SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Marriage may only be solemnized in Jersey by:
- an authorised civil marriage celebrant
- an authorised religious official, or
- an official of the Anglican Church.

This guidance only applies to authorised civil marriage celebrants. It includes information relating to:

Section 2
A. Applying to be a civil celebrant
B. Investigation and removal from registrar
C. Suspension
D. Review of decisions of the Superintendent Registrar
E. Person specification
F. Registration fees
G. Register of civil celebrants
H. Practising as a civil celebrant in Jersey

Section 3
I. Conditions imposed on authorisation
J. Standard conditions
K. Code of practice
L. Content of ceremony

If you have additional queries please contact the Office of the Superintendent Registrar. Tel 441335 / e: SIR@gov.je
SECTION 2: APPLICATION AND REGISTRATION

A. Applying to be a Civil Celebrant

There are 3 key steps to apply to be a civil celebrant in Jersey.

Step 1: Application

- Complete an application form and return to the Superintendent Registrar. The form is available from www.gov.je.

- Enclose a CV and personal statement explaining why you want to be civil celebrant. Explain in your supporting statement how you meet the person specification (see below).

Step 2: Assessment

- The Superintendent Registrar will consider your application. The Superintendent Registrar may seek information from others to assist.

- You may be invited to interview, and the interview may include an independent third party. You may be asked give a presentation as part of the interview process. You will be informed in advance if a presentation is required.

- You may then be invited to take part in training to assess whether you have the skills and knowledge required to act as a marriage celebrant. This will include questions about the marriage law and associated processes in Jersey. Being invited to training is not a guarantee that you’ll be authorised as a civil celebrant.

- If, within 3 months of applying, you have not been invited to interview or training, this will mean your application has been refused.

Step 3: Registration

- If the Superintendent Registrar determines that you should be authorised as a civil marriage celebrant, you will be entered on to the Register of civil celebrants and issued a Certificate of Authorisation. You will be authorised for a five year period.

- The law sets out conditions of authorised (see below). If you fail to adhere to these conditions you authorisation will be revoked and you will be removed from the Register.
Before being entered on to that register, you must:

- take an oath before the Royal Court of Jersey to well and faithfully perform the duties of a civil marriage celebrant
- pay the £150 initial registration fee and the annual registration fee £200 (prorated).

The register is on-line at www.gov.je. The Superintendent Registrar will provide contact details of the celebrants to the public but will not provide recommendations.

B. Investigations and removal from register

- The Superintendent Registrar may investigate or review your performance as a civil celebrant. You will be told in writing what the process is, why it is happening and how long it will take.

- An investigation could be in response to a complaint, concerns about your performance, or concerns that you not have upheld your obligations as a civil celebrant. It may also form part of standard monitoring and quality control processes.

- In some circumstances, an investigation may commence without prior notice but you will be informed as soon as possible.

- At the end of the investigation process, you will be told the outcome in writing.

- If the Superintendent Registrar is concerned that your performance is not satisfactory, you will be given 21 days to provide evidence to the contrary. At the end of the 21 day period, the Superintendent Registrar will consider all the evidence provided and will tell you the outcome in writing. You will be told within 14 days.

- Outcomes could include:
  - You are issued a formal warning setting out concerns and required remedial action
  - You are to undertake professional development activities
  - You are removed from the registrar of authorized civil celebrants.

C. Suspension

- You may be suspended during an investigation process if there are ground to do so, for example, gross misconduct.

- The suspension will be recorded on the register of civil celebrants and arrangements will be made to minimise disruption to couples who have already booked your services.
If annual registration fees are due during your suspension, you will not be required to pay them.

D. Review of decisions of the Superintendent Registrar

- You may ask the Minister to review the Superintendent Registrar’s decision to:
  - reject your application
  - remove you from the register of civil celebrants, including for non-payment of fees
  - suspend your registration
- You must write to the Minister within 3 months of Superintendent Registrar’s decision. You must set out why you believe the decision was wrong and provide supporting evidence.

