

THE CIVIL MARRIAGE CEREMONY

Handbook for Mayors

Published by the Michigan Association of Mayors
in coordination with the Michigan Municipal League



**MICHIGAN
ASSOCIATION
OF MAYORS**

This publication, originally issued in April 1973, was prepared under sponsorship of the Michigan Association of Mayors. The Association is pleased to offer this revised edition to assist the mayors of Michigan in the performance of their authority to solemnize marriages in their communities.

Revised December 2015

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Introduction

Mayors have had the authority to solemnize marriages in the State of Michigan since Public Act 211 of 1972 was signed into law. The legislation was passed as a means of relieving pressure on the court system.

In some cities, the procedure is well established and a city staff person has been designated to assist the mayor in any way possible. Where this is not the case, mayors have turned to other mayors, the county clerk's office or court personnel for assistance. This publication is offered as a practical guide and supplement to those resources. The checklists and sample ceremonies provided may be modified and used to meet individual needs and preferences.

Although the ground rules for solemnizing marriages are the same for mayors in large and small cities, rural or urban communities, an informal survey of mayors and city staff revealed a broad array of opinions on the subject, individual style differences, and varying community needs.

Some mayors consider it “the best part of the job,” an honor and a privilege. Some see it as a contribution to the overall wellbeing of their community or as an opportunity to do something positive for their citizens. Others simply see it as part of the public service they are charged to provide as mayor. Still others find solemnizing marriages an uncomfortable “fit” for a number of reasons—religious convictions, time pressures of their full-time job, or just “on general principles.”

Not surprisingly, mayors who said they enjoy performing weddings are called upon often and tend to put something of themselves into the ceremony. (One mayor reports performing a record fourteen weddings on Valentine's Day!) These mayors often meet with the couple in advance or spend some time getting to know them just before the ceremony, provide a selection of ceremonies or allow the couple to write their own vows and present a personalized copy of the chosen text on the wedding day embossed with the city seal.

Others are able to be very accommodating about the time and place where weddings may occur. Mayors may perform marriage ceremonies anywhere in the county in which their city is located. Mayors have married couples in backyards and city parks, on river banks, boat piers, and city streets, in restaurants, gazebos, rental halls, on horseback, and even on a 747 airplane!

Whatever the circumstances, mayors offer this simple advice for those about to perform a marriage for the first time—line up a city staff person to help with the details, take some time to go through the ceremony once or twice, and then “relax and enjoy!” With the help of this handbook, we hope you will be able to do just that.

A Note on Same-Sex Marriage and Existing Michigan Law

The voters of the State of Michigan adopted an amendment to the Michigan Constitution in 2004 that provided that “the union of one man and one woman in marriage shall be the only agreement recognized as a marriage...” However, the U.S. Supreme Court, on June 26, 2015, held that:

[T]he right to marry is a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment couples of the same-sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty. The Court now holds that same-sex couples may exercise the fundamental right to marry. [*Obergefell v Hodges*; 576 US ___ (2015)]

The Michigan Court of Appeals has already considered the *Obergefell* decision in an opinion holding that the equitable parent doctrine applies to a same-sex marriage held in Canada. Here the court held that “[t]he Supreme Court therefore held state laws, including Michigan’s constitutional provision defining marriage as a union between one man and one woman..., ‘to the extent they exclude same-sex couples from civil marriage on the same terms and conditions as opposite-sex couples.’” [*Stankevich v Milliron*, unpublished per curiam opinion of the Court of Appeals, issued November 19, 2015 (Docket No. 310710)]

Michigan statutory language has not been changed since *Obergefell* and there remain many unanswered questions in family law regarding the impact of the decision due to the gender-specific language in the law. Until the legislature addresses the issues caused by the language, the answers will have to come from the judiciary, which would come piecemeal over some time. Most of these questions concern issues after a marriage has ended. However, an example of this language issue that arises before the marriage is that of consanguinity, as state law prohibits a man from marrying “his mother, sister, grandmother...” [MCL 551.3] and a woman from marrying “her father, brother, grandfather...” [MCL 551.4]

Therefore, technically under the statute a woman could marry her father and a man could marry his mother. Obviously, this goes against the spirit of the law, which is to prevent individuals from marrying people to whom they are too closely related, and would likely be a non-issue if ever presented to a Court. However, the fact remains that much of the statutory language relative to family law needs to be updated in light of *Obergefell*, which could lead to other unanticipated changes concerning conducting marriage ceremonies.

This Handbook seeks to inform mayors of the law as it currently stands. Because the law is likely to change in either sweeping or nuanced form, however, mayors should do their best to utilize resources available to keep abreast of such changes and be fully advised as to how their role in a marriage ceremony is impacted.

Outline of Marriage Ceremony Procedure

- City council determines mandatory marriage fee to be deposited in the general fund.
- Informational visit or telephone call is made by the couple to the county clerk.
- Appointment for the ceremony is made with the mayor.
- Both parties receive educational materials regarding the transmission and prevention of venereal disease and HIV infection and are issued a certificate.
- Formal application is made for the marriage license from the county clerk.
- County clerk issues license to marry.
- The couple appears before the mayor with license at the scheduled time.
- Two witnesses to the ceremony are registered.
- The ceremony is performed; the marriage is solemnized.
- Both the duplicate and the original license are signed by the mayor.
- Mayor gives the first duplicate license to the couple; the original and the second duplicate copy are sent to the county clerk within ten days.
- The fee is paid by the couple to the mayor and deposited in the city's general fund.
- The marriage is entered into the mayor's official journal of marriages. (See sample journal in Appendix 7)

Marriage Ceremony Procedure and Marriage Law in Brief

Authority

Mayors were given the authority to perform marriages in Michigan in 1972 when Public Act 211 was signed into law. [See Michigan Compiled Laws 551.7(1)(f)]

Village presidents were not given the authority to perform marriages. Mayors pro tem may solemnize marriages during a mayor's absence. [Mich. Atty. Gen. Op. No. 6985 (June 8, 1998)]

Mayors are not required by law to perform marriages. Some mayors thoroughly enjoy the responsibility and contribute extra personal time and effort. Some confine marriage ceremonies to a designated day of the week or a certain location. Others choose not to perform the ceremony at all.

