

City of St. John's Corporate and Operational Policy Manual

Procedure Title: Civil Marriage Ceremonies	
Authorizing Policy: Civil Marriage Ceremonies	
Last Revision Date: 2023-10-03 (policy) (procedures are new)	Procedure #: 09-13-02-01
Procedure Sponsor: City Clerk	

1. Procedure Statement

These procedures, along with the policy, establish consistent and transparent processes for the conduct of civil marriage ceremonies conducted by the Mayor at City Hall, City-owned property, or at another location including the roles and responsibilities of the Mayor, Employees and financial requirements.

2. Definitions

“Applicants” means persons seeking to be married by the Mayor.

“Employee” means any person employed by the City of St. John's as a permanent, term, part-time, casual, contract, seasonal, temporary, or student worker.

“Marriage Commissioner” means a person authorized under the Marriage Act to perform a marriage.

“Marriage Licence” means a marriage licence issued under the Marriage Act.

3. Procedure Requirements

3.1 Appointments and Payment for Civil Marriage Ceremony

As noted in Section 3.2 of the policy:

- a) Applicants shall complete the Request for Marriage Services form to request the date for their ceremony. Appointment times shall be submitted at least 14 days in advance of the requested date.
- b) The completed Request for Marriage Services form shall be either:
 - i. hand-delivered to the Office of the City Clerk (Fourth Floor, City Hall) between 9:00a.m. to 4:30p.m. Monday to Friday, or
 - ii. sent via regular mail to Office of the City Clerk, P.O. Box 908, St. John's, A1C 5M2.
- c) A requested date shall not be considered confirmed until the Office of the Mayor sends a confirmation to the email provided on the form.
- d) Ceremony times shall be subject to the schedule and availability of the Mayor.
- e) Applicants may select one of the following locations for a civil marriage ceremony at City Hall:
 - i. Mayor's Lounge (4th Floor, City Hall)
 - ii. Council Chambers (4th Floor, City Hall)
 - iii. Outside in City Hall Courtyard (weather depending)
 - iv. Other City-owned property, or
 - v. Other location, subject to the sole discretion of the Mayor.
- f) The above locations may not be available at the requested date and time and/or availability may change without notice.
- g) If the Applicants choose to have the ceremony at a City-owned property other than City Hall, a booking/rental fee may apply. Applicants shall be responsible for arranging of the booking/rental for the property.
- h) All applications for the Mayor to conduct Marriage Ceremonies shall be submitted to Employees at City Hall.

3.2 Ceremony Fee

- a) Ceremonies taking place at a location outside of City property shall be subject to an additional fee, as detailed below in 3.2(c).
- b) For ceremonies taking place on City-owned property, Applicants shall pay a fee of \$200 plus applicable taxes at least four days in advance of the date of the ceremony and it shall be non-refundable.
- c) For ceremonies taking place at a location other than City-owned property, Applicants shall pay a fee of \$300 plus applicable taxes at least four days in advance of the date of the ceremony and it shall be non-refundable.
- d) The fee shall be paid in person at the Access Centre, 1st Floor, City Hall via cash, debit, or credit card (Visa or Mastercard).
- e) Applicants shall provide a copy of the fee payment receipt, the marriage licence, keepsake marriage certificate, and registration of marriage to the Office of the Mayor at least four days in advance of the date of the ceremony.
- f) The City shall pay the Mayor a stipend of \$100 for each ceremony performed at a location other than City-owned property to cover their time, mileage, and any other travel expenses, payable to the Mayor on a quarterly basis.

3.3 Form of the Ceremony

- a) Civil marriage ceremonies shall only be performed in a language spoken by the Mayor that all parties understand without the need for interpreters and shall be non-religious in nature.

3.3.1 Ceremonies Performed on City Property

- a) For City Hall bookings, the booking for the selected space shall be for up to 45 minutes. However, the ceremony shall not be more than 15 minutes.
- b) If Applicants choose to book another City-owned property, they shall book for not less than 45 minutes (and subject to any requirements of the property).

- c) Applicants may choose to personalize or add to certain parts of the ceremony but shall not remove anything. All requested customizations shall be submitted in writing to the Office of the Mayor at least 4 days prior to the ceremony.
- d) Personalized music is permitted and may be played off an appropriate device provided by the Applicants.
- e) A photographer is permitted. Any photographs or video shall be the responsibility of the Applicants.
- f) As the ceremony is held in a public space, the area is a scent-free environment.
- g) The following items shall not be permitted at the ceremony:
 - i. candles and incense; or
 - ii. confetti, rice, bubbles, or similar items.
- h) Applicants shall not have more than 20 guests in attendance.
- i) Alcohol, tobacco, or cannabis shall not be consumed while on City property.

3.3.2 Ceremonies Performed at a Location Other Than City Property

- a) Applicants shall advise the Mayor of the venue and expected time commitment in advance.

3.4 Indemnification

- a) As noted in Section 5.1 of the policy, by signing the application, the Applicants shall agree to save harmless and indemnify the City of St. John's and its elected representatives, officers, employees and agents from and against any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, causes of action and/or proceedings that may be brought against or made upon the City and/or its elected representatives, officers, employees or agents by any person arising out of matters in any way related to any act, failure to act or otherwise of the applicant and/or its employees, officers, servants, volunteers and agents in respect of, or pertaining to the marriage ceremony or the City's administration of the ceremony requirements.

- b) By signing the application, the Applicants shall release, waive, and forever discharge the City and its elected representatives, officers, employees and agents from all liability to itself and its heirs, executors, administrators and assigns for all loss or damage and any claims or demands for such loss or damage on account of injury to person or damage to property for which the City may be responsible in respect of the conduct of the marriage ceremony.
- c) By signing the application, the Applicants shall agree that they and their guests shall comply with the Code of Conduct.
- d) In addition to complying with this policy and its procedures, the Applicants shall ensure they comply with all applicable legislation.

4. Application

- a) The policy and procedures apply to the following: the Mayor; Council; Applicants; guests of Applicants, and Employees.
- b) The policy and procedures apply to civil marriage ceremonies conducted by the Mayor.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 The Office of the Mayor shall be responsible for:

- a) all necessary requirements associated with the Mayor's role as Marriage Commissioner under this policy.
- b) retaining a copy of the receipt provided by Access St. John's.

5.2 Access St. John's shall be responsible for:

- a) collecting the administrative fee payable to the "City of St. John's" and issuing a receipt.

5.3 Applicants shall be responsible for:

- a) paying the applicable administrative fee to Access St. John's;
- b) agree to all conditions detailed in the procedures and application form;
- c) prior to the civil marriage ceremony, providing a copy of the receipt issued by Access St. John's for such payment;
- d) booking and payment at a City-owned location, if the ceremony is not performed at City Hall; and
- e) providing all other documentation required by the Office of the Mayor within the time prescribed.

6. References

- Civil Marriage Ceremonies Policy
- [Marriage Act](#)
- Request for Marriage Services Form

7. Approval

- Procedure Sponsor: City Clerk
- Procedure Writer: Policy Analyst; City Clerk
- Date of Approval from:
 - Corporate Policy Committee
 - Senior Executive Committee

8. Monitoring and Contravention

- a) The Office of the City Clerk shall monitor the application of this policy.
- b) Any contravention of this policy and/or associated procedures shall be reported to the Office of the City Clerk, Department of Finance and Corporate Services (including the Human Resources Division), the Office of the City Solicitor, and/or the City Manager for further investigation and appropriate action.
- c) Employees who contravene the policy may be subject to appropriate action, which may include, but is not limited to, legal action and discipline, up to and including dismissal.

9. Review Date

Every five years