- The Minister will investigate. This may include consulting with or requesting information from any persons the Minister believes relevant. For example, your previous clients, owners or managers of approved locations, any complaints.

- The Minister may:
  - uphold the decision
  - overturn the decision
  - request a suitably qualified independent person to investigate further if there are compelling grounds.

E. Person specification

Applicants must be at least 18 years old. They must demonstrated that they:

- have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the law. This includes placing their legal obligations above their commercial enterprise
- have sufficient qualifications, competence, skills and experience necessary to be civil celebrant
- can conduct a marriage ceremony, are personable and engaging
- can communicate effectively and are confident public speakers
- can relate to, and interpret, a couple’s wishes for the content and form of the ceremony within the requirements of the law
- will act without discrimination
- can cope with, and respond to unexpected events before or during a ceremony
- can maintain control of individuals and large groups during a period of heightened emotion/stress.
- are reliable, sensible and with good time keeping
- will follow the direction of the Superintendent Registrar
are of good character – including, where relevant, whether they have a conviction for a criminal offence, have been removed from a professional register, have dismissed from previous employment.

Civil celebrant applicants cannot be religious officials.

F. Registration Fees

- The initial registration fee is £150. The Annual registration fee is £200.
- The annual fee must be paid by 5 January for each year of registration. If the celebrant ceases to be authorised during the course of a year, no part of the fee will be returned.
- If the annual fee is not paid with 14 days of due date, registration will be suspended until payment is received.
- If you are suspended whilst an investigation is taking place, you will not have to pay annual fees that may be due during the period of suspension. At the end of the period of suspension:
  - if you are struck off as a celebrant any fees already paid will be retained
  - if you are reinstated as a celebrant, any fees paid during the period of suspension will be refunded.

G. Register of Civil Celebrants

The following details must be entered into the Register of Civil Celebrants:

- Your full name
- Your address
- Any other relevant contact details
- Details of membership, registration or affiliation to relevant organisations
- Date registered
- Expiry date for the registration

The Superintendent Registrar will amend the Register if:

- advised of change to any of the details held on the register
- registration is revoked
- registration is suspended
- you no longer wish to be registered.

H. Practising as a civil celebrant in Jersey
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- Civil celebrants are independent. As a civil celebrant you need to set your own fees, market your services and contract directly with couples. The Superintendent Registrar will not be responsible for supporting you to recoup unpaid fees.

- You may offer services in addition to officiating at ceremonies (for example, wedding planning)

- You can choose who you work for, but you cannot discriminate against any couple. If you do, you will be removed from the register

- Jersey has laws in place to restrict access to work by non-residents. Civil celebrant who are not resident in Jersey may practice in Jersey, however, they are restricted to working on-island no more than 30 days in any 12 month period.
SECTION 3: CODE OF PRACTICE AND CONDITIONS OF AUTHORISATION

I. Conditions imposed on authorisation

The law sets out that all marriage celebrants must comply with the conditions of authorisation. These include:

- You must comply with all standard conditions for a marriage ceremony (see below)
- You must be at the wedding location at least one hour before the wedding and throughout the ceremony
- You must publish the fees you will charge couples for solemnising weddings in Jersey. The fees must be clear and unequivocal. The Superintendent Registrar may ask you for evidence of publication
- You must agree with the couple in writing, in advance of the ceremony, the content and form of the ceremony. The form and content of the ceremony must comply with Article 17 of the law. See below
- You must seek advice from the Superintendent Registrar on any matter about the form and content if you feel you need to.
- You must undertake in any training that the Superintendent Registrar requires to ensure the marriage are solemnised in accordance with the law
- You must notify the Superintendent Registrar, in writing, within 30 days of:
  - Any changes in circumstances that will require the register of authorised celebrants to be updated
  - Any occurrence that may have caused the Superintendent Registrar to not authorise you if it has happened before authorisation.
- A civil marriage celebrant must solemnise same-sex marriage and officiate at conversions of civil partnerships to marriage. An authorised religious official may consent to do so.

