



Instructions for completing the application for registration as a marriage celebrant

IMPORTANT: You **cannot** accept a Notice of Intended Marriage and we strongly advise you not to book or agree to perform a marriage until you have been notified by the Registrar of Marriage Celebrants (the Registrar) that you have been registered as a marriage celebrant.

GENERAL COMMENTS

These instructions are for persons wishing to apply to the Registrar of Marriage Celebrants for registration as a marriage celebrant under Part IV, Division 1, Subdivision C and Subdivision D of the *Marriage Act 1961*.

You should only complete this application if you have the required qualifications or skills.

See the 'Qualifications, skills and knowledge of the law' section below for more details.

The application for Registration as a Marriage Celebrant form (application form) is designed to determine whether you are a fit and proper person to be registered as a marriage celebrant (section 39C of the *Marriage Act 1961*). Completing the necessary qualification and paying for your application does not automatically entitle you to registration as a marriage celebrant.

Please write clearly on the application form and associated documents and ensure you accurately complete each section.

FEES AND CHARGES

Aspiring marriage celebrants are required to pay an application fee of \$600, unless an exemption has been granted.

If your application is successful, you will need to pay the annual \$240 celebrant registration charge (or part thereof, depending on the timing of your registration).

In limited circumstances, an exemption from these fees and charges may be granted. Guidelines on eligibility are available on the 'Becoming a marriage celebrant' page of our website www.ag.gov.au/marriage.

Please note all fees and charges are non-refundable.

ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS OR CERTIFIED COPIES

Throughout this application form you will be asked to attach various documents as evidence of your claims. You will need to provide an original or certified copy of your documentation.

How to make certified copies of original documents

- A full list of people who can certify your documents are available at www.ag.gov.au/statdec or on the back of the Commonwealth statutory declaration form.
- You will need to show the person the original document and the copy at the same time.

- The person certifying the copy of an original document may do so by attesting to the following words on the copied document: 'I have sighted the original of this document and certify it to be a true copy.' The person should sign under that statement and print their full name, qualification (ie Justice of the Peace), and the date.

SUPPLEMENTING MATERIAL IN THE APPLICATION FORM

There are a number of sections within the application form that have only limited space. For those sections, you may wish to add extra pages to the application form to provide full responses to the material requested.

ASSESSING YOUR APPLICATION

IMPORTANT: If your application is missing any necessary materials or information, it may result in your application being returned to you.

It will usually take three months from the date a formally 'complete' application is received for it to be assessed and the applicant notified of the result. The time taken depends on factors such as the thoroughness of your application. If the Registrar requests further information from you in order to assess your application it may take longer than three months for you to be notified of the result.

The Registrar must deal with applications in the order they are received (subsection 39D(2) of the Marriage Act). Each application is issued with a process number and assessed in process number order.

OUTCOME OF ASSESSMENT OF YOUR APPLICATION

You will be notified in writing of the Registrar's decision within three months of receiving a complete application.

If the Registrar decides not to register you as a marriage celebrant you will be informed of the reasons for this decision in writing (subsection 39D(7) of the Marriage Act). If so, you are entitled to seek a review of the Registrar's decision from the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (subsection 39J(1) of the Marriage Act). Information about the AAT and its processes is available at www.aat.gov.au.

APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AS A MARRIAGE CELEBRANT

PERSONAL DETAILS

IMPORTANT: You should be contactable at all times while your application is being assessed. This will ensure your application is processed as quickly as possible.

Evidence of date of birth

One of the criteria required for registration as a marriage celebrant is that you are 18 years or over (paragraph 39C(1)(a) of the Marriage Act).

Evidence can be provided as a certified copy of one of the following documents:

- birth certificate
- driver's licence, or
- passport.

If your evidence of date of birth is in a different name to the name you are using in your application, you must provide evidence of your change of name. For example, if you provide a certified copy of your birth certificate and you have changed your name as a result of marriage, you must also provide a certified copy of your marriage certificate.

PREVIOUS AUTHORISATION AS A MARRIAGE CELEBRANT

If you have been previously authorised as a marriage celebrant in Australia you must provide full details and evidence of the cessation of your previous authorisation.

This question applies to you if at any time in the past you have been:

- an officer employed by a state or territory in a position that authorised you to solemnise marriages (referred to as a 'state officer')
- a minister of religion for a recognised denomination, or
- a Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant performing civil or religious ceremonies.