Also authorized to solemnize a marriage are: a district court judge or magistrate; a municipal probate or federal judge; a county clerk in the county in which the clerk serves, or in a county over 2,000,000 a designee of the county clerk in the county in which the clerk serves; and an authorized minister of the gospel or clerk or religious practitioner. [MCL 551.7(a) to (j)]

Fees

City council is required to set the marriage fee, by statute. The fees collected are to be deposited in the city's general fund. The mayor collects the fee at the time of marriage. [MCL 551.7(3)]

Fees for this service generally fall in the \$25 to \$50 range. (See Appendix 1 for a sample Resolution).

Form

No particular form is required to solemnize a marriage except the parties "... shall solemnly declare, in the presence of the person solemnizing the marriage and the attending witnesses, that they take each other as husband and wife;..." [MCL 551.9] (See Appendix 6 for sample ceremonies).

Jurisdiction

A mayor may perform a marriage ceremony anywhere in a county in which that city is located. [MCL 551.7(1)(f)]

License

A marriage license is required by state law. The license is issued by the county clerk of the county in which either party resides. If both parties are non-residents of the state, they must obtain the license from the county in which the marriage will be performed. [MCL 551.2, 551.101]

As a first step and to avoid any later misunderstanding, basic information concerning the procedure to follow should be obtained by the couple directly from the county clerk's office.

To issue a license, the county clerk will require a signed application attesting to the parties' competency under the law to enter into marriage [MCL 551.102] and a certificate indicating the couple has received educational materials regarding the transmission and prevention of venereal disease and HIV infection [MCL 333.5119]. Both of these requirements are usually met when the couple applies for the license with the county clerk.

Parties to a marriage must be 18 years of age or older, or 16 years of age with a parent's or legal guardian's written consent. [MCL 551.103]

A license fee is required, (\$20 for residents, \$30 for non-residents). [MCL 551.103]

Three days after the date of application, one or both of the contracting parties may pick up the license at the county clerk's office. **The license is good for 33 days.** The clerk's office may expedite the three-day wait "for good and sufficient cause shown." [MCL 551.103a]

Following the ceremony, a completed copy of the license is given to one of the parties joined in marriage. The original license is returned to the county clerk issuing the license **within 10 days.** [MCL 551.104]

Notice

As a courtesy to the mayor, and to allow the couple adequate time to meet state license requirements, at least two to three weeks' notice to the mayor is desirable. At that time, an appointment for the marriage can be made and special arrangements considered. General information in some written format might be made available to the parties to the marriage to remind them of all the steps to be followed in preparation for the wedding day.

Oath

Mayors are no longer required to administer the marriage oath. This requirement was removed when section 551.8 of the marriage law was repealed by Public Act 64 of 1983.

Penalties

"If a person authorized to solemnize marriages knowingly joins any persons in marriage contrary to the provision of this chapter, he or she shall forfeit for each offense a sum not exceeding \$500.00." [MCL 551.14]

"If any person should undertake to join others in marriage, knowing that he is not lawfully authorized so to do, or knowing of any legal impediment to the proposed marriage, he shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by imprisonment in the county jail not more than 1 year, or by a fine not less than 50 nor more than 500 dollars, or by both such fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court." [MCL 551.15]

"Any clergyman or magistrate who shall join together in marriage, parties who have not delivered to him a properly issued license, as provided for in this act, or who shall violate any of the provision of this act, shall be adjudged guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine of 100 dollars, or, in default of payment thereof, by imprisonment in the county jail for a term of 90 days." [MCL 551.106]

"Any person, whose duty it shall be to return a marriage certificate to the county clerk, who shall neglect to return said certificate, shall be adjudged guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine of not exceeding 100 dollars or 90 days imprisonment, or both, in the discretion of the court." [MCL 551.107]

Record

The mayor must keep "an accurate record of all marriages solemnized in a book used expressly for that purpose." [MCL 551.7(2), 551.104]. (See sample journal in Appendix 7).

Signatures

Upon solemnization of the marriage vows, the mayor must affix his or her signature and official title to both the original and duplicate licenses. Typewriting such information underneath the handwritten form assures legibility for proper recording.

Witnesses

A marriage requires the presence of at least two witnesses at the ceremony. [MCL 551.9]

The mayor must obtain the signatures of the witnesses and the address of their residences on the marriage certificate and at the bottom of the marriage license. This may be done before the ceremony.

Mayor's Checklist

1. Check the license for correct spelling of names and addresses.
2. Check the date of issue of the license. After 33 days, the license is void.
3. Solemnize the marriage.

Complete the certificate of marriage. Use black ink. Except for the mayor's signature, all spaces are to be filled in by typewriter or printed legibly.

The mayor's name and title may be either typed or printed under his or her signature. For legibility, the witnesses' names should also be typed or printed under their signatures.

4. Collect the fee.
5. Present one party with the first duplicate copy of the marriage license.
6. Return the original copy and the second duplicate copy to the county clerk within ten days of the ceremony.
7. Record the marriage in the official journal.
8. Deposit the fee with the city treasurer.