J. Standard conditions

The Law sets out standard conditions which all marriage celebrants must comply with. These conditions include:
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- You must ensure that no food and drink is consumed at the wedding location for one hour before the ceremony, until the end of the ceremony, except:
  - if is reasonable on health and safety grounds. For example, drinking water on a hot day or a child eating snacks. Or,
  - the marriage is in an open air location and it would be unreasonable to prevent consumption. For example, on-lookers to a beach wedding eating ice-cream.

- You must ensure the wedding ceremony takes place within the boundaries of the approved location, as set out in the register of approved locations. For example, it must take place in the hotel room list in the register, not another room.

- You must ensure the space in which the marriage ceremony is taking is separate from other unrelated activities (for example, if the wedding is in a room in a hotel, caterers can’t set up tables in the same room whilst the wedding is taking place).

- You must ensure the details of wedding display notice is in place least one hour before the wedding and throughout the ceremony.

  The notice will be given to you by the Superintendent Registrar. You must display it at every public entrance to the location or, if it is an outdoor location, in a place in a suitable place where it will be easy to see. The notice includes
  - Names of people getting married
  - Date of wedding
  - Time of wedding
  - Location of wedding

K. Code of practice

As a civil celebrant you must also adhere to the following code of practice.

Planning the ceremony

You must:

- give the couple the information and guidance needed to help them compose a ceremony that meets their expectations and is in accordance with the law
• respect the privacy and confidentiality of the couple and associated parties. You must act in accordance with data protection requirements and ensure all records and documents are stored securely

• ascertain that the couple are aware of any special conditions that may apply to their chosen location, as these may impact the form and content of their ceremony. Special conditions are listed on the register of approved locations. The person who is responsible for the location must ensure special conditions are complied with which, depending on the location, may be the couple themselves. If you have any concerns about special conditions, you must inform the Superintendent Registrar

• collect the wedding documents from the Office of the Superintendent Registrar one to two working days before the ceremony and keep them secure. The documents include:
  • the marriage schedule or conversion declaration
  • 3 copies of the marriage certificate
  • the signature verification form which includes photos of the couple.

Ceremony day

You must:

• arrive at the location at least 1 hour in advance and erect the display notice(s). You must stay at the location until the ceremony has ended

• check that the ceremony is being conducted in a location that accords with all conditions set out above

• identify and liaise with the person who is responsible for the location and any special conditions, if that person is different from the couple.

The ceremony

You must:

• ensure accuracy in the conduct of the ceremony. The legal vows exchanged by the couple must reflect the exact words provided in law

• make a declaration of marriage only after signing of the certificates and schedule by the couple, the witnesses and yourself

• ensure that the ceremony commences within one hour of the time stated on the marriage documents
• ensure that the ceremony is audible to all those present and in particular to the couple and witnesses

• make efforts to ensure that the parties names are pronounced correctly and in accordance with the parties' wishes;

Managing difficult situations

You must:

• refuse to conduct a ceremony if you believe either party are incapable of consenting due to mental capacity or intoxication. You must also request alternative witnesses if the witnesses are under 18 years or are incapable of acting as witnesses due to mental capacity or intoxication

• halt a ceremony if any aspect of the law is not being complied with until such time as the issue has been addresses

• halt proceedings if, during the course of the ceremony, a person objects to the wedding. You should take down the full details of the objection and the person making the objection. If you believe the purported objection:
  • is not an impediment to marriage, you should continue with the ceremony. You should nevertheless inform the couple that the Superintendent Registrar will undertake further investigations and, if the objection is correct, the marriage may be void
  • is a true impediment to marriage/civil partnership, you must halt the ceremony and immediately inform the Superintendent Registrar.

