

Missouri Marriage Officiant Guide

Marriage Officiants: Marriage ceremonies may be performed anywhere in Missouri by any member of the clergy, either active or retired, who is in good standing with any church or synagogue in this state. (Missouri *does not* restrict ordained non-resident Officiants from serving anywhere in the state.)

Officiants must keep a record of all marriage ceremonies they perform. Officiants are not required to register with any state or local agency, but must submit their credentials to any legal authority and/or the bridal couple upon their request.

Solemnization Authority: Per Missouri Statute 451.100 (“Marriages solemnized by whom”), within the 30-day period after the marriage license is issued, the marriage must be solemnized anywhere in the State of Missouri by one of the following:

- A member of the clergy, active or retired, who is in good standing with any church or synagogue in Missouri;
- A Circuit Court or Associate Circuit Court judge (who are prohibited by a Missouri Constitutional provision from receiving any compensation for the service); or
- A religious society, institution or organization in Missouri of which either marriage party is a member, in accordance with the organization’s regulations and customs.



Within 90 days after the marriage ceremony, the person solemnizing the marriage must complete the marriage certificate issued with the marriage license and return it to the office of the issuing Recorder.

Lack of witnesses does not render a marriage invalid. However, two witnesses can submit an affidavit that the marriage ceremony took place if the certificate is lost or destroyed and the person who solemnized the marriage is unavailable.

MARRIAGE LICENSE INFORMATION

Much of the information below is state law in Missouri; however, this information can vary from county to county, and is subject to change. We recommend contacting your county clerk’s office before applying for your marriage license.

Identification Requirement: Photo ID (such as driver’s license) *and* Social Security card required.

Residency Requirement: You do not have to be a resident of Missouri.

Previous Marriages: Applicants must provide the date their last marriage ended and must wait at least 30 days after the divorce is final before applying for a marriage license.

Application Requirement: Both parties to the marriage must appear together before the Recorder of Deeds of any Missouri county and apply for a marriage license.

Waiting Period: Three days. The three-day waiting period can be waived with approval of a judge if special conditions make an expedited marriage “advisable.”

Fees: \$50 plus a \$1 fee for each parental consent filing. Cash only; no refunds.

Blood Tests: No tests required.

Common Law Marriage: No. However, Missouri law does recognize the validity of common-law marriages entered into in Missouri before 1921, as well as common-law marriages contracted in other states which permit them.

Cousin Marriages: Not permitted.

Under 18: A person under age 18 cannot marry without the consent of the custodial parent or guardian.

NOTE: A person under age 15 cannot marry without approval of a judge in the county where the marriage license is sought. The applicable statute states that the judge should grant approval only upon a showing of “good cause” and that unusual conditions make the marriage “advisable.” Persons lacking mental capacity to consent to marriage cannot marry without court approval.

Proxy Marriages: Permitted under certain circumstances for incarcerated applicants or if an applicant has been called or ordered to active military duty out of the state or country, under Missouri Revised Statute Chapter 451.040(2)(1).

Same-Gender Marriages: Permitted following U.S. Supreme Court decision of 26 June 2015.

Valid: A Missouri marriage license is valid for 30 days. The marriage license can only be used (solemnized) within the State of Missouri.

For additional information, please visit
FirstNationMinistry.org/us/missouri

The above information is believed to be current and correct, but does not purport to be legal advice, is not all-inclusive and shall be used only as a guide. Under the terms specified in your ordination, you are solely responsible for becoming familiar with and complying to all current laws and regulations in effect within the jurisdiction in which you will conduct ceremonies.