Questions and Answers about the Mayor's Authority

- Q. Can the mayor perform a marriage ceremony outside the city's corporate limits?
- A. Yes. Mayors may perform marriage ceremonies anywhere in a county in which their city is located. [MCL 551.7(1)(f)]
- Some mayors agree to perform the marriage ceremony in private homes or other locations outside city hall.
- Q. Is a mayor required to pass upon the eligibility for marriage of the couple?
- A. No. Parties intending to be married obtain a license from the county clerk of the county in which either resides, or, if non-residents of the state, from the county clerk of the county in which the marriage is to be performed. It is the duty of the county clerk to pass upon the competency of the parties and their satisfactory fulfillment of all state statutes and requirements before issuance of a license to marry. [MCL 551.2, 551.101, 551.102] The mayor has been delegated only the power to solemnize the marriage.
- Q. Is a mayor required to perform a marriage ceremony upon request?
- A. No. There is no mandate under state law upon a mayor in this respect. It is in the nature of an extra service which some mayor's feel is needed in their city, while mayors of other cities feel differently. It is possible, however, that such a mandate may exist under the city charter or code of ordinances. Further, if the mayor is in the practice of conducting ceremonies, denying a request should be due a valid reason, such as scheduling.
- Q. May a mayor refuse to perform a marriage ceremony because the couple is same-sex?
- A. No. While a mayor is not required under state law to perform marriage ceremonies, a claim for discrimination could arise if the reason for refusing to perform the ceremony is because the couple is same-sex. This would be treating same-sex couples differently than opposite-sex couples and is prohibited under the Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell*.
- Q. Can the marriage ceremony contain religious themes or elements?
- A. Yes. However, mayors should be cognizant of the Establishment Clause of the U.S. Constitution, which, in part, prohibits the government from coercing people to support or participate in religion against their will. [*Lee v Weisman*, 505 U.S. 577 (1992)]. The best way to avoid an issue here would likely be to discuss the content of the ceremony with the couple and determine what, if anything, they are comfortable with including in the ceremony.
- Q. How much should a mayor charge for performing a marriage ceremony?
- A. The statute provides that the fee shall be set by the city's legislative body. Fees are to be paid to the city treasurer and deposited in the general fund of the city as general city revenues. An informal survey shows fees of \$25 to \$50 to be common in the State of Michigan.
- Q. Can a city deposit fees received for marriage ceremonies performed by the mayor in a specific fund, or may the mayor keep such a fee personally?
- A. No. State law requires that the fee collected by the mayor "be paid to the city treasurer and deposited in the general fund of the city at the end of the month." [MCL 551.7(3)] However, once in the city's general fund, the city may spend the money as it sees fit.

- Q. Can an acting mayor or mayor pro tem solemnize a marriage?
- A. Yes, a mayor pro tem is authorized to perform routine mayoral duties during a mayor's absence, even if a city charter fails to recite the specific duty. Solemnizing a marriage, being a ministerial act, is one such routine mayoral duty. [Mich. Atty. Gen. Op. No. 6985 (June 8, 1998)]

Summaries of Selected Provisions of Law Governing Marriage

This summary of selected provisions of the Michigan law governing marriage is taken from the Michigan Compiled Laws, Chapter 551. For amendments to the laws after November 2015, please consult your city attorney, court office, and/or county clerk.

551.2 Marriage a civil contract, need for consent, license and solemnization

Marriage, so far as its validity is concerned, is a civil contract, to which the consent of parties capable in law of contracting, is essential. Consent alone will not be enough to effectuate a legal marriage on and after January 1, 1957. Consent shall be followed by obtaining a license... and solemnization, as authorized by...Sections 7 to 18 of this Chapter.

551.3 Persons a man cannot marry¹

A man shall not marry his mother, sister, grandmother, daughter, granddaughter, stepmother, grandfather's wife, son's wife, grandson's wife, wife's mother, wife's grandmother, wife's daughter, wife's granddaughter, brother's daughter, sister's daughter, father's sister, mother's sister, cousin of the first degree, or another man.

551.4 Persons a woman cannot marry²

A woman shall not marry her father, brother, grandfather, son, grandson, stepfather, grandmother's husband, daughter's husband, granddaughter's husband, husband's father, husband's grandfather, husband's son, husband's grandson, brother's son, sister's son, father's brother, mother's brother, cousin of the first degree, or another woman.

551.5 Bigamy prohibited

No marriage shall be contracted whilst either of the parties has a former wife or husband living, unless the marriage with such former wife or husband, shall have been dissolved.

551.7 Persons authorized to solemnize marriages; records; and fees

1. Marriage may be solemnized by any of the following:
 - a. A judge of the district court, anywhere in this state.
 - b. A district court magistrate, anywhere in this state.
 - c. A municipal judge, in the city in which the judge is serving or in a township over which a municipal court has jurisdiction under section 9928 of the revised judicature act of 1961, 1961 PA 236, MCL 600.9928.
 - d. A judge of probate, anywhere in this state.
 - e. A judge of a federal court.
 - f. A mayor of a city, anywhere in a county in which that city is located.
 - g. The county clerk in the county in which the clerk serves, or in another county with the written authorization of the clerk of the other county.
 - h. For a county having more than 1,500,000 inhabitants, an employee of the county clerk's office designated by the county clerk, in the county in which the clerk serves.

¹ As discussed elsewhere in this Handbook, this is a section of statutory language that *Obergefell* had an impact upon. First, the provision prohibiting a man from marrying another man is specifically invalid because it violates the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Second, the decision has the unintended result of creating a loop-hole because of the gender-specific language concerning consanguinity. However, it is likely that a court would hold that a person may not marry a similarly related individual, regardless of sex.

² See similar discussion in footnote 1.

- i. A minister of the gospel or cleric or religious practitioner, anywhere in the state, if the minister or cleric or religious practitioner is ordained or authorized to solemnize marriages according to the usage of the denomination.
 - j. A minister of the gospel or cleric or religious practitioner, anywhere in the state, if the minister or cleric or religious practitioner is not a resident of this state but is authorized to solemnize marriages under the laws of the state in which the minister or cleric or religious practitioner resides.
2. A person authorized by this act to solemnize a marriage shall keep proper records and make returns as required by section 4 of 1887, MCL 551.104.
 3. If a mayor of a city solemnizes a marriage, the mayor shall charge and collect a fee to be determined by the council of that city, which shall be paid to the city treasurer and deposited in the general fund of the city at the end of the month.
 4. If the county clerk or, in a county having more than 1,500,000 inhabitants, an employee of the clerk's office designated by the county clerk solemnizes a marriage, the county clerk shall charge and collect a fee to be determined by the commissioners of that county in which the clerk serves. The fee shall be paid to the treasurer for the county in which the clerk serves and deposited in the general fund of that county at the end of the month.