Evidence of cessation as a marriage celebrant

- If you were a **state officer**, submit evidence that you no longer work in the position that is authorised to solemnise marriage ceremonies (i.e. a letter from your employer or supervisor) and provide details of your current circumstances.
- If you were a **minister of religion for a recognised denomination**, submit a letter of revocation of your authorisation from the relevant state or territory Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, or the nominating authority for the recognised denomination you belonged to.
- If you were a Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant performing civil or religious ceremonies, please provide your previous A number.

CONTACT DETAILS

Email address

Please ensure your application includes a current email address that you monitor. All requests for further information will be sent to your nominated email address and it is your responsibility to monitor that email address.

Evidence of principal residential address

The evidence you provide should show your name, principal address and be dated within six months of the date you submit your application.

Please provide a certified copy of one of the following documents:

- electoral enrolment
- rates notice
- lease
- utility bill (phone, electricity, gas, etc), or
- bank statement.

A driver's licence is not evidence of your principal residential address as it does not include a date of issue.

CONDUCTING RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

Evidence for conducting a religious ceremony

If you propose to conduct marriage ceremonies for an independent religious organisation, you will need to provide the following:

- the organisation's written confirmation that you are permitted to conduct religious ceremonies for that organisation
- a copy of the religious organisation's marriage ceremony to enable us to verify that it meets the legal requirements under the *Marriage Act 1961*, and
- your written undertaking that you will use the organisation's marriage ceremony once we have verified that it meets the legal requirements under the Marriage Act.

REGISTER OF MARRIAGE CELEBRANTS

The Register lists the name, contact details and addresses of each Commonwealth-registered marriage celebrant. It is published on the department's website and is available to the public. The Register also identifies whether a person is a religious marriage celebrant.

Please note the following information:

- Under section 43 of the Marriage Regulations 2017 you are required to provide your title, full name and suburb, town or locality including State/Territory and postcode and any contact details you wish to be entered.
- You are not permitted to use nicknames. You must provide your full legal name.

QUALIFICATIONS, SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW

You cannot be registered as a marriage celebrant unless you have at least one of the qualifications mentioned in section 39 of the Marriage Regulations 2017.

Qualifications – Certificate IV in Celebrancy or an equivalent university qualification

You will need to provide a certified copy of your qualification. The certificate issued by the Registered Training Organisation (RTO) for completion of the Certificate IV in Celebrancy or an equivalent university qualification must contain the following requirements:

- confirm that all units of competency mandatory for registration as a marriage celebrant have been successfully completed
- confirm that all required training materials were included in the delivery of the mandatory marriage celebrancy units
- include the following statement: 'Units completed for this qualification meet the requirements of the Registrar of Marriage Celebrants, as set out in subsection 39(2) of the Marriage Regulations 2017', and
- include a transcript of units completed as part of the qualification (including titles and national codes for each unit).

If your certificate does not include the statements listed above, you should request an amended certificate from your RTO provider.

Celebrancy Skills

This section should only be completed by those who are submitting their application on the basis of skills in an Australian Indigenous language and who wish to be appointed as a marriage celebrant to serve Indigenous communities.

For more information on the skills required to satisfy the 'Skills' criteria, please email the department at marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au.

If your application relies upon the 'Skills' in an Australian Indigenous language, you do not need to complete the 'Qualifications' section.

CONVICTIONS FOR OFFENCES – CRIMINAL HISTORY

In determining whether you are a fit and proper person to become a marriage celebrant, the Registrar must take into account whether you have a conviction for an offence, punishable by imprisonment for one year or longer, against a law of the Commonwealth, a State or a Territory (see paragraph 39C(2)(d) of the Act).

Unless the spent convictions¹ process applies, this means that if you were ever convicted of an offence carrying a **possible** prison sentence of one year or longer, you must answer yes to this question, even if you were not imprisoned.

Complete

- the [informed consent form](#) for a national police history check

The Marriage Law and Celebrants Section (MLCS) uses the Document Verification Service (DVS) to verify information presented by individuals as evidence of identity. The following documents are assessed via the DVS and certified copies of these documents are **not required** when submitting to MLCS:

- Australian Birth Certificate
- Australian Passport
- Australian State or Territory Driver's Licence

All other documents used to prove identification must be a certified copy of the original document.

BUSINESS INTERESTS AND OTHER INTERESTS

In determining whether you are a fit and proper person to become a marriage celebrant, the Registrar must take into account whether you have an actual or potential conflict of interest between your proposed practice as a marriage celebrant and your business or other interests (paragraph 39C(2)(e) of the Marriage Act). The Registrar must also take into account whether your registration as a marriage celebrant would be likely to result in you gaining a benefit in respect of another business that you own, control or carry out (paragraph 39C(2)(f) of the Marriage Act).

