



## State of Connecticut

### SENATE

STATE CAPITOL  
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106-1591

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**RANKING MEMBER**  
COMMERCE COMMITTEE  
FINANCE, REVENUE & BONDING COMMITTEE

**MEMBER**  
LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE  
TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

### Testimony in Favor of SB 1115 An Act Concerning Wedding Officiants

#### Judiciary Committee

March 23, 2015

Sen. Coleman, Rep. Tong, Ranking Members Kissel and Rebimbas, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am Sen. Scott Frantz, and I am testifying in favor of Senate Bill 1115: An Act Concerning Wedding Officiants.

The idea for this bill came from a constituent of mine.

My constituent pointed out that in Massachusetts, a One-Day Marriage Designation allows a friend/family member to perform a wedding ceremony.

Under Massachusetts law, the Commonwealth can designate non-clergy individuals to solemnize a marriage, such as a friend or a family member.

Attached is information about Massachusetts' law:

<http://www.mass.gov/governor/constituent-services/one-day-marriage/faqs.html>

<http://www.mass.gov/governor/constituent-services/one-day-marriage/one-day-marriage-designation-new-application.html>

I ask you to please consider updating Connecticut's laws in this area.

Scott Frantz



The Official Website of the Governor of Massachusetts

## Governor Charlie Baker

Home > Constituent Services > One Day Marriage Designation > FAQs

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. WHO CAN PERFORM A WEDDING CEREMONY?

Couples can be married either by a member of the clergy, Justice of the Peace, or friend/family member. As of May 17, 2004, same-sex couples can be married in Massachusetts. To have a friend/family member perform the ceremony, a One-Day Marriage Designation is required.

#### 2. WHAT IS A ONE-DAY MARRIAGE DESIGNATION?

According to Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 207, S. 39, the Governor can designate non-clergy individuals to solemnize a marriage, such as a friend or a family member. It is not meant for a member of the clergy or Justice of the Peace residing in Massachusetts or out of state. The only exception is for clergy residing outside of the United States.

Clergy members are required to register with the Secretary of Commonwealth. Please contact their office at (617) 727-2836 to obtain those guidelines.

*The One-Day Marriage Designation is not a marriage license. To contact a city or town clerk, please call Citizen Information Service at (617) 727-7030 or (800) 392-6090.*

#### 3. HOW DO I APPLY FOR A ONE-DAY MARRIAGE DESIGNATION?

An applicant must fill out the [Application Form](#) on the Governor's website, and send it with a letter of character reference and a check or money order made out to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for \$25.00. *Cash payments, debit or credit cards are not accepted.*

#### 4. CAN MORE THAN ONE PERSON PERFORM THE SAME WEDDING?

No. The certificate only allows for one individual to be listed. The ceremony can be tailored to include more than one speaker. The person listed on the certificate has to pronounce the wedding and sign the marriage license.

#### 5. ARE THERE REQUIREMENTS FOR A ONE-DAY MARRIAGE DESIGNATION?

The couple must have the ceremony in Massachusetts. They do not have to be residents of Massachusetts. The applicant who intends to perform the ceremony does not have to be a Massachusetts resident, but must be over 18 years of age and should not be a clergy member from another state. If you are a clergy from another state then you should fill out an application from the Secretary of State's Office. Please click [here](#) or go to [Mass.gov](#) and search for Non-Resident Clergy.

#### 6. WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT MY APPLICATION?

Ideally, applications should be mailed 6 weeks in advance. Due to high volume, we do not accept applications less than 1 week before the wedding or applications more than 3 months in advance of the ceremony.

#### 7. DO YOU ACCEPT APPLICATIONS BY FAX OR E-MAIL?

No. We do not accept the applications by fax or email because a check or money order for \$25.00 must be submitted along with the application.

#### 8. HOW ARE APPLICATIONS PROCESSED?

Once applications have been approved by the Governor's Office, they are sent to the Secretary of State's Office. The Public Records Division is responsible for printing the certificate and processing the check. The One-Day Marriage Certificate as well as information regarding what needs to be done after the ceremony will be sent to the applicant approximately one month prior to the wedding.

#### 9. HOW DO I KNOW IF MY APPLICATION HAS BEEN APPROVED?

Once approved, an email confirmation is sent out to the applicant containing information on next steps, such as how long until the certificate is mailed out and what to do if there are any changes in the date of the wedding or location. Should you not provide an email address, no confirmation email will be sent. You may call (617) 725-4055 to inquire about the status of your application.

#### 10. IF THE DATE OR LOCATION OF THE WEDDING CHANGES, DO I HAVE TO SUBMIT A NEW APPLICATION?

Yes. If the date or town of the wedding changes, a new application must be submitted. If the certificate has been issued, the Secretary of State's Office requires a check or money order for \$5.00 to pay for the re-print. *If a certificate has not been issued and no reprint is needed, you can fax the corrected application to the Governor's Office at (617) 727-9725.*

#### 11. WHAT IF THERE IS A TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR ON MY CERTIFICATE?

You must get in contact with the Secretary of State's Office at (617) 727-2836. They have the application on file, and will check to see where the error occurred. If the applicant made the error, you will have to resubmit a corrected application. The Secretary of State's Office requires a check or money order for \$5.00 for the re-print. *If it is their error, they will reissue a new certificate at no cost.*

#### 12. WHAT IF THE CITY OR TOWN CLERK REJECTS MY ONE-DAY MARRIAGE DESIGNATION?

Please contact the Secretary of State's Office to reissue a new certificate at (617) 727-2836.