551.16 Effect on marriage of lack of authority to marry

A marriage solemnized before an individual professing to be a district judge, common pleas court judge, district court magistrate, municipal judge, judge of probate, judge of a federal court, mayor, the county clerk or, in a county having more than 2,000,000 inhabitants, an employee of the county clerk designated by the clerk to solemnize marriages, or a minister of the gospel or cleric or religious practitioner shall not be considered or adjudged to be void, nor shall the validity of the marriage be affected, on account of any want of jurisdiction or authority by that individual if the marriage was consummated with a full belief on the part of the individuals married, or either of them, that they were lawfully joined in marriage.

551.103 Minimum age

A person who is 18 years of age or older may contract marriage. A person who is 16 years of age but is less than 18 years of age may contract marriage with the written consent of 1 of the parents of the person or the person's legal guardian. . . . As proof of age, the person who intendeds to be married, in addition to the statement of age in the application, when requested by the county clerk, shall submit a birth certificate or other proof of age...

551.104 Duty of person officiating at marriage

It shall be the duty of the clergyman or magistrate, officiating at a marriage, to fill in the spaces of the certificate left blank for the entry of the time and place of marriage, the names and the residences of two witnesses, and his or her own signature in certification that the marriage has been performed by him and any and all information required to be filled in, in the spaces left blank in the certificate shall be typewritten or legibly printed. He or she shall separate the duplicate license and certificate, and deliver the half part designated duplicate to one of the parties, so joined in marriage, and within 10 days return the original to the county clerk issuing the same. It shall be the duty of such clergyman or magistrate to keep an accurate record of all marriages solemnized in a book used expressly for that purpose. (See Appendix 7 for a sample journal).

Appendices

Appendix 1

Fees:

- Table of marriage ceremony fees
- Sample fee ordinance: Coopersville
- Sample fee Resolution: Wixom

Appendix 2

Sample website information page – Kalamazoo

Appendix 3

Sample Application/Form – Algonac, Marine City, Wixom

Appendix 4

Sample Checklist – St. Clair

Appendix 5

Sample Ceremonies

- Ceremony One: Flushing
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- Ceremony Five: Lesbian and Gay Weddings Website

Appendix 6

Sample Journal: Corunna

Appendix 1 Fees

Marriage Ceremony Fee	# of cities in Michigan
\$10	5
\$20	1
\$25	6
\$30	2
\$50	13
\$75	1
\$100	3

220.01 - MARRIAGE CEREMONIES; FEE.

- (a) A fee of twenty five dollars (\$25.00) is hereby established for the Mayor to officiate at or perform a marriage ceremony.
- (b) Such fee shall be paid to the City Treasurer and shall be deposited in the General Fund of the City.
(Res. 86-07-28-030. Passed 7-28-86; Res. 96-338. Passed 10-14-96.)



passed

REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL FROM THE CITY MANAGER

APRIL 26, 1994

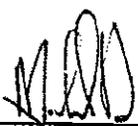
SUBJECT: Request for Approval of a Resolution Establishing Updated Marriage Fee

Background: Since 1972 when Gilbert Willis was the mayor of the City of Wixom, it has been the policy of both he and the succeeding mayors to perform marriages when requested, in the City of Wixom. The authorization to perform marriages was granted to mayors in Michigan pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 211 of 1972.

City council is required to set the marriage fee, by statute. The fees collected are to be deposited in the City's general fund. The mayor collects the fee at the time of marriage [MCL 551.7 (3)]. Since 1972, the fee has been set at \$10.00. Mayor McDonald believes that it is time to address the issue of raising the fee for marriages due to the administrative time necessary to discuss the ceremony with the prospective marriage partners, conduct followup phone calls and prepare the necessary documents.

Recommendation: On this note and in consideration of the fact that the \$10.00 fee for marriages in the City of Wixom has not changed over the last twenty-two (22) years, it is recommended that the following resolution be approved by City Council, this action being in the best interest of the City:

RESOLVED, that the fee for a marriage solemnized by the Mayor of the City of Wixom pursuant to the provisions of Public Act 211 of 1972 be and the same hereby is set at Fifty Dollars (\$50.00) which shall be collected by the Mayor at the time of said solemnization and remitted to the City Treasurer for deposit in the General Fund of the City of Wixom.



J. Michael Dornan, City Manager

/lp
CPYCNCL.MTG\MARAGFFK.ES

Appendix 2
Sample Website Information: Kalamazoo

City of Kalamazoo website:

WEDDING CEREMONY REQUEST

Public Act 211 of 1972 authorizes Mayors to solemnize marriages in the State of Michigan and in 2007 a new law authorized Mayors to perform marriage ceremonies anywhere in a county in which their City is located. The Vice Mayor can perform a wedding when the Mayor is out of town.

PRIOR TO THE CEREMONY

The Mayor may travel within the county. City of Kalamazoo Staff will work with you to schedule your ceremony.

If you would like your Ceremony performed at City Hall, there are two rooms available. One is a small conference room which hosts up to 10 people. The second is the City Commission Chambers which hosts up to 60 people. These rooms will need to be scheduled and City of Kalamazoo staff will attempt to accommodate these requests.

The Mayor uses standard vows for each ceremony he performs; a copy of the vows will be emailed to the couple for their review. If the couple has their own vows or ceremony preferences, it should be provided to the City Manager's Office two weeks prior to the ceremony.

There is a minimum fee of \$100.00, checks payable to Kalamazoo City Treasurer. It is acceptable for the couple to pay more if they choose to. The money is deposited in the Parks & Recreation fund to support the park programs. This must be paid prior to scheduling. You may mail or bring in person to: City Hall, 241 W South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.

Kalamazoo County issues Marriage Licenses which can be obtained from the Kalamazoo County Clerk located at 201 W. Kalamazoo Avenue (383-8840) up to 30 days prior to the actual wedding date.

THE DAY OF THE WEDDING CEREMONY

Please bring all copies of the Marriage License. After the ceremony, the Mayor and the witnesses will sign the license. The City of Kalamazoo will submit to the County Register of Deeds. Kalamazoo County then certifies and mails a copy to the couple.

