



**OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
NYC MARRIAGE BUREAU**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS REGARDING
VIRTUAL MARRIAGE LICENSES**

1. When will the Marriage Bureau reopen for in-person services?

Given the current conditions it is difficult to accurately predict the date of reopening. Planning the reopening will require updated social distancing protocols to protect the health and safety of our employees and visitors. Please follow our website www.cityclerk.nyc.gov for updates.

Couples can now apply for a marriage license online. [Executive Order No. 202.20](#), signed by Governor Cuomo on April 18, 2020, authorizes our office to use videoconferencing technology to enable couples to apply for a marriage license. In addition, the Executive Order also permits the performance of marriage ceremonies using such technology. Although the City Clerk's Office is not currently conducting marriage ceremonies, a couple can choose their own licensed marriage officiant (the person who performs the marriage ceremony) and have a marriage ceremony using videoconferencing. This allows the couple, the marriage officiant and the witness to each be located in a separate place. Please note that all participants in the marriage ceremony (the couple, the officiant and the witness) **must** be physically located in New York State during the marriage ceremony.

2. What is the procedure to apply for a marriage license virtually?

The couple should visit our website and apply on-line. They will be able to utilize the new platform "Project Cupid" to create an account, verify their identity and submit the \$35.00 (thirty-five dollar) marriage license fee. They will then receive an appointment for a videoconference with a marriage license clerk to complete their application. To participate in this appointment, they will need a device capable of videoconferencing, such as a laptop, smartphone, or tablet. While an in-person appearance at the Marriage Bureau is not required, the other eligibility requirements for a marriage license remain the same. For example, the couple will still need [proper identification](#). For further information regarding identification requirements and fees please see the [Marriage License](#) section on our website.

Please also see [Procedures for Virtual Marriage Ceremonies Conducted by Non-City Clerk Marriage Officiants](#).

3. We have our marriage license already. How can we have a wedding?

If a couple obtained a marriage license prior to the closure of our office, they may choose a marriage officiant who is willing to perform the ceremony. If they make arrangements for an in-person ceremony, they should remember to maintain social distancing at all times during the ceremony.

For virtual ceremonies, please see our [Procedures for Virtual Marriage Ceremonies Conducted by Non-City Clerk Marriage Officiants](#) for more information.

4. How do I find a private marriage officiant to solemnize my wedding ceremony?

As a government agency we cannot appear to be favoring any private person or business over another and therefore we cannot provide recommendations. Since many marriage officiants have websites advertising their services, you can try searching on the internet for a suitable marriage officiant. Some of them charge substantial fees so it is advisable to compare your options. There are hundreds of individuals who are authorized by State law to perform marriage ceremonies. Persons permitted to officiate a marriage ceremony in the State of New York include: (1) clergy members or ministers of any religion, including people such as reverends, pastors, priests, rabbis, imams, deacons, and cantors; (2) Federal, State and local judges or justices; (3) current members of the State Senate and Assembly; and (4) other officials ([see this website for more information](#)). When you find a suitable marriage officiant, please refer them to our [new guidance for non-city clerk marriage officiants](#) explaining how to perform a marriage ceremony by videoconference.

5. What if our marriage license has expired?

Normally, after a couple obtains a marriage license, they must have a marriage ceremony performed within sixty days or the license will expire. However, on April 18, 2020, Governor Cuomo issued [Executive Order No. 202.20](#), which waives this sixty-day expiration date. This waiver remains in effect “during the period of time that there exists a declared emergency in New York State.” Therefore, if the couple obtained a marriage license with an expiration date that occurs on or after March 7, 2020, even if more than sixty days have passed since it was issued, they may still use that marriage license to marry. They may choose a marriage officiant who is willing to perform the marriage ceremony either in person (while practicing social distancing) or virtually, using the marriage license that they received from the City Clerk’s Office.

Please see Paragraph 8 in our [Procedures for Virtual Marriage Ceremonies Conducted by Non-City Clerk Marriage Officiants](#) for details on how to submit a completed marriage license.

6. We received our marriage license before the Marriage Bureau closed its in-person services and our marriage ceremony was performed outside your office. Should we mail our original hard copy of the completed marriage license to your office?

We are processing completed marriage licenses received by mail as quickly as possible. If a couple mails in their completed marriage license, their marriage certificate will be sent to them by U.S mail. However, we recommend that they retain the completed marriage license in a secure place and visit our office for same day in-person processing when we reopen.

If they need to receive their marriage certificate quickly, they should scan and email a copy of the completed marriage license to VMLReturns@cityclerk.nyc.gov for processing. They should store the original completed marriage license in a place of safekeeping.

7. We received a virtual marriage license and had a virtual marriage ceremony performed by a marriage officiant. Should we mail our completed marriage license to your office?

No. Please see our [Procedures for Virtual Marriage Ceremonies Conducted by Non-City Clerk Marriage Officiants](#) for more information on how to send the electronic marriage license to our office.

8. I submitted a marriage record request by-mail before you closed the office. When will I receive a response?

We are making every effort to respond within four to six weeks to all record requests received by mail. However, given the current circumstances of the pandemic, we cannot guarantee any specific timeframe for a reply.

9. I need a certified copy of my marriage certificate to obtain an enhanced driver license. How do I obtain a marriage certificate?

Please follow the directions found here: <https://www.cityclerk.nyc.gov/content/marriage-records>. Please also be aware that the deadline to obtain an enhanced driver license has been extended by the DMV for an additional year, to October 1, 2021.

10. Can I register a domestic partnership or obtain a certificate of non-impediment virtually?

The Governor's [Executive Order](#) only authorizes the issuance of marriage licenses and performance of marriage ceremonies through videoconferencing means. With the closure of our offices, it is not possible at the present time to register a domestic partnership or obtain a certificate of non-impediment. Even applicants who submit their information using our online application must visit the office in person to complete the process. These services require an in-person appearance in order to verify identification, review previous marriage information and make payment. Therefore, domestic partnerships and certificates of non-impediment are not available at this time.

11. I am frustrated that I can't get a domestic partnership or certificate of non-impediment now. What can I do?

We understand your frustration. The City Clerk's Office is required to comply with laws and directives of the Governor that require nonessential personnel to stay home. New York City remains the epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States. We ask for your patience and understanding while we await the opportunity to reopen. We hope that you remain safe and healthy during this time.