

**QUICK GUIDE TO REGISTERING A MARRIAGE
FOR AUTHORISED PERSONS**

Before you register a marriage, make sure you have the following items with you:-

PEN & INK

PENCIL

TWO MARRIAGE REGISTERS

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES

A MARRIAGE AUTHORITY FOR EACH PERSON

(This is the blue form issued by a Superintendent Registrar)

IMPORTANT- IF YOU HAVE NO AUTHORITIES THE MARRIAGE CANNOT PROCEED

You must first of all check the details on the authorities are correct –the forms must be dated and the marriage must take place within the valid period and before the expiry date. It is good practice to check this before the wedding day so that any problems can be sorted out . Marriage authorities issued after 2 March 2015 no longer require a Superintendent’s signature. If the couple are non EEA nationals and have been referred to the Home Office, you will be issued with photographs along with the blue authorities.

You should check with the bride and groom that all the details shown on the authorities are correct-they may have had a birthday/changed address/changed occupation since the notices were attested. If you make any changes-please write them in pencil on the reverse of the authority. If photos are supplied, please confirm they are those of the couple.

Confirm the full name and occupation of the bride and groom’s fathers as this is entered in box 7 of the register entry.

This is either their natural father of or their legally adoptive father.

The name of a step-father can be entered if either requests this and this should be qualified by adding **(Step-father)** in brackets next to his name

If a woman is the sole adopter, her name can be put in the register and qualified by adding **(Adoptive Parent)** in brackets.

IMPORTANT

IF THERE ARE ANY DISCREPANCIES IN THE NAME OR MARITAL STATUS OF EITHER PERSON, OR THE VALID DATES ON THE AUTHORITY, YOU SHOULD RING THE REGISTER OFFICE FOR ADVICE AS THIS CAN AFFECT THE VALIDITY OF THE MARRIAGE.

Once you have checked all the details you should sit at a table where you can hear and see the ceremony taking place.

You can begin to complete the register once the declaratory and contracting words have been said-not before! You must fill in both registers and the couple, their witnesses and yourself will need to sign them both

You can prepare the marriage certificate beforehand but leave blanks for signatures or any details which could have changed.

REMEMBER

DO NOT BE HURRIED - YOU ARE COMPLETING A LEGAL DOCUMENT AND MISTAKES ARE EASILY MADE IF YOU RUSH THINGS.

BETTER TO TAKE FIVE MINUTES MORE AND GET THINGS RIGHT!

HOW TO COMPLETE THE REGISTER

Using registration ink only, copy the details into the register. Use capital letters for any surnames.

Do not use abbreviations at all-for example HGV Driver should read “**Heavy Goods Vehicle Driver**”

The date should be written in words for the day and the month and in numbers for the year i.e. “**Tenth January 2015**”

Make sure all the headings are correct.

If you make a mistake, do not write over it. You must follow the legal corrections procedure and make a numbered error. Check back through the register to make sure you use the next consecutive number. It is a good idea to put a sticky note on the last numbered error made. Write the correct word next to the incorrect one and draw a line through the wrong word. Add the next number in figure format in brackets next to the error

“~~SMTHH~~ (1) SMITH”

You should then write the number of the error in the legal margin along with your initials

ie “**One AEP**”

REMEMBER- YOU CAN ONLY MAKE A NUMBERED ERROR BEFORE THE ENTRY IS SIGNED.

Once the entry is finished, ask the couple to check it carefully before adding their signatures. The bride should sign in the name shown on the authority-not in her new married name.

They should sign their usual signatures.

The witnesses must also each sign the entry using their usual signatures.

Once you are absolutely sure that the entry is correct, sign the register yourself and add your designation-ie “**Authorised Person**”.

The entry is not legally “completed” until you have signed it. Any errors found after this point are far more complicated to correct and involve referral to the General Register Office with supporting documents, along with the couple attending at a later date to witness a formal correction. This is a lengthy and annoying process and if you check entries carefully at this point it will save us all a lot of work in the future

Make a note in the margin in pencil in **BLOCK CAPITALS** of what has actually been written by the couple, their witness and yourself. This helps when the entry is added on to the national database by the General Register Office and also if you ever need to prepare a copy certificate.

You must enter the names as signed by the bride, groom and witnesses on to the marriage certificate -they do not sign the certificate only you should complete the details.

Place the certificate in an envelope and hand to the happy couple!.

IF YOU HAVE ANY OTHER PROBLEMS, CHECK IN YOUR GUIDE FOR AUTHORISED PERSONS. IF YOU ARE UNSURE ABOUT ANYTHING, PLEASE RING YOUR LOCAL REGISTER OFFICE FOR ADVICE on

North Lincolnshire - TEL 01724 298555, North East Lincolnshire Tel 01472 326295 (Option 1) and Lincolnshire 01522 782244

IF YOU HAVE A SERIOUS PROBLEM, OUT OF HOURS OR AT A WEEKEND WEDDING YOU CAN RING THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE ON 0300 123 1837

QUARTERLY MARRIAGE RETURNS FOR NORTH & NORTH EAST LINCOLNSHIRE ONLY

The General Register Office maintains a record of all marriages in England and Wales. This is updated on a quarterly basis

The quarters end on 31/3; 30/6; 30/9 AND 31/12 respectively

Four times a year we will ask you to:-

1. Supply us with copies of all the marriage entries made in your register for that quarter
- or
2. Make a declaration that no marriages have taken place-this is called making a "NIL RETURN"

We then make a local index of all marriages and forward your returns to the General Register Office.

All the forms must be returned to us before the 15th day of the month following the end of the quarter.

IF MARRIAGES HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN YOUR CHURCH

Please complete the blank return form and copy the register details exactly as they appear in the register. Use one of your 2 registers only for returns.

Remember to sign and date the back of the return form

Sign the enclosed receipt slip

Return the forms/receipt/marriage authorities to us asap.

We will send you an annual payments (currently £2 per entry after the December quarter)

Please make sure you have signed each form before you send it to us.

IF YOU HAVE HAD NO MARRIAGES DURING THAT QUARTER

You must complete a "NIL RETURN"

This can now be done by email - please see instructions overleaf

PLEASE help us by sending in your returns promptly.

FINALLY, PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU TAKE GREAT CARE OF THE REGISTERS, YOU ARE LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR SAFEKEEPING. DO NOT LET ANY OTHER PERSON WRITE IN THE REGISTERS OR REMOVE THEM FROM YOUR SAFE.

**TO USE THE ELECTRONIC NIL RETURN FORM FOR NORTH & NORTH EAST
LINCOLNSHIRE ONLY**

Open the attachment (it is a WORD document) and save it as **“BLANK NIL RETURN”**

Each quarter, open the **“BLANK NIL RETURN”**.
Complete the form and save it under your church name and the quarter.

For example, if you are the minister for St.Pauls, Ashby and completing a return for the December quarter 2015, you would go to **“file”** on your PC, put in the details and then **“save as”** giving the return the name
“Nil return St Pauls Ashby Dec 2015”

This saves both the original blank return and the completed form.

If you have more than one church, you will need to complete and save a Nil Return for each church
Don't forget to save the Nil Return for each church under the right name.

HELPFUL HINT– Keep a record of your last register number near your computer, it will save you having to look at the register each time.