Please contact the City Manager's Office at 269.337.8047 for additional information.

[Please complete this form.](#)

REQUEST FOR WEDDING CEREMONY

Wedding ceremonies performed by the City of Kalamazoo Mayor or Vice Mayor, by law, must be within Kalamazoo County.

Is the location(*)

Within Kalamazoo County Not in Kalamazoo County

City and Zip Code(*)

Location of Ceremony(*)

Is the venue(*)

Indoors Outdoors

Date of Ceremony(*)

Previous Month (July 2015) August 2015 Next Month (September 2015)

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Time of Ceremony(*)

Partner Information

Name of Partner 1(*)

Name of Partner 2(*)

Email(*)

Address(*)

City and Zip Code(*)

Contact Number(*)

Wedding Vows/Other Details

Wedding Vows(*)

If selecting personal/custom vows, please submit to the City Manager's Office two weeks prior to ceremony or email to mayor@kalamazoo-city.org

Please list two witnesses. They must be 18 years or older and will sign the Marriage License.

Will Rings be exchanged? (*)

Wedding Fee:

There is a minimum fee of \$100.00, with the funds going to support the park programs. It is acceptable for the couple to pay more if they choose to. Make checks payable to the Kalamazoo City Treasurer and mail or bring in person to: City of Kalamazoo, City Manager's Office, 241 W South Street, Kalamazoo, MI 49007. Please write Wedding and Last Name in the memo line of checks.

Marriage License:

Can be obtained at Kalamazoo County Clerk up to 30 days prior to the ceremony. They are located at 201 W Kalamazoo Avenue. Phone: 269.383.8840

[Kalamazoo County Marriage License Information](#)

Appendix 3

Sample Applications/Forms

**CITY OF ALGONAC
WEDDING CEREMONY INFORMATION**



DATE OF WEDDING: _____

TIME OF WEDDING: _____

ADDRESS WEDDING BEING PERFORMED AT: _____

BRIDE'S NAME: _____

BRIDE'S ADDRESS: _____

BRIDE'S PHONE NUMBER: _____

GROOM'S NAME: _____

GROOM'S ADDRESS: _____

GROOM'S PHONE NUMBER: _____

CONTACTED MAYOR AND CHECKED FOR AVAILABILITY: _____

FEE: \$50.00 PAID ON: _____

CASH/CHECK: _____



Marine City Michigan Wedding Ceremony Application

This form must be completed and returned to the Clerk's Office prior to scheduling confirmation with the Mayor. Please provide accurate and specific information on your wedding plans. Weddings will be scheduled on a first come, first service basis.

A valid Michigan Marriage License is required before the Mayor can perform the service. You must apply for the license in the County where you live. Out of State residents can only apply for a license in St. Clair County. Contact the appropriate County Clerk for license requirements and fees. The marriage license must be delivered to the City Clerk's Office and the service confirmed at least three (3) days prior to the wedding date.

A \$30.00 Processing Fee is charged by the City of Marine City, payable upon delivery of the completed Wedding Ceremony Application to the Clerk's Office. This fee is non-refundable.

Traditional Vows are used. The wording can be changed if you wish to personalize the ceremony. If you wish to change the vows, please furnish a copy at least one week prior to the ceremony.

The Mayor will meet the wedding party at the designated location to perform the ceremony. The civil ceremony lasts approximately ten to fifteen minutes. No rehearsal will be held.

Questions may be directed to the City Clerk, City of Marine City
303 South Water Street, Marine City, Michigan 48039
(810) 765-8846.

WEDDING DATE: _____

WEDDING TIME: _____

CEREMONY
LOCATION: _____

BRIDE'S NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
TELEPHONE: _____

GROOM'S NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____
TELEPHONE: _____

WILL RINGS BE EXCHANGED? _____
SINGLE _____ DOUBLE _____

TRADITIONAL VOWS? _____
PERSONALIZED VOWS? _____

FIRST WITNESS NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

SECOND WITNESS NAME: _____
ADDRESS: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/
REQUEST _____

**The Mayor is authorized to perform wedding ceremonies
within St. Clair County, Michigan**

FEE PAID: _____
DATE: _____
DATE CONFIRMED BY: _____

PLEASE PRINT & ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS AS BRIEFLY AS POSSIBLE:

BRIDE

GROOM

FULL NAME _____

PRESENT ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

DATE OF MARRIAGE: _____ TIME: _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THE CITY OF WIXOM?: _____

IF YOU ARE NOT A RESIDENT OF THE CITY, LIST NAMES OR RELATIVES OR FRIENDS RESIDING HERE:

WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE THE CEREMONY TO TAKE PLACE?: _____

IS THIS IN THE CITY OF WIXOM? _____ IS THIS A DOUBLE RING CEREMONY? _____

NAMES USED DURING CEREMONY _____

NO. OF GUESTS AT CEREMONY _____ ARE YOU WRITING YOUR OWN VOWS? _____

NAME OF PARTY GIVING BRIDE AWAY _____

FULL NAMES OF YOUR WITNESSES:

IS THIS A FORMAL DRESS AFFAIR _____ BRIDAL GOWN _____

IF YOU CHOOSE TO USE ONE OF THE CEREMONIES PROVIDED, PLEASE INDICATE BY NUMBER (1 OR 2) WHICH YOU PREFER: _____

PLEASE NOTE: ALL MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES MUST BE IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE AT LEAST THREE DAYS PRIOR TO THE WEDDING.

BRIDE SIGNATURE

GROOM SIGNATURE

Bride Phone # - please indicate home, office,
pager, car, etc.

Groom Phone # - please indicate home, office,
pager, car, etc.

Appendix 4
Sample Marriage Ceremony Checklist

City of St. Clair Marriage Ceremony Check List

- Couple contacts County Clerk: 810-985-2200
 - Couple receives educational materials and certificate
 - Formal application is made for the marriage license
 - County Clerk issues license

- Couple submits a Marriage Request to the City Clerk's Office and an appointment is made with the Mayor to perform the marriage ceremony.

