sec.state.ma.us/OneDayWeb/External/Welcome.aspx> for more information.