Signing of the documents

You must:

• ensure accuracy in the signing of all the documents by all parties (couples, witnesses and yourself)

• check the photos and signature on the signature verification form, to ensure the couple are the same people attended the Office of the Superintendent Registrar. You must not sign the schedule/declaration or certificates until you have done so

• provide two copies of the signed certificates to the couple at the end of the ceremony

• return to the Office of the Superintendent Registrar, as soon as soon as possible after the ceremony, but in a maximum of 3 days:
  • one copy of the signed certificate
  • the signed schedule/conversion declaration
  • the signature verification form.
Standards

You must:

- ensure couples know that they can notify the Superintendent Registrar of any concerns or complaints that they may have regarding your services as a civil celebrant

- inform the Superintendent Registrar of any information or changes of circumstances that may affect your authorisation or the details in the Register

- use any constructive comments provided by couples or the Superintendent Registrar to improve enhance your services

L. Content of ceremony

- The marriage celebrant is responsible for ensuring that the marriage ceremony complies with the law. Article 17 of the 2001 Law sets out matters relating to the content and form of the marriage ceremony.

- The marriage celebrant must:
  - agree with the couple the content and format of the ceremony in writing, in advance, and may refuse a couple’s request to include certain things if the marriage celebrant believes it does not accord with the law
  - consult Superintendent Registrar in advance if they have any concerns about proposed content of a ceremony

The Superintendent Registrar may request that the marriage celebrant provides the written details of the ceremony to the Superintendent Registrar before the ceremony for inspection.

- A marriage must take place Monday to Sunday between 8am and 7pm.

- All weddings must include the vows set out in law. Those vows cannot be altered, except that the couple may choose whether they refer to each other as husband, wife or spouse. There are different vows for a marriage ceremony and for a conversion of a civil partnership to a marriage.

Marriage

“I solemnly declare that I know of no lawful reason why I, [AB] may not be joined in marriage to [CD]”; and “I call upon the persons here present to witness that I, [AB], take you, [CD], to be my lawful wedded wife [or husband] [or spouse]”

Conversion vows
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I (AB) solemnly declare that I am in a civil partnership with you (CD) and I know of no lawful reason why we may not convert our civil partnership into marriage. I understand that in making this declaration I will be converting our civil partnership into a marriage and that you (CD) will thereby become my lawful [husband][wife][spouse].

Civil marriage

- A civil marriage may include some religious content but must not replicate or emulate acts of religious ritual, service or worship.

- Civil marriage celebrants must never permit any of the following to form a part of the marriage ceremony:
  - Prayers
  - Religious icons, imagery or symbols - crosses, crucifixes and other symbols of any faith are strictly forbidden
  - Religious rituals
  - Religious worship
  - Religious service

- Civil marriage celebrants may permit the following:
  - Hymns, songs and chants: if sung as by one person or a group of individuals (either live or via a recording). The singing of a religious hymn or recognised religious chant by all wedding guests is not permitted (i.e. as a congregation) as guests will come together in praise of god, ceases to be a performance and becomes an act of worship.
  - Playing of instrumental hymnal music
  - Pop/contemporary music that contains religious references or terminology will be permitted unless demonstratively disrespectful in nature/content.
  - Readings from the bible or other holy books: The Civil Marriage Celebrant must, however, consult the Superintendent Registrar in advance as many readings from the bible or holy books are also prayers and not permissible. The reading of psalms will never be permitted, as they are prayers. The Superintendent Registrar may consult a relevant religious official as to the suitability or acceptability of readings from holy books.
  - Secular readings that contain religious references or terminology will be permitted unless demonstratively disrespectful in nature/content.
• **Vows:** Couples may exchange personal vows in addition to the legal vows but they are not permitted to emulate or replicate vows of any religious organisation.

• **Candles, lights, incense and ribbons:** The burning of candles, use of incense and practices such as hand fasting is permitted, providing it does not emulate or replicate of the rites or rituals of any religious faith or denomination.

**Religious marriage**

A religious marriage, which is solemnized by an authorised religious official, must be in accordance with the relevant religious ritual or service.