- A fee of \$50.00, payable to the City of St. Clair, is submitted to the City Clerk along with the marriage license obtained from the County Clerk at least three business days prior to the ceremony.

- The couple appears before the Mayor with their two witnesses at the scheduled place and time.

- Two witnesses to the ceremony are registered and sign the license.

- The ceremony is performed.

- Both the original license and the copies are signed by the Mayor. The couple receives one copy and the original and one copy are forwarded to the County Clerk's Office within ten days.

- The marriage is entered into the Mayor's official journal of marriages.

St. Clair County Clerk
201 McMorran Boulevard
Port Huron MI 48060
810-985-2200

St. Clair City Clerk
547 N. Carney Drive
St. Clair MI 48079
810-329-7121

Appendix 5

Sample Marriage Ceremonies

The following examples are offered as a guide. You are encouraged to develop your own ceremony by combining sections from the following examples and writing sections that reflect your personal style.

Sample Ceremony One

(Mayor)

We are gathered together here in the presence of these witnesses to join this man and this woman in matrimony, which is an honorable estate, and is not to be entered into unadvisedly or lightly, but reverently and discreetly. If anyone can show just cause why this man and this woman may not lawfully be joined together, let them speak now or hereafter remain silent.

(Mayor to the Bride and Groom)

_____ and _____, I require and charge you both that if either of you know any reason why you may not lawfully be joined together in matrimony, you do now confess. If any persons are joined together otherwise than as prescribed by law, their marriage is not lawful.

Exchange of Vows

(Mayor to the Groom)

_____, will you take this woman to be your wedded wife, to live together in the estate of matrimony? Will you love, honor and keep her; in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only unto her, as long as you both shall live?

(Mayor to the Bride)

_____, will you take this man to be your wedded husband, to live together in the estate of matrimony? Will you love, honor and keep him; in sickness and in health, and forsaking all others, keep yourself only until him, so long as you both shall live?

(Mayor to Groom)

_____, take _____ by the hand and repeat after me. "I, _____, take thee _____, to be my wedded wife, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish until death do us part.

(Mayor to the Bride)

_____, repeat after me. "I, _____, take thee _____, to be my wedded husband, to have and to hold from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, until death do us part."

Giving and Receiving of Rings

(Mayor)

For as much as _____ and _____ have consented together in wedlock and have witnessed the same before this company, and thereto have given and pledged their troth, each to the other, and have declared the same by joining hands.

Now, by the authority vested in me by the State of Michigan and the Office of Mayor of the City of _____, I pronounce you to be husband and wife and extend to you my best wishes for a successful and happy married life together.

A personal thanks for granting me the honor and privilege of extending the marriage rites to you on this wonderful day. Ladies and gentlemen...may I present Mr. & Mrs. _____.

Courtesy of the City of Flushing
Office of the Mayor



Sample Ceremony Two

Wedding Vows

of _____
and _____
(Date) _____

Dearby Beloved...

We are gathered here today to witness the marriage of _____ and _____. As you come here to exchange your vows of marriage, we know that you come with the full realization of both the joys and the responsibilities that will be yours together.

Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

Please join your right hands and repeat after me:

I, _____, take you _____, to be my wedded wife, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, for as long as we both shall live.

I, _____, take you _____, to be my wedded husband, for better or for worse, for richer or for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, for as long as we both shall live.

The ring is in the shape of a circle. A circle is the symbol of the sun, the earth and the universe. It is the symbol of wholeness, of perfection and of peace. The ring that you present today is a symbol of the shared love into which you enter together.

_____, please place the ring on _____ =s finger and repeat after me... As a token of my faith and abiding love, with this ring, I thee wed.

_____, please place the ring on _____ =s finger and repeat after me... As a token of my faith and abiding love, with this ring, I thee wed.

Inasmuch as you _____ and you _____, have pledged yourselves to each other in love and fidelity, in the presence of this company, I now, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the State of Michigan as Mayor of the City of Hastings, pronounce you husband and wife, and may all that is lovely, noble and true, abide with you both forever.

You may kiss the bride.

Ladies and Gentlemen... it is with great pleasure that I introduce to you - Mr. and Mrs.

*Mayor Franklin L. Campbell
presiding*

On this day

Sample Ceremony Three

Exchange of Vows

(Mayor to the Groom)

_____ will you have this woman to be your wife; and will you promise your faithfulness to her, in all love and honor, in all duty and service, and in all faith and tenderness, to live with her, and cherish her, according to the bonds of marriage?

(Groom)

I will

(Mayor to the Bride)

_____ will you have this man to be your husband, and will you promise your faithfulness to him, in all love and honor, in all duty and service, and in all faith and tenderness, to live with him and cherish him according to the bonds of marriage?

(Bride)

I will

Giving and Receiving of Rings

(Mayor to the Groom) Repeat after me:

I, _____ take you, _____, to be my wedded wife; and I promise to be your faithful husband, in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, as long as we both shall live. This ring I give to you in token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love.

(Mayor to Bride) Repeat after me:

I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wedded husband, and I promise to be your faithful wife, in plenty and in want, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, as long as we both shall live. This ring I give to you in token and pledge of our constant faith and abiding love.

Conclusion

(Mayor)

By the authority vested in me as Mayor in and for the City of _____, County of _____, State of Michigan, I declare that you are now, husband and wife, in accordance with the laws of the State.

You may embrace.

Courtesy of the City of Midland
Office of the Mayor

Sample Ceremony Four

Explanation of Marriage

You are about to enter into a union which is most serious. It is most serious because it will bind you together for life in a relationship so close and intimate that it will profoundly influence your whole future. That future, with its hopes and disappointments, its successes and its failure, its pleasures and its pains, its joys and its sorrows, is hidden from your eyes. You know that these elements are mingled in every life, and are to be expected in your own. And so, not knowing what is before you, you take each other for better or for worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health.

