

Marriage License

General Information

- There are two sets of fees for obtaining a marriage license. One set of fees if the couple seeking the license presents a certificate of completion of a qualifying premarital education program, and another set of fees if the couple does not. If the couple has the certification, the total cost is \$26.00. Without certification, the total cost is \$61.00. Included in this cost is one certified copy of the marriage certificate. Additional copies cost \$10.00 each. Often the Social Security Administration requires a certified copy of the license application when name changes are sought.
- The court cannot accept non-local personal checks, credit cards, or debit cards. Payment for a marriage license must be in the form of cash, certified check, money order, or a local check.
- To get a marriage license without parental consent, you must be 18 years old.
- You must present proof of age: driver's license, birth certificate, draft card, Baptismal Certificate, or other state-issued photo identification.
- The applicants must be of sound mind and cannot have any undissolved marriages. If divorced, an applicant must present a copy of the final divorce decree.
- A marriage license may be issued in any county if one of the persons to be married is a resident of the State of Georgia. If neither the bride nor the groom is a resident of the state of Georgia, the license must be purchased in the county in which the ceremony is to be performed.
- If either applicant is 16 or 17 years of age, they must get parental consent. No marriage license can be issued to anyone under 16 years of age. As of July 1, 2006, pregnancy is no longer a waiver of the age requirement.
- Georgia law requires each applicant to designate the legal surname he or she will use after marriage. The applicant may choose: (1) his or her present surname; (2) spouses' surname, or (3) a combination of the two.
- Marriage licenses issued after July 1, 2003 do not require a blood test.
- Marriage ceremonies must be scheduled in advance, in either the Magistrate Court (229-431-3216) or Probate Court (229-431-2102). There is no fee for ceremonies performed during office hours.

Premarital Education Program

In order to qualify for the reduced fee, the couple must provide the court a signed and dated certificate of completion of a qualifying premarital education program.

Under O.C.G.A. § 19-3-30.1, a qualifying premarital education program shall include at least six hours of instruction involving marital issues, which may include but not be limited to conflict management, communication skills, financial responsibilities, child and parenting responsibilities, and extended family roles. The program must have been completed within twelve months prior to the application and the couple must have undergone the premarital education together. To qualify, the premarital education must have been performed by:

- a professional counselor, social worker, or marriage and family therapist
- a psychiatrist;
- a psychologist

- an active member of the clergy when in the course of his or her service as clergy, or the designee of such active member of the clergy, provided the designee is skilled and trained in premarital education.

Marriage Ceremonies

Ceremonies at the courthouse must be scheduled in advance, in either the Magistrate Court (229-431-3216) or Probate Court (229-431-2102). No fee is required for ceremonies performed during office hours.

Restrictions

The applicants must be of sound mind and cannot have any undissolved marriages. Any person who marries a person to whom he knows he is related, either by blood or by marriage, as set forth in this paragraph, shall be subject to punishment by imprisonment for not less than one nor more than three years:

- father and daughter or stepdaughter
- mother and son or stepson
- brother and sister of the whole blood or the half blood
- grandparent and grandchild
- aunt and nephew
- uncle and niece