

# Short and Sweet Ceremonies

## FAQs:

### **Q. What is considered local? What is considered a remote location?**

A. Basically, anything within an hour's drive from my location I consider local. Beyond an hour's drive from my location I consider remote and I may charge a travel fee. Or if I have to board a ferry/car ferry to reach your chosen location in islands in Washington, I will charge a travel fee. If I must drive on an unpaved forestry road in the hills to reach your chosen location, or hike a trail, walk or drive a remote dirt road to reach your chosen location. Seriously, if your wedding location requires me parking my car in one location and then do any amount of hiking/trekking to reach the spot for the ceremony, count on paying a remote location/travel fee. Travel fees: Remote Western Washington = \$100. Remote Central Washington = \$175. Remote Eastern Washington = \$200.

### **Q. Why do you have a hotel fee?**

A. Not every remote location requires a hotel stay, but some do. Depends on ceremony start time; depends on distanced traveled. If I am traveling to Central or Eastern Washington to perform your ceremony, you can count on paying the travel fee and for hotel accommodation. Officiant Hotel Accommodation & Board (1 night) for remote locations will probably be between \$100 to \$200. I'm not going to book a hostel or tent camp in a camp ground – but I am also not going to book the penthouse at The Four Seasons. Not every remote Western Washington location requires me to also have hotel accommodation, but some might. For example, if you are having a sunrise or sunset ceremony at Mt. Rainier, I will need to book accommodation for 1 night either the night before for a sunrise ceremony, or the night of for a sunset ceremony. There are no surprise travel fees. If you have any questions, please ask. Tell me exactly where you will have your ceremony, what I will have to do to reach the location (hike, take a ferry, train, etc.), what you have in mind for the ceremony, and we shall come to an agreement. #Transparency #NoSurprises

### **Q. Will you provide witnesses for my ceremony or elopement?**

A. Sorry, no. I do not provide witnesses. But if you are having your ceremony in a public place like a popular beach, park, etc., my experience is that finding people willing to volunteer as witnesses usually is not a problem. Most people I've encountered (not all, but most) are happy to oblige because what kind of monster doesn't love a wedding and helping people in love? Haha Weddings usually make people happy and gives them a good story to share.

PRO TIP: If we do your ceremony at a local coffee shop or restaurant or pub and the staff have agreed to witness for you: 1.) Order a cup of coffee or a glass of wine to support the business owner! 2.) Leave a generous tip for witnesses \$10-20 or whatever you can afford. #Kindness #GoodKarma #FairTrade

### **Q. How old do my witnesses need to be?**

A. Two of your witnesses must be at least 18 years of age. #legal

### **Q. Will you be attending my wedding rehearsal and the rehearsal dinner?**

A. As a rule, no. The wedding rehearsal is for the wedding party to practice their procession. It is not customary nor is it necessary for the officiant to attend the rehearsal but I certainly can if you would prefer. The rate is \$100/hour and must be pre-arranged. As for the rehearsal dinner, there is no need to invite me to your rehearsal dinner. And I would not dream of interfering. That is a very special time between you and your beloved family and friends. I am happy enough to be officiating your ceremony. If I do attend your wedding rehearsal, I shall leave right after.

### **Q. My wedding ceremony is scheduled to start at 2pm, what time will you arrive?**

A. I arrive ahead of time to review the marriage paperwork, and so that I understand where we will be standing to perform the ceremony, and where we will go afterwards to sign the marriage paperwork with your witnesses. I typically text you to let you know I am enroute and again to let you know I have arrived, in case it is a large venue and I cannot immediately locate you. If you have not yet paid for the officiant, you can do so. #ontime

### **Q. How long is a wedding ceremony?**

A. I promise your ceremony will be short and sweet. The goal is to have a ceremony long enough for your photographer or family/friends to capture photos of your special moments; short enough that you and your wedding guests won't start getting antsy. Typically a ceremony only takes about 5-10 minutes plus your wedding procession/recession if you have one. It all depends on the length of the vows you have chosen, the number of people in your wedding procession, if you have special music, other ceremony rituals, etc. The wedding ceremony script is pre-approved by you ahead of time. If you each have personal vows you have written for each other, that is fit into the ceremony. The maximum time for me to be at a wedding is 50 minutes from the officiant arrival time to review the marriage paperwork to the signing of marriage paperwork. #shortandsweet