#### 13. WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE IF I AM RENEWING MY VOWS?

Since renewing vows is purely ceremonial, neither a Marriage License nor a One-Day Marriage Designation is required.



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The Official Website of the Governor of Massachusetts

## Governor Charlie Baker

Home > Constituent Services > One Day Marriage Designation > Application

### Application Process

[Download the Application with Instructions](#)  

Please download the application posted above before going through these instructions. The following instructions should help you complete the application for your one day marriage designation. Please refer to the most frequently asked questions section if you have questions about this process.

1. **Reason for Designation:** A personal explanation for why you have been selected to solemnize the wedding ceremony of Party A and Party B

Example: "Party A is my former roommate, I recognize their relationship with Party B and I am honored to take part in their wedding ceremony."

2. **Applicant Information:** Full name, direct email, street address and telephone number of applicant who wishes to officiate the marriage

3. **Party A and Party B:** Full legal names before wedding ceremony occurs. Full contact information. Names will appear on the certificate as written here

4. **City/Town of Wedding:** Please state which of the 351 Cities or Towns in Massachusetts the wedding will take place

5. **Date of Proposed Marriage:** Please state the exact calendar date the wedding ceremony is set to take place in said City or Town within the borders of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**Note: We cannot accept applications submitted more than 3 months in advance of the ceremony.**

A complete application will have the following materials submitted to the Governor's Office:

- **Application Form**
- **Letter of Reference.** The letter must be written on behalf of the individual applying to officiate the wedding attesting to the applicant's high standard of character. Cannot be written or signed by the applicant, Party A or Party B. The letter must be signed by its author. *Note:* judges, appointed and elected officials do not require letters of recommendation
- **\$25 Processing Fee.** The fee must be in the form of check or money order only made out to "The Commonwealth of Massachusetts". The Governor's Office will not accept cash, debit or credit cards

Please mail all completed application materials to:

Office of Governor Charlie Baker  
Room 271M

Attn: One-Day Marriage Designation  
State House  
Boston, MA 02133

*Note:* Applicant will receive an email from the governor's office notifying them of their acceptance. Applicant will also receive a hard-copy of the certificate of solemnization to perform the wedding ceremony approximately four weeks prior to the wedding date. Once the applicant receives the email from our office they can solemnize the ceremony. It is not necessary to have the certificate on hand

#### Additional Information

1. We require that applications be submitted with adequate time for processing, which could be anywhere between 4-6 weeks, especially during spring/summer months. i.e. an application received on June 22<sup>nd</sup> for a wedding on July 4th will NOT be processed in time.

*Please do not submit applications more than three months in advance of the wedding date*

2. Following the wedding, the Certificate of Solemnization must be submitted, along with the completed marriage license, to the city or town hall at which the couple applied for the license.

3. Statute requires the Governor to specify the specific date of the wedding and the city or town in which it will be held. Therefore, **you will need to submit a new application** if either of those details changes along with a \$5 processing fee (check/money order only).



## Commonwealth of Massachusetts One-Day Marriage Designation Instructions

The following instructions should help you complete the application for your one day marriage designation.

1. **Reason for Designation:** A personal explanation for why you have been selected to solemnize the wedding ceremony of Party A and Party B.

Example: "Party A is my former roommate, I recognize their relationship with Party B and I am honored to take part in their wedding ceremony."

2. **Applicant Information:** Full name, direct email, street address and telephone number of applicant who wishes to officiate the marriage.

3. **Party A and Party B:** Full legal names before wedding ceremony occurs. Full contact information. Names will appear on the certificate as written here.

4. **City/Town of Wedding:** Please state which of the 351 Cities or Towns in Massachusetts the wedding will take place.

5. **Date of Proposed Marriage:** Please state the exact calendar date the wedding ceremony is set to take place in said City or Town within the borders of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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A complete application will have the following materials submitted to the Governor's Office:

- **Application Form**
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- **\$25 Processing Fee.** The fee must be in the form of check or money order only made out to "The Commonwealth of Massachusetts". The Governor's Office will not accept cash, debit or credit cards.

Please mail all completed application materials to:  
Office of Governor Charlie Baker  
Attn: One-Day Marriage Designation  
State House,  
Rm 271M  
Boston, MA 02133

Feel free to call us directly at (617) 725-4055 if we can assist you in any way.

*Note:* Applicant will receive an email from the Governor's Office notifying them of their acceptance. Applicant will also receive a hard-copy of the certificate of solemnization to perform the wedding ceremony approximately four weeks prior to the wedding date. Once the applicant receives the email from our office they can solemnize the ceremony. It is not necessary to have the certificate on hand.

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**  
**One-Day Marriage Designation Application**

**Note:** This application is valid only for marriages to be solemnized within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts by individuals who are not otherwise authorized to do so. Clergy and other individuals whose offices authorize them to solemnize marriages in other states should instead obtain the *Non-Resident Clergy Petition to Solemnize Marriage* from the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

**I hereby request that Governor Baker designate me to solemnize a particular marriage for the following reason:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you are a judge or elected official: \_\_\_\_\_

**Party A Information**

**Party B Information**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

**City/Town of Wedding Location:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Proposed Marriage:** \_\_\_\_\_

*I certify under penalty of perjury that all information on this form is accurate.*

**Applicant Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this application, along with the letter of recommendation and \$25 processing fee in the form of a check made out to *The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, to:**

Office of the Governor · State House, Room 271M · Boston, MA 02133 · Attn: One-Day Marriage Designation

**Should you have any questions while completing this form, please contact a member of the Governor's Office at (617) 725-4055.**