

# Getting Married in NZ

The Marriage Act 1955 provides the rules and processes for two people to get married – which is to formalise the relationship and have it registered.

Anyone can marry as long as they are legally free to do so – which means they are not already married or in a civil union, they are over 16 and not closely related.

During the ceremony before a marriage celebrant, and before at least two witnesses, each party must say the words "I AB, take you CD, to be my legal wife/husband" or words to similar effect.

## Before You Get Married

Before you get married, you will need to:

1. Know when and where you want to get married – you will need this for your marriage license application. If the venue changes before the marriage takes place, you have to notify the Registry Office from where your licence was obtained. If you are getting married outside, plan for an alternate venue in case the weather isn't suitable for an outside ceremony. You can provide this alternate venue on the application form
2. Choose an appointed marriage celebrant and agree on a time and place for your ceremony
3. Obtain a marriage license (see below) and pay the fee

## Getting Your Marriage License

To get a license you need to complete a Notice of Intended Marriage Application Form [BDM60].

As part of the application process you need to make a statutory declaration that there is no lawful impediment to the marriage, so the application must be made in person in the presence of a Registrar of Marriages

The application must be submitted at least three days before you intend to get married, and is valid for three months from the date on which it is issued.

You will need to provide proof that any previous marriage or civil union has been dissolved, such as a Divorce/Dissolution Order.

If your previous partner is deceased you will need to enter the date of death on your application but will not need to provide proof of their death

If you are 16 or 17 years of age, you must obtain consent from your guardian(s), a relative acting in place of a guardian or a Family Court Judge. This must be provided along with your license application.

If you are getting married by a celebrant, a fee of \$122.60 will need to be paid when you hand in your BD60 application form (this does not include any fees for the celebrant's services).

## **Legal Requirements for all Marriage Ceremonies**

- All marriages must be performed by a Marriage Celebrant or Registrar of Marriages at the place specified on the marriage licence.
- The marriage must be performed in the presence of at least two witnesses
- During the ceremony, and before at least two witnesses, each party must say the words "I AB take you CD, to be my legal wife/husband" or words to similar effect.
- Both parties and witnesses sign the registration forms 'Copy of Particulars of Marriage' issued with your license (the BDM45). This is a legal document proving that you are married. One copy gets sent to the Births, Deaths and Marriages department of the Department of Internal Affairs