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STRENGTHENING YOUR MARRIAGE

Before marriage: Marriage Education

Solid relationships set you up to meet the changes and challenges of life. It is important to develop good communication and sound relationship skills early, so that you can fall back on these skills during difficult times.

Pre-marriage education prepares couples for marriage by providing skills and information to build lifelong marriages. Courses are also available to explore the added dimension and complexity brought to a marriage by children from a previous relationship.

During marriage: Family Counselling

Keeping relationships on track is not always easy. Relationship problems can arise at various stages of our lives. While having a shaky moment does not mean your relationship is in trouble, it may be a sign that you could do with some help.

Family counselling can help couples come to terms with the many changes that happen during a marriage, such as the personal and interpersonal issues to do with children and family. Family counsellors can help you work through emotional problems with your spouse or partner, or to reach agreement about your parental responsibilities.

Marriage breakdown: Family Dispute Resolution

Family Dispute Resolution (FDR) can help separating couples to reach agreement about property, money, and—most importantly—any children. The law requires separating families who have a parenting dispute to make a genuine effort to try to sort it out through FDR.

An accredited FDR Practitioner can help you discuss issues, look at options, and reach agreement. Importantly, FDR can help you to develop a parenting plan to set out arrangements for any children.

For more information about the services and advice available for couples and families, visit the Family Relationships Online website at www.familyrelationships.gov.au or phone the Family Relationship Advice Line on 1800 050 321.

This information is provided pursuant to subsection 42(5A) of the *Marriage Act 1961* and regulation 39A of the *Marriage Regulations 1963*

Happily Ever... Before and After

INFORMATION FOR COUPLES PLANNING TO MARRY



MARRIAGE IS IMPORTANT

Your celebrant is handing you this document because the decision to marry is one of the biggest decisions a couple can make. Marriage is a significant step which will bring a number of changes for you, your spouse and your family. This document tells you:

- the process of getting married in Australia,
- some important legal consequences of getting married, and
- where relationship support services, such as marriage education, family counselling or dispute resolution services may be obtained.

GETTING MARRIED IN AUSTRALIA

In Australia, marriage is regulated by the *Marriage Act 1961*, which sets out the process for getting married and the legal requirements of a valid marriage.

1

A completed **Notice of Intended Marriage** form must be given to your celebrant at least one month (and up to 18 months) before the wedding.

2

You and your partner must provide your celebrant **with evidence of your date and place of birth, identity and the end of any previous marriages**.

3

You must both sign the 'Declaration of no legal impediment to marriage'. By signing the Declaration, you declare that you believe that you are of marriageable age, and that there is no legal impediment to your marriage.

4

On your **wedding day**, your celebrant will solemnise your marriage. Your celebrant will then ask you, your partner and your witnesses to **sign up to three marriage certificates**.

5

After your wedding, **your marriage celebrant will register the marriage** with the Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages in the State or Territory where your marriage took place.

MARRIAGE IN AUSTRALIA: SOME IMPORTANT THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

Health and welfare benefits

If you receive health or welfare benefits, you will need to contact the relevant agencies to advise them that you have married. These agencies will advise you if your benefits will change. You may lose benefits and even be penalised if you fail to tell them you have married within a reasonable time after the wedding.

Changing your name

Any person who marries may choose to take their spouse's surname. You are not legally required to take your spouse's surname once you are married.

If you wish to take your spouse's surname, you must obtain a certificate of marriage issued by your state or territory Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages. This is usually sufficient evidence to have your personal documentation (eg. driver's licence) changed to your married surname.

The certificate you received on your wedding day is ceremonial and will not meet the identity requirements of many government agencies, such as the passport office.

Citizenship

If you marry an Australian citizen, you do not have an automatic right to Australian citizenship. You will still need to apply for citizenship and satisfy the eligibility criteria. You can obtain further information from the Department of Immigration and Border Protection website at www.immi.gov.au.

Making a will

Marriage will invalidate any previous wills unless your will clearly shows you were planning this marriage when you made it.

It is important that you make a new will when your personal circumstances change. This ensures that you have a valid will that gives effect to your intentions about how you want your assets to be distributed in the event of your death. A solicitor can help you make or change a will.

Taxation after marriage

When you marry, the amount of taxation you pay may change. It is advisable to contact the Australian Taxation Office, a tax agent or an accountant before marriage to discuss any tax implications.