Truly, then, these words are most serious. It is a beautiful tribute to your loving faith in each other that, recognizing their importance, you are nevertheless, so willing and ready to pronounce them. And because the words involve such solemn obligations, it is most fitting that you rest the security of your wedded life upon the great principle of self-sacrifice. And so you begin your married life by the voluntary and complete surrender of your individual lives in the interest of that deeper and wider life which you two have in common. Henceforth, you will belong entirely to each other; you will be one in mind, one in heart and one in affection.

No greater blessing can come to your married life than pure matrimonial love, loyal and true to the end. May then this love with which you join your hands and hearts today never fail, but grow deeper and stronger as the years go on. And if true love and unselfish spirit of sacrifice guide your every action, you can expect the greatest measure of earthly happiness that may be allotted to each of you.

Exchange of Vows

(Mayor to the Groom)

Do you, _____, take this woman _____, to be your lawful wedded wife?

(Groom)

I _____, take thee, _____, for my lawful wife, to love, honor and keep you as a faithful husband is bound to do, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and adversity, and forsaking all others, keep myself only unto you.

(Mayor to the Bride)

Do you, _____, take this man _____, to be your lawful wedded husband?

(Bride)

I, _____, take thee, _____, for my lawful husband, to love, honor and keep you as a faithful wife is bound to do, in health and in sickness, in prosperity and adversity, and forsaking all others, keep myself only unto you.

Giving and Receiving of Rings

(Groom)

With this ring I thee wed, and pledge my faith.

(Bride)

With this ring I thee wed, and pledge my faith.

Conclusion

(Mayor)

For as much as _____ and _____ have consented to live together in wedlock, and having declared their intentions before these witnesses and no legal impediments having been shown, I _____, Mayor of the City of _____, do hereby join them together in wedlock and declare that they are now husband and wife.

Courtesy of the City of Southgate
Office of the Mayor

Sample Ceremony 5

Gender Neutral Wedding Ceremony

Word of welcome

Welcome to you all on this special day.

Regardless of the wonderful and loving relationship that (Partner 1) and (Partner 2) have shared to this day, today, that relationship changes. All of us know it will grow, and become stronger and better.

Indeed, during these exciting times, this day is a day of hope; A day in which (Partner 2) and (Partner 1) demonstrate their faith and love in one another.

Expression of Intent

I now have a question for each of you.

(Partner 1), you have chosen (Partner 2) to be your life partner. Will you love and respect her/him? Will you be honest with her/him always and will you stand by her through whatever may come? (Answer: "I will")

(Partner 2), you have chosen (Partner 1) to be your life partner. Will you love and respect her/him? Will you be honest with her/him always and will you stand by her through whatever may come? (Answer: "I will")

And do you both promise to make the necessary adjustments in your personal lives in order that you may live in a harmonious relationship together? (Answer: "We do")

The Exchange of vows

(Partner 1) and (Partner 2), we now come to your vows. May I remind you that saying your vows are one thing but nothing is more challenging than living them day-by-day. What you promise today must be renewed tomorrow and each day that stretches out before you. Will you now please turn and face each other and hold hands, looking at each other.

(Partner 1), please repeat after me: In the presence of our family and friends, I (Partner 1) choose you (Partner 2) to be my life partner; To have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow, to love and to cherish, and to be faithful to you alone. This is my solemn vow.

Now (Partner 2), please repeat after me: In the presence of our family and friends, I (Partner 2) choose you (Partner 1) to be my life partner; To have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer for poorer, in sickness and in health, in joy and in sorrow, to love and to cherish, and to be faithful to you alone. This is my solemn vow.

The Giving of Rings (Optional)

May I have the rings please?

(Partner 2), I give you this ring, that you may wear it, as a symbol of the vows we have made this day. I pledge you my love and respect, my laughter and my tears. With all that I am I honour you.

(Partner 1), I give you this ring that you may wear it as a symbol of the vows we have made this day. I pledge you my love and respect, my laughter and my tears. With all that I am I honour you.

Now may those who wear these rings live in love all their days.

Declaration of Marriage

(Partner 1) and (Partner 2), we have heard your promise to share your lives in marriage. We recognize and respect the covenant you have made here this day before each of us as witnesses. Therefore in the honesty and sincerity of what you have said and done here today and by the power vested in me, by the Province of Ontario, I declare you married and partners for life.

You may seal your vows with a kiss.

Signing of the Marriage Register

(At this time, the wedded parties and their witnesses will sign the Official Marriage Register. This normally takes a minute or two; consider providing appropriate music during this interval.)

Introduction of the couple

It is now my personal privilege and great joy to be the first one to introduce (Partner 1) and (Partner 2) as the newly married couple. Partners in life... for life.

Please greet them warmly.

(Source: <http://www.lesbian-and-gay-weddings.com/ceremony>)

