



# COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO

Ernest J. Dronenburg, Jr.  
ASSESSOR/RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

www.sdarcc.com



## ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, SUITE 103  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92101-2422  
(619) 236-3771 • FAX (619) 557-4056

## RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE

1600 PACIFIC HIGHWAY, SUITE 260  
P.O. BOX 121750, SAN DIEGO, CA 92112-1750  
(619) 237-0502 • FAX (619) 557-4155

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What do we need to do to get a marriage license and get married?**

- You must be at least 18 years old. If either party is under age 18, you will need to contact Juvenile Court. The number is (858) 634-1600.
- To purchase a marriage license you must make an appointment and appear together at the office of the San Diego County Clerk and present valid government issued photo identification submit a completed marriage license application and pay the license fee.
- The purchase of the license only permits you to become married. Once a license is issued you have 90 days to have a ceremony performed and on the day of your ceremony then you are married. Our office can issue the marriage license and perform a civil ceremony.

### **What forms of identification are acceptable?**

- A current Driver's License or state identification
- A current Passport
- A current Military identification card

### **Do I need a blood test?**

- No. In California, there is no blood test requirement.

### **Is there a residency requirement to get married in California?**

- No. There is no residency requirement.

### **Do I need proof of divorce/dissolution?**

- If either party has been divorced or filed a "Termination of Domestic Partnership" within the last 90 days, it is recommended that he or she bring the final divorce decree of termination documents with the judge's signature and date.

### **I was legally married in another state/country. Can I get married here also?**

- No. You are already legally married.

### **Can I walk into your office for a marriage license or ceremony without an appointment?**

- No. Appointments for licenses and ceremonies are required. With the exception of announced holidays and seasonal events (see our homepage for any announcements). Please call (619) 237-0502 to make an appointment.
- You will be given an "appointment number" when you first call in. Keep this number handy in case you have to call us and re-schedule or have any questions.
- You will be seen in the order of your appointment and sign-in time. It is suggested that you sign in approximately 15 minutes before your scheduled appointment time and have the marriage license application completed.
- If you are late, you will be seen when there is an available opening in the schedule.

### **Where can I get a marriage license application?**

- Applications are available [here](#).
- Applications are also available at any of our offices.

### **What is the difference between a non-confidential license and a confidential marriage license?**

- Non-confidential license:
  - Once chosen, cannot be changed to a confidential license at a later date.
  - The ceremony may take place anywhere in the state of California.
  - Certified copies are only available to authorized persons (spouse, parent, sibling, grandparent, or child of the party).
  - Mail-in requests for certified copies must have a notarized signature from an authorized requestor.
- Confidential license:
  - Is a confidential record. Once chosen, it cannot be changed to non-confidential license at a later date.
  - Both parties must be at least 18 years of age and living together already as a couple.
  - The ceremony may take place anywhere in the state of California.
  - Certified copies are only available to the couple or by court order signed by a judge.
  - Mail requests for certified copies must have a notarized signature from either party to the marriage.

### **When we purchase our marriage license, must we have a ceremony that day?**

- No, you are not required to have the ceremony on the same day as you purchase the license.
- The marriage license is valid for 90 days. You must have a ceremony within 90 days.
- If you wish to have your ceremony with our office, but on a different day, be sure to have a separate appointment scheduled.

### **Does purchasing a marriage license make us married?**

- No. You must have a ceremony performed to finalize the marriage.
- Pursuant to Family Code Section 400, a marriage may be solemnized by any of the following who is of the age of 18 years or older:
  - A priest, minister, rabbi, or authorized person of any religious denomination.
  - A judge or retired judge, commissioner of civil marriages or retired commissioner of civil marriages, commissioner or retired commissioner, or assistant commissioner of a court of record in this state.
  - A judge or magistrate who has resigned from office.
  - Any of the following judges or magistrates of the United States.
  - A justice or retired justice of the United States Supreme Court.
  - A judge or retired judge of a court of appeals, a district court, or any court created by an act of Congress the judges of which are entitled to hold office during good behavior.
  - A judge or retired judge of a bankruptcy court or a tax court.
  - A United States magistrate or retired magistrate.
  - A legislator or constitutional officer of this state or a member of Congress who represents a district within this state, while that person holds office.

### **How soon can I get married?**

- You can have a civil ceremony as soon as you have purchased a marriage license.
- You may have a civil ceremony with our office, or go to a chapel, church, or other location instead. The person solemnizing the marriage has ten (10) days to return the license for recording.

