

Marriage License Information

Appointment required: Marriage license applications are accepted by appointment only. **Appointment hours:** Mon–Thu 8:30 a.m.–3:00 p.m.; Fri 8:30–11:00 a.m.

At a Glance

- **Fee:** \$75 application fee (cash or local check only; no credit/debit cards accepted)
- **Apply in person:** Both parties must be present and apply together
- **Waiting period:** License/certificate is valid on the 4th day after application
- **Validity:** Valid for 60 days from date of issuance
- **Questions/appointments:** Call 608-685-6209

Contact

Buffalo County Clerk's Office
407 South Second Street
Alma, WI 54610
Phone: 608-685-6209
Email: lisa.schmitt@buffalocountywi.gov



Application Information Needed at Appointment

- **Proof of age:** Certified birth certificates, not a hospital certificate. If the birth certificate is not in English, it must be translated and certified. If a birth certificate is determined to be unattainable by the County Clerk under Wis. Stat. §765.09(3)(c), a Real ID or passport may be considered in place of a birth certificate. Mere failure to bring the birth certificate, or a preference not to obtain it, is not considered unobtainability.
- **Photo ID:** Current, non-expired photo IDs for both parties.
- **Proof of residency/address:** Documentation showing your current address (for example: driver's license, bank statement, utility bill).
- **Social Security numbers:** You do not need to bring the actual cards.
- **If previously married:** Proof of how the marriage ended (certified copy of a divorce judgment, death certificate, or annulment). Six months must have passed since the final divorce date before the applicant may remarry.
- **Officiant information:** Name, address, and phone number needed. Please note: It is your responsibility to verify the legitimacy of your officiant. The County

Clerk's office cannot provide advice on this matter. If you are unsure of the legal status of your officiant, you should contact an attorney.

- **Ceremony date and location:** You must have a date chosen and know the location (city, village or township) of where the ceremony will take place.
- **Payment:** \$75 application fee (cash or local check only; no credit/debit cards).

Detailed Information

Age requirements

Anyone age 18 or older may marry if otherwise competent. If a person is 16–17, a license may be issued with written consent of the person's parent(s), legal guardian, or custodian. It is illegal for anyone under 16 to marry in Wisconsin. Legal guardians must show proof of custody and be present at the time of application.

Relationship requirements

Persons closer in relationship than second cousins may not marry. Two exceptions: (1) first cousins may marry if the female has attained the age of 55 years; or (2) either party submits an affidavit signed by a physician stating that either party is permanently sterile.

Divorce and annulment

If your last marriage ended by divorce, you may not remarry in Wisconsin until 6 months after the judgment of divorce (regardless of where the divorce occurred). Applicants divorced outside Wisconsin (including foreign countries) must wait 6 months from the final divorce decree date. Court annulments do not require a waiting period.

Residency

You may apply in any Wisconsin county. There is no residency requirement.

Proxy and common-law marriage

Marriage by proxy is not permitted in Wisconsin. Common-law marriages are not recognized in Wisconsin. Questions about your status concerning a common-law marriage in another state or country must be resolved by your legal counsel. Clerk staff cannot provide legal advice.

Waiting-period waiver

In limited circumstances, the County Clerk may approve a waiver of the waiting period. To request a waiver, you must complete the waiver form and pay an additional \$25 fee.

Foreign language documents and interpreters

Documents in another language must include a certified translation. Applicants who do not speak and/or understand English must bring an independent interpreter who is not related to either party.

These requirements are governed by Wisconsin law and are generally the same statewide. Fees for a marriage license/certificate and any waiver fee may vary by county.

Marriage License/Certificate - Validity and Reprints

The marriage license/certificate is valid on the 4th day after the application date. It is valid for 60 days from the date of issuance. We are not responsible for lost or misplaced license/certificates and a \$5.00 reprint fee will apply.

Ceremony and Officiant Filing

Bring the marriage license/certificate to the ceremony for the officiant and witnesses to sign. The officiant completes their portion of the form. The original, signed marriage certificate must be filed with the Register of Deeds in any Wisconsin county within 3 days after the date of the marriage.

Certified Copies

Certified copies of the marriage license/certificate can be obtained from the Register of Deeds in any Wisconsin county. The cost is \$20 for the first copy and \$3 for each additional copy purchased at the same time.