Appendix 6
Sample Marriage Journal

STEVE COREY'S MARRIAGE JOURNAL

EXCERPT

	DATE	BRIDE & GROOM	ADDRESS	AGE	WITNESS
	1/19/2002	LOUISE T. GUILLOZ	36625 MORAVIAN DR., APT.3, CLINTON TWSP	56	SHARON K. BENTLEY
1	1/19/2002	WILLIAM E. FINCH	8959 E. CRONK RD., CORUNNA	66	DENNIS J. BENTLEY
	2/15/2002	ANGELA JEAN GRAHAM	1704 S. M-52, LOT 14, OWOSSO	30	TABETHA SPENCER
2	2/15/2002	GEORGE BERNARD SPENCER	1704 S. M-52, LOT 14, OWOSSO	32	CHRIS SPENCER
	6/22/2002	CANDICE LEA GRAHAM	1409 S. GEECK RD., CORUNNA	19	MEGAN MOLLINS
3	6/22/2002	JEFFREY RONALD SMOLEK	1409 S. GEECK RD., CORUNNA	22	JEREMY D. SMOLEK
	8/10/2002	COLLEEN RENEE WILLIAMS	247 CORY AVE., APT. 7, CHARLESTON, S.C.	30	DETOVIO HOSKINS
4	8/10/2002	STEPHEN JAMES LEWEIN	247 CORY AVE., APT. 7, CHARLESTON, S.C.	36	WILMOT J. WILLIAMS JR.
	8/24/2002	BRANDIE RACHEL HALL	1950 OWOSSO AVE., OWOSSO	25	MICHELLE TOTTINGHAM
5	8/24/2002	NEIL WILLIAM SMITH	1950 OWOSSO AVE., OWOSSO	29	PETER TABAKA
	9/5/2002	LEANN KAY KITTENDORF	3218 E. HIBBARD RD., OWOSSO	27	LISA PASSINAULT
6	9/5/2002	JASON WILLIAM SZAKAL	3218 E. HIBBARD RD., OWOSSO	30	TOM PASSINAULT
	9/12/2002	JESSICA ANN CARPENTER	10351 W. M-78, HASLETT	27	DONNA J. SHAUVER
7	9/12/2002	TERRY JOSEPH SHAUVER	10351 W. M-78, HASLETT	33	TIMOTHY J. SHAUVER
	9/21/2002	CARI MARIE HAAG	303 N. SHIAWASSEE, BANCROFT	28	MICHAEL D. MANN
8	9/21/2002	TIMOTHY WILLIAM MANN	303 N. SHIAWASSEE, BANCROFT	28	JAMES L. RABY JR.
	9/26/2002	BONNIE LYNN PHIPPS	104 E. NALDRETTE ST., DURAND	43	DOROTHY MAE VIECELLI
9	9/26/2002	WILLIAM EUGENE MINER SR.	104 E. NALDRETTE ST., DURAND	50	J.W. VIECELLI
	9/28/2002	KIMBERLY LYNN ARTHUR	13444 TURNER RD., DEWITT	36	KRISTI JENSEN
10	9/28/2002	KYLE DEAN BARNHART	2510 E. TOWNSEND RD., ST. JOHNS	35	JAMES ARTHUR
	10/11/2002	CHRISTINE ANN CARROLL	840 W. CORUNNA AVE., APT. A6, OWOSSO	40	PATRICIA A. RAISBECK
11	10/11/2002	WILLIAM HARRY LIVESAY	850 W. CORUNNA AVE., APT. A5, OWOSSO	27	FRANCES PRASKI
	10/12/2002	HILDA ANN SIMS	1704 S. M-52, LOT 33, OWOSSO	41	JEANNE OBERLIN
12	10/12/2002	PERRY MICHAEL KUYKENDOLL	3760 SIMOT RD., EATON RAPIDS, MI	41	RICHIE KUYKENDOLL
	10/19/2002	JESSICA MICHELLE MILLER	634 N. WASHINGTON ST., APT. 2, OWOSSO	20	ROBERTA MILLER
13	10/19/2002	JOSHUA EDWARD MORENCE	634 N. WASHINGTON ST., APT. 2, OWOSSO	23	TIMOTHY J. NUMERICH
	10/19/2002	JODI MARIE WRIGHT	3240 S. WAVERLY, LANSING	19	SHELLY GREEN
14	10/19/2002	MICHAEL JOHN BASHAW	326 OAKWOOD LANE, PERRY	27	CRAIG LEE CROOPE
	10/30/2002	MINDY LEE SCHWAB	12561 RAUCHOLZ, CHESANING	24	ANNETTE STANFIELD
15	10/30/2002	DREW MICHAEL WILLARD	2265 W. CHURCH, MORRICE	24	PAM DENTER
	11/13/2002	BOBBIE JEAN BLEMASTER	8415 SIMPSON RD., OVID	19	KEVIN SCHULTZ
16	11/13/2002	JAY DARROW LOSEY	6200 MCBRIDE RD., OWOSSO	23	DUSTIN BROWN
	12/6/2002	MAXINE LYNN KENNEDY	9050 E. M-21, CORUNNA	65	VALERIE L. DENSLOW
17	12/6/2002	FREDERICK NELSON WISMER	4255 W. BLADWIN RD., GRAND BLANC	70	EDWIN G. WISMER
	12/20/2002	KIMBERLY ANN CHURCHILL	219 WALNUT ST., CORUNNA	23	JENELLE ORDIWAY
18	12/20/2002	KEVIN CLAUDE SMITH	703 CARY ST., CORUNNA	28	LARRY LEON ORDIWAY
	12/20/2002	ROBIN LEE OSTIPOW	652 N. PARK ST., #B, OWOSSO	24	KATRINA L. SHEARS
19	12/20/2002	CLAUDE ALLEN FOWLER	1704 S. M-52, LOT 35, OWOSSO	24	THOMAS MARTINDALE
	12/26/2002	SUSAN MARY WIEGEL	1109 WALNUT ST., OWOSSO	50	FRANCES H. WIEGEL
20	12/26/2002	RUSSELL EUGENE IRWIN JR.	1109 WALNUT ST., OWOSSO	40	GLEN W. HUTCHINSON
	12/26/2002	DODY LYNN CHREST	507 S. WASHINGTON ST., APT. 13, OWOSSO	30	JENNIFER HAWN
21	12/26/2002	JOSHUA TRAVIS LAVERTY	911 BEEHLER ST., OWOSSO	28	JONATHAN LAVERTY
	12/30/2002	DAWN MARIE PELCHAT	214 N. MAIN ST., BANCROFT	29	LISA FALL
22	12/30/2002	RICHARD RUSSELL GRAVES	214 N. MAIN ST., BANCROFT	33	LARRY FALL
	12/31/2002	LYNN DIANE DIEBOLT	4578 S. MORRICE RD., OWOSSO	45	BETH ANN DUNLAP
23	12/31/2002	MICHAEL KENNETH POTTER	4600 LYTLE ROAD, CORUNNA	41	DUANE HOLMES
	1/3/2003	TERESA MARIE HOLFORD	820 S. CHIPMAN, OWOSSO	33	LISA D. SILVERNAIL
24	1/3/2003	MICHAEL MARTIN CASSELTON	667 CLAXTON LIVELY RD., WAYNESBORO, GA	35	MARK A. GRUZD