HERE IS A LIST OF ORGANISATIONS THAT OFFER RELATIONSHIP EDUCATION AND SUPPORT IN YOUR AREA

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

Deakin	Relationships Australia	02 6281 3600
Red Hill	Centacare	02 6162 6113

NEW SOUTH WALES

Armidale	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Ashfield	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Bankstown	Centacare	02 9793 7522
Bathurst	Centacare	02 6331 8944
Bondi Junction	Relationships Australia	02 9387 4211
Bowral	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Bowral	Relationships Australia	02 4228 7711
Bulli	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Burwood	Interrelate (Family Life Movement of Australia) – NSW	02 9745 5544
Cabramatta West	Centacare	02 9822 9855
Campbelltown	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Campbelltown	Centacare	02 4628 0044
Campbelltown	Relationships Australia	02 4228 7711
Coffs Harbour	Interrelate (Family Life Movement of Australia) – NSW	02 6651 1010
Cooma	Relationships Australia	02 6281 3600
Epping	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Glebe	Centacare	02 9660 2044
Glen Innes	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Gosford	Centacare	02 8425 8700
East Gosford	UNIFAM - Marriage and Family Counselling Service	02 9633 4555
Gunnedah	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Guyra	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Hamilton	Relationships Australia	02 4969 3977
Hornsby	Centacare	02 9476 8433
Inverell	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Kensington	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Lane Cove	Relationships Australia	02 9418 8800
Miranda	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Moree	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Naremburn	Centacare	02 8425 8700
Narrabeen	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Narrabeen	Centacare	02 8425 8700
Narrabri	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Neutral Bay	Relationships Australia	02 9418 8800
North Shore	Centacare	02 8425 8700
North Star	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Nowra	Anglicare	02 4423 1018
Nowra	Centacare	02 4227 1122
Oxford Falls	Centacare	02 8425 8700
Parramatta	Anglicare	02 9895 8054

Parramatta	Centacare	02 9630 7788
Parramatta	UNIFAM Marriage and Family Counselling Service	02 9891 1628
Penrith	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Penrith	Relationships Australia	02 4731 6744
Rockdale	Relationships Australia	02 9567 7198
Sth. Tweed Heads	The Family Centre Community Projects	07 5524 8711
Sutherland	Centacare	02 9545 1544
Sydney	UNIFAM Marriage and Family Counselling Service	02 9261 4077
Tamworth	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Tenterfield	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Thornleigh	Centacare	02 9847 2750
Turramurra	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Tweed Heads	The Family Centre Community Projects	07 5524 8711
Uralla	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Vaucluse	Anglicare	02 9895 8045
Wagga Wagga	Centacare	02 6931 7911
Wagga Wagga	Relationships Australia	02 6921 3597
Walcha	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Warialda	Anglican Counselling Service	02 6765 2527
Westmead	Relationships Australia	02 9806 3299
Windsor	Anglicare	02 9895 8054
Wollongong	Anglicare	02 4228 9612
Wollongong	Centacare	02 4227 1122
Wollongong	Relationships Australia	02 4228 7711
Wyong	Centacare	02 8425 8700

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Alice Springs	Relationships Australia	08 8952 7344
Darwin	Relationships Australia	08 8981 6676

QUEENSLAND

Bowen	Centacare	07 4786 4158
Brisbane	Kinections (formerly Anglican Family Care)	07 3435 4333
Bundaberg	Centacare	07 4153 2532
Cairns	Centacare	07 4051 9511
Cairns	Relationships Australia	07 4041 2822
Gold Coast	Centacare	07 5527 7211
Emerald	Centacare	07 4982 4358
Fraser Coast	Centacare	07 4197 0172
Hillcrest	Kinections (formerly Anglican Family Care)	07 3435 4333
Ipswich	Kinections (formerly Anglican Family Care)	07 3435 4333

Mackay	Centacare	07 4957 2533
Mackay	Relationships Australia	07 4957 4542
Sunshine Coast	Centacare	07 5479 4755
Moranbah	Centacare	07 4941 6093
Rockhampton	Centacare	07 4927 1700
Slacks Creek	Kinections (formerly Anglican Family Care)	07 3435 4333
Spring Hill	Relationships Australia	07 3831 2005
Springsure	Centacare	07 4982 4358
Toowoomba	Centacare	07 4632 3604
Toowoomba	Relationships Australia	07 4638 1295
Upper Mt. Gravatt	Centacare	07 3252 4371
Townsville	Centacare	07 4772 7799
Windsor	Relationships Australia	07 3861 1422
Woodridge	Kinections (formerly Anglican Family Care)	07 3435 4333