The *Conflict of interest and benefit to business guidelines* will assist you in considering these issues. The guidelines can be found on the department's website at www.ag.gov.au/celebrants.

¹ Further information on [spent convictions](#)

Questions in this section are designed to assist the applicant identify these possible issues. If you tick 'yes' to any of these questions, you will need to provide thorough details (i.e. a description of your employment or business) and explain how you would manage them if you were registered as a marriage celebrant.

Please ensure that you state your occupation in response to the first question in Part F. If you are retired, unemployed, a carer or performing home duties, please say so.

RELATIONSHIP SUPPORT SERVICES – KNOWLEDGE AND COMMITMENT

Your responses in this section should demonstrate that you conducted research into relationship support services in your region and developed an understanding and knowledge of the range and nature of those services.

Identifying organisations that provide relationship support services

You will need to list the name, address and other contact details of a number of relationship support services in your region. We recommend that you provide information on at least three different services, including private, not-for-profit and community organisations.

You should include relationship support services that:

- meet the needs of couples in your area. For example, if you live in a remote location you could provide information about telephone or distance providers
- are for couples from a diverse range of backgrounds and income levels
- include major not-for-profit family relationship support services
- are not simply a number of different locations for one organisation. For example, Relationships Australia in three different states, and
- are organisations that specifically provide services to enhance and sustain couples throughout their relationship (ie not only marriage preparation and education).

The services you list should not be those that have a limited or targeted purpose (ie Alcoholics Anonymous, Men's Helpline or financial assistance programs funded by government).

Describing the services offered by each organisation

For each of the relationship support services you list, you should include:

- **contact details** for each relationship support organisation listed
- a description of the **different** services each organisation offers
- the **availability** of services (ie times and days courses/sessions are run), and
- any **costs** associated with the use of those services.

COMMUNITY STANDING

You should provide detailed information about your involvement in community activities, whether they are related to your occupation, interests or volunteer activities. You should only include the **current** community activities you are involved with.

This could involve listing the community organisations you are involved with and describing your role in each organisation.

- If you are not involved in the community then you should explain the reasons for that (i.e. you are currently a full-time carer for a family member).

OTHER MATTERS

This section gives you an opportunity to highlight any other skills, qualifications or attributes you consider relevant to your application and have not yet been addressed elsewhere in the Application Form.

REFEREE REPORTS

You need to provide three independent referee reports to support the claims you have made in the Application Form. The report should be completed using the [referee report template](#).

ASSESSING YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW

As part of your application, you are required to complete a set of written questions, a Notice of Intended Marriage (NOIM) form scenario and a sample marriage ceremony to determine your knowledge of the law relating to the solemnisation of marriages by marriage celebrants.

Knowledge of the law is one of the factors the Registrar will consider in determining whether you are a fit and proper person to be a marriage celebrant (paragraph 39C(2)(a) of the Marriage Act).

Applicants applying through the online form will receive the questions on the knowledge of the law and the NOIM/Sample ceremony scenario in 'Part 2' of the online application.

Applicants who are applying with a hard copy application will need to contact us via email at marriagecelebrantssection@ag.gov.au to receive the questions on the knowledge of the law and the NOIM/Sample ceremony.

You should provide your answers when submitting your hardcopy application.

UNDERTAKINGS RELATING TO OBLIGATIONS UNDER SECTION 39G OF THE *MARRIAGE ACT 1961*

IMPORTANT: These undertakings are a serious matter and you should consider them carefully before signing. Marriage celebrants have a complex set of responsibilities under the law and failure to meet these is a criminal offence in some cases.

This section requires you to 'Agree' to the obligations as set out under section 39G of the Act.

Once agreed to, this section forms undertakings from you to the Registrar stating that you will comply with the required obligations as a marriage celebrant if you are registered.

ATTACHMENTS – CHECKLIST

Ensure you have attached all the required documents to your application form. This includes:

- evidence of your principal residential address
- evidence of your cessation as an authorised celebrant (if applicable)
- evidence of your qualification (if applicable)
- evidence of your fluency in a language other than English and the Indigenous language(s) (if applicable)
- criminal history consent form
- 100 points of evidence for identity
- three referee reports
- your answers to the questions on the knowledge of the law
- your sample notice of intended marriage, and
- your sample marriage ceremony.

SIGNATURE

By signing the Application Form you are declaring that the information you have provided throughout your application is true in every detail.