

Minnesota Marriage Officiant Guide

Solemnization Authority: Under Minnesota Statute § 517.04, marriages may be solemnized anywhere in the state by an individual who has attained the age of 21 years and is a licensed or ordained minister of any religious denomination. There are also special provisions for Minnesota-based judges, administrators and civic officials, as well as for marriage between members of the Baha'i, Hindu, Quaker and Native American religious groups.



Credentials of Minister: In Minnesota, ministers must register with the state through their local county office prior to performing a marriage ceremony anywhere in the state. Minnesota Statute § 517.05 states:

Ministers of any religious denomination, before they are authorized to solemnize a civil marriage, shall file a copy of their credentials of license or ordination ... with the local registrar of a county in this state, who shall record the same and give a certificate of filing thereof. The place where the credentials are recorded shall be endorsed upon and recorded with each certificate of civil marriage granted by a minister.

Educator's Statement: Minnesota Statute § 517.08 subd. 1b(c-d) provides for a reduced marriage license fee when a couple completes 12 hours of premarital education. "The premarital education must be provided by a licensed or ordained minister or the minister's designee, a person authorized to solemnize marriages under section 517.18, or a person authorized to practice marriage and family therapy under section 148B.33."

To obtain the reduced fee, applicants must provide a statement from the educator at the time of application. The statement must meet the following requirements:

1. Statement must be on the educator's letterhead.
2. Statement must be signed and dated by the educator, with the educator's signature notarized or "marked" with a church seal.
3. Statement must include legal names of both applicants and these names must be identical to the names on the marriage application.
4. Minnesota law (Minn. Stat. § 517.08 subd. 1b(d)) specifically requires the following language be used in the Educator's Statement:

"I, (name of educator), confirm that (names of both parties to the marriage) received at least 12 hours of premarital education that included the use of a premarital inventory and the teaching of communication and conflict management skills. I am a licensed or ordained minister, a person authorized to solemnize marriages under Minnesota Statutes, Section 517.18, or a person licensed to practice marriage and family therapy under Minnesota Statutes, Section 148B.33."

MARRIAGE LICENSE INFORMATION

Much of the information below is state law in Minnesota; however, this information can vary from county to county, and is subject to change. We recommend contacting your county clerk's office before applying for your marriage license.

Application Requirement: Only one applicant is required to apply in person for a marriage license. The applicant will be required to complete all information about both applicants:

- Full names;
- Addresses, dates and places of birth; and
- Bride's name after marriage (if applicable)

Identification requirements vary in each county. A valid driver's license or certified copy of birth certificate may be requested.

Residency Requirement: The bridal couple does not have to reside in Minnesota.

Waiting Period: Five days following issuance of the marriage license.

Valid: A Minnesota marriage license is valid for six months. The marriage license can only be used within the State of Minnesota.

Fees: \$70. It's best to pay with cash, as some counties impose a fifteen-day waiting period if you pay by check in order to make sure that it clears the bank.

Blood Tests: No tests are required.

Age 18 and Under: Applicants 18 years of age may obtain a license. It is necessary to provide proof of age.

- Applicants between the ages of 15 and 18 must have the consent of a parent, guardian or the judge of juvenile court.
- Applicants younger than 15 require the written consent of a parent or guardian and the consent of a juvenile court judge.

Common Law Marriage: Not permitted. However, the State does recognize common law marriages that are valid in other states.

Same-Gender Marriage: Permitted. Minnesota has recognized the validity of same-gender marriages from other jurisdictions since July 1, 2013, and began issuing its own certificates on August 1, 2013.

***For additional information, please visit
FirstNationMinistry.org/us/minnesota***

The above information is believed to be current and correct, but it is not legal advice, does not purport to be all-inclusive and shall be used only as a guide. Under the terms specified in your certification, you are solely responsible for becoming familiar with and adhering to the current laws and regulations in effect within the jurisdiction in which you will conduct ceremonies.