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Adelaide	Anglicare	08 8342 4005
Adelaide	Centacare	08 8210 8200
Adelaide	Lutheran Community Care	08 8269 9300
Adelaide	Centre of Personal Education (COPE)	08 8223 3433
Adelaide	Relationships Australia	08 8223 4566
Berri	Relationships Australia	08 8582 4122
Elizabeth	Anglicare	08 8342 4005
Elizabeth	Relationships Australia	08 8287 5055
Oaklands Park	Relationships Australia	08 8377 5400
Morphett Vale	Anglicare	08 8342 4005
Prospect	Anglicare	08 8342 4005
Whyalla	Whyalla Counselling Service	08 8645 9188

TASMANIA

Burnie	Centacare	03 6431 8555
Devonport	Relationships Australia	03 6421 5800
Hobart	Anglicare	03 6234 3510
Hobart	Relationships Australia	03 6211 4050
Launceston	Centacare	03 6331 9253
Launceston	Relationships Australia	03 6336 7000
New Town	Centacare	03 6278 1660

VICTORIA

Ballarat	Centacare	03 5337 8999
Bendigo	Centacare	03 5443 9577
Coburg	Family Relationships Institute Inc.	03 9354 8854
Echuca	Centacare	03 5443 9577

Flemington	Stepfamily Association of Victoria Inc.	03 9481 1500
Footscray	Centacare	03 9689 3888
Geelong	Centacare	03 5221 7055
Hamilton	Centacare	03 5337 8999
Kew	Relationships Australia	03 9261 8700
Malvern	Centacare	03 9576 2377
Melbourne	LifeWorks (Vic)	03 9654 7360
Melbourne East	Centacare	03 9287 5516
Mitcham	Centacare	03 9873 4344
Mount Dandenong	Family Relationships Institute Inc.	03 9751 1655
Narre Warren	Relationships Australia	03 9704 7788
Northcote	Stepfamily Association of Victoria Inc.	03 9481 1500
North Fitzroy	Marriage Education Programme	03 9486 7833
North Geelong	Bethany Community Support Inc.	03 5278 8122
Prahran	Stepfamily Association of Victoria Inc.	03 9481 1500
Preston	Stepfamily Association of Victoria Inc.	03 9481 1500
Shepparton	Centacare	03 5831 4699
Shepparton	Relationships Australia	03 5821 1846
Traralgon	Relationships Australia	03 5174 1100
Vermont South	Stepfamily Association of Victoria Inc.	03 9481 1500
Wangaratta	Centacare	03 5721 2341
Wangaratta	LifeWorks (Vic)	03 5721 5700
Warrnambool	Centacare	03 5561 5923
Wyndham	LifeWorks (Vic)	03 9974 3200
Wodonga	Centacare	02 6056 1861
Wodonga	Upper Hume Community Health Service	02 6022 8888

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Bunbury	Relationships Australia	08 9721 5288
Busselton	Relationships Australia	08 9721 5288
Fremantle	Relationships Australia	08 9336 2144
Gosnells	Anglicare	08 9263 2050
Joondalup	Anglicare	08 9300 0460
Joondalup	Relationships Australia	08 9409 2000
Lockridge	Anglicare	08 9263 2050
Mandurah	Relationships Australia	08 9535 5711
Midland	Relationships Australia	08 9250 1242
Perth	Catholic Marriage Education Services	08 9325 1859
Rockingham	Anglicare	08 9263 2056
South Headland	Relationships Australia	08 9140 1966
West Leederville	Relationships Australia	08 9489 6363



Marriage ceremony of Couples Names

Date _____ and Time _____

Place _____

SAMPLE CEREMONY DRAFT

Unplugged ceremony or use of #tags

THE ENTRANCE

(Music playing)

INTRODUCTION

MONITUM:

Cannot be change, Celebrant to read:

My name is Beverly Simmons-Hurtado I am duly authorised by law to solemnise marriages according to law. Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses, I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are now about to enter.