**Q. How long does an elopement take, because my fiancé and I want to be married but we do not want anything that resembles a wedding ceremony. Basically we just want to sign papers so we can be married. Can we do that?**

A. Yes. Sort of. The very minimum is that a wedding officiant reviews the marriage paperwork and must ask both parties if they wish to be married to the other and must receive affirmative responses. Your intentions to be married must be expressed or acknowledged, however you wish. If you have wedding rings you wish to exchange, you can exchange rings. Then the officiant pronounces you married. You and the officiant and your two witnesses sign the marriage paperwork. Start to finish, we're talking a matter of just a few minutes. Really, that is as fast as it gets. #elopement

**Q. Will you stay for dinner or festivities after the ceremony? Should I mail you a formal invitation?**

A. "No, thank you" on dinner and sending me a formal wedding invitation is not necessary. I will perform the ceremony and leave after we all sign the paperwork so you may celebrate with your loved ones in private. Although I really do appreciate the very kind invitations I have received, you definitely do not need to mail me a formal invitation. My "RSVP" to you is the promise we make to each other when you book me for your wedding ceremony. If you would still like to mail me an invitation, go for it! My business mailing address is 6333 75<sup>th</sup> Ave NE Olympia, WA 98516 :-)

**Q. What does it cost to hire you as an officiant?**

A. My officiant rate is either \$150 or \$300. An elopement, wedding, or ceremony where I come to your chosen location is \$300. And a quick no-frills elopement where you and your two witnesses come meet me at my location is just \$150. I charge a travel fee for remote locations between \$100-200, depending on location, depending on how far I have to drive, and is in addition to the \$300 officiant fee. Rehearsals are \$100/hr. Extra time is \$50/ in 30-min increments. I try to identify my rates/fees clearly under RATES, TERMS & CONDITIONS. But if you have any question about cost for your specific ceremony needs, give me a call at 360-280-0888 and we can discuss. I'm happy to answer all of your questions.

**Q. What is not included in the standard \$300 officiant rate?**

A. Not included is any fee or cost required to reach your location to perform your ceremony. We will discuss this in advance when you tell me about your ceremony requirements and whether there are any challenges, constraints, or circumstances the officiant must be aware of. Some example of fees not included in a regular officiant rate:

- Entrance fees to events, attractions, or State/National Parks
- Ferries, parking/valet fees
- Hotel accommodation
- Tips for witnesses -- only if you don't already have your own witnesses and if we are holding in a public place like a coffee shop, etc. It is the kind/fair thing to do. 100% your discretion.
- Coffee, beverages, or food -- again, this only comes into play if you are eloping at a local coffee shop, restaurant, pub, etc. It's good to patronize the business.
- Wedding rehearsal - \$100/hr. Rehearsals are not required and must be pre-arranged. For what it's worth, it is not customary for a wedding officiant to attend, but I am happy to do so if that is what you prefer. Please tell me at the time of booking the ceremony so I can confirm availability and set that time aside for you as well.

**Q. What forms of payment do you accept?**

A. Cash or credit card (payable via PayPal). Checks may be accepted if it is local. Sorry, no out of state checks.

**Q. We would like to pre-pay by personal check. Who do I make it out to? And where do I mail it?**

A. You can make local checks payable to Short and Sweet Ceremonies or CARMEN LANE LLC. My business mailing address: CARMEN LANE LLC, 6333 75th Ave NE, Olympia, WA 98516. If the check is written by someone else, please have them include Bride & Groom names and the date of wedding in the check memo line. Local checks must be mailed in advance and should include some kind of tracking for your protection. <https://www.certifiedmaillabels.com/usps-postal-rates> I will notify you once it has been received and mark it as paid on my calendar. \$40NSF applies.

**Q. What if I cannot afford your rate or county official to perform my wedding ceremony?**

A. If my rate doesn't fit in your budget, please don't worry. You can ask a trusted friend or family member to go through the steps to become ordained so they may perform your marriage ceremony for you at no cost. It could be another beautiful memory for all of you, another bond tightened. I wish you great happiness, whatever you decide. #DIYceremony

**Q. Are there any instances you will NOT perform a wedding ceremony?**

A. Really it's about safety for me, for my car. Unpaved forestry roads concern me. Winter/adverse weather driving conditions concern me. Locations with no cell or GPS reception concern me. I rely on my car's GPS to find your chosen wedding location. If you have chosen to have your ceremony in a remote place and if I do not feel safe or if I am concerned whether I'll be able to reach you safely in my car, I will let you know as soon as possible. I always do GPS search of addresses and I let my family know in advance where I will be. But sometimes I don't know what exactly I am facing until I get there. Some specific examples of where I would likely not be able to do a ceremony is...