### **Do I need to bring a witness?**

- You do not need a witness to purchase a marriage license if you are having your ceremony elsewhere.
- If you are having a civil ceremony in our office and have purchased a non-confidential license you will need to bring at least one witness. If you do not have a witness, we can provide one for an additional \$18.00 fee.
- If you are having a ceremony in our office and have already purchased a confidential marriage license, you will not need a witness.

**What are our location choices to get a license and have a civil ceremony?**

<b>Days</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Phone</b>
Monday-Friday	<b>Downtown</b> County Administration Center 1600 Pacific Highway Suite 273 San Diego, CA 92101	(619) 237-0502 Appointment Only 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday	<b>San Marcos</b> 141 E. Carmel St. San Marcos, 92078	(619) 237-0502 Appointment Only 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday	<b>El Cajon</b> 200 S. Magnolia Ave. El Cajon, 92020	(619) 237-0502 Appointment Only 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Monday-Friday	<b>Chula Vista</b> 590 3rd Ave. Chula Vista, 91910	(619) 237-0502 Appointment Only 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
*Saturday Every 3 <sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month	<b>Kearny Mesa</b> 9225 Clairemont Mesa Blvd San Diego, CA 92123	(619) 237-0502 Appointment Only 9:00 a.m.- 2:30p.m.

\*With the exception of December 2016, instead we will be open December 10,2016

**How many guests will the ceremony rooms accommodate?**

- Downtown San Diego 15 guests
- San Marcos 20 guests
- El Cajon 10 guests
- Chula Vista 15 guests
- Kearny Mesa 15 guests

**How many guests may I invite if I have an outdoor ceremony appointment at the Downtown location?**

- You may bring as many guests as you wish for an outdoor ceremony. Please be aware however, that all outdoor ceremonies are weather permitting and subject to change without notice.

**When will our marriage certificate be ready for purchase?**

- The license must then be returned to the County Clerk for recording. A certified copy is usually available two (2) weeks after it has been received in our downtown office.
- A certified copy is \$15.00.

**How do I change my name?**

- [The Name Equality Act of 2007](#) gives specific rights to parties at the time they are applying for a California marriage license to choose and list on the marriage license the new name that each party will

go by after marriage. Parties are not required to have the same name, nor are they required to change their name.

- If one or both parties want to have their new name shown on the marriage license, the new name must be entered on the marriage license application at the time they are applying for the marriage license. In the event that you wish to change your name, this is the one opportunity to change your name without going to court and paying an additional fee for the legal name change.
- You may not change your first name using this process.
- You cannot amend the marriage license after it has been issued to add or change the name you wish to be known as after you are married. The name you indicate on the marriage license application will be your name on the marriage license/certificate and cannot be changed by the County Clerk.
- A certified copy of the marriage certificate containing the new name, or retaining the former name, shall constitute proof that the use of the new name or retention of the former name is lawful.
- The marriage certificate is used by multiple local, state, federal and private agencies. Questions concerning name changes should be directed to the Social Security Administration, California Department of Motor Vehicles or any other applicable agencies before applying for the marriage license.

#### **What are the costs?**

- |                                     |         |
|-------------------------------------|---------|
| • Non-confidential Marriage License | \$70.00 |
| • Confidential Marriage License     | \$89.00 |
| • Civil Ceremony                    | \$88.00 |
| • Witness Fee                       | \$18.00 |
| • Certified Copy                    | \$15.00 |

#### **What forms of payment are accepted?**

- Cash, check, money orders
- Credit cards: MasterCard, American Express, Discover (plus an additional \$2.50 Service Fee)
- Debit cards: Visa, MasterCard, American Express, Discover (plus an additional \$2.50 Service Fee)

#### **What is the “Deputy Marriage Commissioner for a Day” program?**

- For a fee of \$80.00, your friend or relative may be commissioned to perform your wedding.
- This person shall appear in person at any of our 5 office locations with the completed [application](#) and valid government issued identification. The clerk will give a review of the instructions to the applicant and administer the Oath of Office. The applicant will receive the “Certificate of Appointment” in the mail in approximately 7 working days.
- If the applicant cannot appear in person before the ceremony, they may submit the required [notarized application](#) by mail at least 4 weeks in advance for processing.
- The applicant will receive their Certificate of Appointment in the mail along with a sample of the vows and instructions on how to complete the marriage license.
- The “Deputy Marriage Commissioner for a Day” applicant should mail the completed and notarized application at least 4 weeks prior to the wedding date to:

San Diego Recorder/County Clerk  
Attn: Marriage Commissioner  
P.O Box 121750  
San Diego, CA 92112-1750