Marriage according to law in Australia, is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life

LOVE STORY (reflection of what is it they love about each other):

POEMS OR READING

(Optional – Celebrant to provide samples if required)

ASKING:

Partner (1/2): say their “I Do”

EXCHANGE OF VOWS:

PARTNER (1):

Legal vows cannot be change, Partner (2) & Partner (1) to say out loud
I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, Partner (1)'s full name, take thee, Partner (2)'s full name, to be my lawful wedded wife (husband).

To be followed by personal vows (secret vows)

PARTNER (2):

Legal vows cannot be change, Partner (2) & Partner (1) to say out loud
I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, Partner (2)'s full name, take thee,
Partner (1)'s full name, to be my lawful wedded husband (wife).

To be followed by personal vows (secret vows)

EXCHANGE OF RINGS:

CELEBRANT:

Who will hold the rings?

Words of exchange

DECLARATION:

Acting as the Authorised Civil Marriage Celebrant, it is with great pride and honour that I pronounce you, Husband and Wife/ Wife in Marriage/ Husband in Marriage/ Partner in Marriage

You may now share your first kiss as husband and wife/ wife in marriage/ husband in marriage/ partner in marriage.

SIGNING OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE:

(Music playing)

Ladies and Gentlemen, we will now have the signing of the Marriage Certificate. May I please ask for Witness and Witness to join Couples Names in the signing?

PRESENTATION OF THE CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE AND CONCLUSION:

Couples Names it is my great honor in presenting your Certificate of Marriage.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Ladies and Gentlemen, will you please join me to welcome for the first time our newly wedded couple Couples Names.

AFTER THE CEREMONY:

- Photos – group, family, friends etc



Applying for an official marriage certificate

[nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/marriages/what-to-know-when-getting-married/applying-for-an-official-marriage-certificate](https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/marriages/what-to-know-when-getting-married/applying-for-an-official-marriage-certificate)

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You need an official marriage certificate to prove your marriage and change your name. Here you'll find out how to apply, the cost and how to correct an error.

Last updated: 31 December 2023

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A marriage certificate is issued by the registry of births, deaths and marriages in the state or territory where you were married.

You need an official marriage certificate to prove you are married or when [**changing your surname after marriage \(https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/name-changes-and-corrections/change-your-surname-after-marriage\)**](https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/name-changes-and-corrections/change-your-surname-after-marriage).

This is different to the ceremonial marriage certificate you take home on your wedding day.

Who can apply for a NSW marriage certificate

You can apply for a NSW marriage certificate if the marriage took place in NSW and:

- you are one of the people named in the marriage
- the couple named in the marriage have passed away and you are a child of the marriage, or

- you are the authorised representative of either person named in the marriage

An authorised representative will need to:

- show a **letter of authority (PDF 217.4KB)** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/apply-letter-of-authority.pdf>) giving them permission to apply for the marriage certificate
- show Power of Attorney for either person named in the marriage, or
- be a **solicitor** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/births-deaths-marriages/business-partners/solicitors-applying-for-certificates>) who is either acting for a person named on the certificate or who needs the certificate for a legal purpose

Celebrants can order the marriage certificate on your behalf within 2 months from the date of the ceremony. They do not need a letter of authority to do so.

You can apply for a marriage certificate at any time after your marriage, once the marriage has been registered.

You can also apply to get a replacement marriage certificate if you have lost the original copy.

How to apply for a NSW marriage certificate

To apply for a new or replacement marriage certificate, you will need to provide:

- details of the marriage
- personal and contact information
- **proof of identity documents** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/marriages/what-to-know-when-getting-married/applying-for-an-official-marriage-certificate#toc-proof-of-identity-documents>)
- **payment** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/marriages/what-to-know-when-getting-married/applying-for-an-official-marriage-certificate#toc-how-much-a-marriage-certificate-costs>)

You can apply online, or:

- by downloading a **marriage certificate application form (PDF 629.4KB)** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2023-12/apply-for-marriage-certificate.pdf>)
- in person at a **Service NSW service centre** (<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/service-centre>)

[Apply online for a NSW marriage certificate](https://onlineforms.bdm.nsw.gov.au/application/marriage_details)

(https://onlineforms.bdm.nsw.gov.au/application/marriage_details)

Proof of identity documents

To apply for a NSW marriage certificate you will need to provide:

- at least 3 forms of current identity
- one form of identity each from categories 1, 2 and 3

If you cannot provide proof of identity documents from categories 1 and 2:

- you must still provide at least 3 forms of identity
- at least 2 of these should be from category 3

If you cannot meet these requirements, **contact the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/departments-and-agencies/births-deaths-marriages/contact-registry>)**.