1. Out of State. A marriage license issued by any county in Washington State is valid in any other Washington county. But if you intend to be married outside of Washington, you must obtain a marriage license from that state and you should probably find a local officiant as depending how far it is, it would probably be cost prohibitive for you to hire me to travel out of Washington to perform your ceremony. #roadtrip
2. Snow/ice/winter or adverse weather conditions, too remote for me, or if a severe weather advisory is issued. I won't be driving to or across the mountains to do winter weddings. #safety
3. Extreme sports wedding. I am no Spring chicken. So if you and your skydiving fiancé have your hearts set on jumping out of a plane and exchanging vows mid-air, I am definitely not the officiant for you. There was a time I would have loved to be your skydiving wedding officiant. That was a few years and about a thousand Hostess Twinkies ago hahaha. But how about if you and your fiancé go skydiving together and then you let me perform your ceremony after landing? #SkyDiveToledo #SkyDiveKapowsin
4. Schedule conflict ~ prior commitment.
5. Sickness. If I become sick/injured/incapacitated or unable to perform your ceremony
6. TOO REMOTE. So the reality is I am a round middle-aged woman in "meh" shape. And I am being generous. If I park my car and then discover too late that I am unable to safely schlep up/down that muddy embankment or steep hill, or leap across an unexpected stream, or fjord a river, or cross a rickety foot bridge, or slog through a marsh, or make the hike/trek to reach your remote wedding location, I'd say we are in trouble unless you are cheerfully willing to adjust/modify/change your expectation, location-wise. ☺

**Q. Do you perform weddings for LGBTQIAAP+?**

A. Yes, certainly. I believe in equality. I am happy to perform ceremonies for any loving couple in Washington. I care only that a couple is 18+, in love, has a valid marriage license, and wishes to be married. #equality #loveislove

**Q. Do you require me and my fiancé to attend special marriage counseling sessions before you perform our wedding ceremony? And if so, for how long and what is the cost?**

A. No, I do not require any special counseling sessions whatsoever. You are both adults. Only you and your fiancé can determine whether you are ready for marriage. No marriage counseling is required by me, nor do I offer it. #istayinmylane

**Q. What makes you qualified to perform a wedding ceremony?**

A. I am ordained through Universal Life Church. And the laws of the State of Washington are what permit me to solemnize (officiate) weddings in Washington. I posted links to ULC and the laws of the State of Washington at the beginning of the website. Here is the link to the RCW 26.04.050 Who may solemnize:

<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=26.04.050>

*"The following named officers and persons, active or retired, are hereby authorized to solemnize marriages, to wit: Justices of the supreme court, judges of the court of appeals, judges of the superior courts, supreme court commissioners, court of appeals commissioners, superior court commissioners, judges of courts of limited jurisdiction as defined in RCW 3.02.010, judges of tribal courts from a federally recognized tribe, and any regularly licensed or ordained minister or any priest, imam, rabbi, or similar official of any religious organization."...*

And here is a link to Universal Life Church Monastery: <https://www.themonastery.org/wedding-laws/washington>

And I have a business license. So, that helps me too... But if your question is really more like what is my personal experience and personal qualifications to perform your wedding ceremony, I can tell you have done a number of wedding ceremonies and public speaking. I feel very comfortable and qualified. Maybe give me a call, ask me your specific questions: (360)-280-0888. A chat may help you get a feel for who I am and help you decide for yourself whether you think I am a good fit to perform your ceremony. #letschat

**Q Which payment apps do you use?**

A. PayPal for credit card payments. My PayPal email address is Carmen-Lane@comcast.net. And your receipt should show payment has been made to CARMEN LANE LLC.

**Q. Do you have suggestions or recommendations for a wedding procession?**

A. It really depends on how big your wedding is and what you want to do. There are many wedding "How To" books and websites that can help you plan your wedding from start to finish. Your wedding processional can be as simple or as elaborate as you want it to be. And if you prefer not to have one, don't. It's all up to you. I created a 30-Second Wedding Guide that you can download, if that helps.

DO YOU HAVE OTHER QUESTIONS? Call or email me!

I am happy to help however I can.

Carmen-Lane@comcast.net | 360-280-0888

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