Category	Documents
1	<p>If born in Australia: an Australian birth certificate</p> <p>Record of immigration status:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• citizenship certificate• New Zealand citizenship certificate together with passport• New Zealand birth certificate
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Australian driver's licence• Australian passport• firearms licence• foreign passport• proof of age card
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medicare card• Centrelink or Department of Veterans' Affairs card• security or crowd control licence• tertiary education institution identity card
4	recent utility account with current residential address (issued within last 3 months)

Categories for proof of identity documents

How much a marriage certificate costs

The cost of a marriage certificate will depend on the type of certificate you choose and how quickly you want to get it.

Certificate request	Standard service	Priority service
Standard marriage certificate	\$65	\$96
Standard and commemorative marriage certificate	\$95	\$126

Cost of marriage certificate

All prices include postage and handling. Add \$9 for international post.

How long it takes to get an official marriage certificate

Your marriage certificate will be processed once your application has been received. There can be delays if the information in your application is:

- incomplete, or
- incorrect

The number of working days it takes to process a certificate depends on how you apply. Processing times are estimates only.

It's much quicker for marriages registered online by your marriage celebrant. Check with your celebrant if they can apply for a marriage certificate for you.

Official marriage certificates are delivered by registered post. The processing time does not include delivery, please see Australia Post website for current delivery times within Australia or International.

You can click and collect urgent certificates from the NSW Registry of Births, Deaths & Marriages office in **Chippendale (<https://www.service.nsw.gov.au/nswgovdirectory/births-deaths-marriages-nsw-registry-sydney>)**.

Getting your certificate:

- Applying online is the fastest and easiest way to obtain your certificate. If you have selected a 'collect' option please await a confirmation email, sent to you within one working day of your application, before coming to the office to collect the certificate.
- **[Apply for your certificate online \(https://onlineforms.bdm.nsw.gov.au/application/marriage_details\)](https://onlineforms.bdm.nsw.gov.au/application/marriage_details)**.

Australia Post advises customers to expect delays with **international post** (<https://auspost.com.au/service-updates/international-delivery-times>).

Standard marriage certificate	Standard service	Priority service
Certificate for newlyweds (celebrants have 14 days to lodge)	Up to 4 weeks	Not available
Online application	Up to 2 weeks	Up to 1 week
Submitted by post	Up to 4 weeks	Up to 2 weeks
Registry agent (Service NSW)	Up to 3 weeks	Up to 2 weeks

Processing times for standard marriage certificate

If there's an error on your marriage certificate

You can apply to correct an error if you've received your marriage certificate and the details are incorrect.

This will be free if the registry made the error. There will be an additional cost if you supplied incorrect or incomplete information.

You'll need to:

- return the original certificate by post
- provide 3 proof of identity documents
- send the correct information on the **correct an entry form (PDF 947.6KB)** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2024-01/apply-for-correct-an-entry.pdf>)

Learn how to **correct an error on your marriage certificate** (<https://www.nsw.gov.au/family-and-relationships/name-changes-and-corrections/correct-an-entry>).

If you were married in another state or territory

You need an official marriage certificate from the registry in the state or territory where you were married to:

- prove you are married
- update your name after marriage

If you were not married in NSW, you can apply for a marriage certificate in:

- **Victoria** (<https://www.bdm.vic.gov.au/marriages-and-relationships/get-a-marriage-certificate>)

- **Queensland** (<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/births-deaths-marriages-and-divorces/birth-death-and-marriage-certificates/marriage-certificates/applying-for-a-marriage-certificate>)
- **South Australia** (<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/births-deaths-and-marriages/certificates/marriage-or-relationship>)
- **Western Australia** (<https://www.wa.gov.au/service/justice/civil-law/apply-marriage-certificate>)
- **Tasmania** (<https://www.justice.tas.gov.au/bdm/apply-for-a-marriage-certificate>)
- **Northern Territory** (<https://nt.gov.au/law/bdm/apply-for-birth-death-or-marriage-certificate>)
- **Australian Capital Territory** (<https://www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au/s/article/apply-for-a-birth-death-or-marriage-certificate-tab-how-to-apply-for-my-marriage-certificate>)