

To obtain a Marriage License in Harris County:

To obtain a marriage license in Harris County, both parties will need to appear in person and provide identification (State Issued I.D., Driver's License, Passport, etc.) to any of the 10 locations of the Harris County Clerk's Office. No appointment is necessary, the fee is \$72.00, there is a 72 hour waiting period from the time of issuance (see DISTRICT below for waivers of this) and the ceremony must be performed within 90 days of the marriage license issue date.

You may also visit any of our 10 locations to obtain a marriage license.

Baytown Office	701 W Baker Rd	Baytown	281/422-0253
Chimney Rock Office	6000 Chimney Rock	Houston	713/660-7902
Clay Road Office	16715 Clay Rd.	Houston	281/859-0685
Clear Lake Office	16603 Buccaneer	Houston	281/486-7250
Cypresswood Office	6831 Cypresswood Dr.	Houston	281/379-1057
Downtown Office (Central)	201 Caroline, Ste. 330	Houston	713/755-6436
Humble Office	7900 Will Clayton Pkwy	Humble	281/540-1173
N. Shepherd Office	7300 N. Shepherd Dr.	Houston	713/697-5193
Pasadena Office	101 S. Richey, Ste. D	Pasadena	713/274-6230
South Belt Office	10851 Scarsdale	Houston	281/464-0115

The office hours are Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at any of the annex offices or the central location.

They accept all major credit cards, cash, personal check (local only with valid Texas ID), money order, cashier's check, company check and traveler's checks for payment of marriage license.

Original licenses should be returned to any annex, the central location or mailed to:

Harris County Clerk's Office
P. O. Box 1525
Houston, Texas 77251-1525.

If returning by mail, please make sure that the address printed on the marriage license is where you want your license returned to. If the address is different, please paperclip a note to the license stating where you want the license mailed to.

If returning in person, only one person need return it and certified copies can be obtained at the same time (each copy is \$7.00), should they be necessary for name changes before the license is returned.

Upon being returned to the office, original Marriage Licenses can take anywhere from 1-2 weeks to be returned to you, once they are received in the office. If you do not receive the license after that time period, please feel free to contact the Personal Records Department at 713-755-6436.

Lost the license before mailing it in:

If the original Marriage License has been lost before it is recorded in our office the couple can purchase a duplicate for \$12.50 and then have the marriage license signed and dated by the officiate. They can return to the office where they purchased it if that is the most convenient. Contact the Personal Records department at 713-755-6436 for further assistance in this matter.

Marriage Certificate in Texas:

Texas does not issue a Marriage Certificate just a Marriage License or a certified copy of the Marriage License, however if you would like the Harris County Clerk's office can mail you a letter explaining this.

To request this letter you can email your request to ccinfo@cco.hctx.net or mail your request to:

Stan Stanart, Harris County Clerk
ATTN: Personal Records Department
P.O. Box 1525, Houston, TX 77251

Be sure to include the complete names of both applicants and the address to send the letter to.

For further assistance, contact the Personal Records Department at 713-755-6436.

Getting married at a courthouse:

The Harris County Clerk's Office does not speak to the conditions by which a Judge's office performs a ceremony. The Clerk's office is independent from Judge's offices and while we can't direct you specifically we recommend you see the list that Harris County maintains of Judges at <http://www.harriscountytexas.gov/phonedirectory.aspx>. When you get to the main directory page you should select [Search by Court](#).

Please note which courts can marry, according to the Texas Family Code §2.202:

- *a justice of the supreme court, judge of the court of criminal appeals, justice of the courts of appeals, judge of the district, county, and probate courts, judge of the county courts at law, judge of the courts of domestic relations, judge of the juvenile courts, retired justice or judge of those courts, justice of the peace, retired justice of the peace, judge of a municipal court, or judge or magistrate of a federal court of this state.*

Each court has different policies, schedules and fees for marriages so please keep this in mind when contacting their offices.

District and Justice of the Peace Judges

District Judges are the judges that can waive the 72 hour waiting period. Justice of the Peace judges can marry individuals but cannot waive the 72 hour waiting period. You must contact the court directly for waivers and/or to marry. The court clerk will provide you with a waiver document that, along with your signed marriage license, you will return to the Harris County Clerk's Office (see list above). Remember, you only need the waiver if you are having the ceremony prior to 72 hours after the license is issued.

Who is authorized to conduct a Marriage Ceremony?

Please note that the Texas Family Code §2.202 states:

The following persons are authorized to conduct a marriage ceremony:

- *a licensed or ordained Christian minister or priest;*
- *a Jewish rabbi;*
- *a person who is an officer of a religious organization and who is authorized by the organization to conduct a marriage ceremony; and*
- *a justice of the supreme court, judge of the court of criminal appeals, justice of the courts of appeals, judge of the district, county, and probate courts, judge of the county courts at law, judge of the courts of domestic relations, judge of the juvenile courts, retired justice or judge of those courts, justice of the peace, retired justice of the peace, judge of a municipal court, or judge or magistrate of a federal court of this state.*

There is nothing in Texas Law that states that the state of Texas or the county clerks' offices are to determine who falls under Family Code §2.202. There is no official registration process with the state of Texas for persons who are authorized to conduct a marriage ceremony. The only thing that the Texas Vital Statistics and the County Clerks' offices can do for persons who ask these questions is to inform them of what the law states. It would be up to the person who wants to perform the ceremony to determine whether they fall under the law as an authorized person to conduct marriage ceremonies.

The next question is usually, what if the person really was not authorized to conduct a marriage ceremony. The Texas Family Code also addresses this. Family Code §2.302 says:

The validity of a marriage is not affected by the lack of authority of the person conducting the marriage ceremony if there was a reasonable appearance of authority by that person; at least one party to the marriage participated in the ceremony in good faith and that party treats the marriage as valid.

Because of the presumption that every marriage is valid [FC §1.101], a lack of authority to marry the couple does not affect the marriage if at least one of the parties acted in good faith.

Persons authorized to conduct marriage ceremonies do not have to register with the Vital Statistics Unit of the Texas Department of State Health Services office or the Harris County Clerk's Office before performing a ceremony. For more information contact the Texas Department of State Health Services by visiting www.dshs.state.tx.us/vs/.

Contact the Personal Records Department at 713-755-6436 for further assistance. The Personal Records fax number is 713-755-8839.

FAQS

Will we need to bring witnesses to obtain a Marriage License?

Answer:

You do not need to bring witnesses to obtain the marriage license or for the marriage ceremony. There are not signature places on the Marriage License for witnesses. Visit the [Personal Records Department](#) page for more information.

Can we get married in another country (destination wedding), using a Harris County Marriage License?

Answer:

Most destination weddings require the couple to follow the requirements of the country where the wedding ceremony is performed. Some U.S. entities will not accept a foreign Marriage License to change the female's name for an example. Some couples choose to purchase a Marriage License in the other country as well as locally.

How do I obtain an Apostille for my Marriage License?

Answer:

Contact the Texas Secretary of State in Austin for apostilles or authentication of documents. For more information visit <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/authinfo.shtml>.

What is the difference between a formal marriage license and an informal marriage license?

Answer:

On an Informal you can post date your marriage date to a date that has already passed....a formal marriage license is when you purchase a license and then get married by someone that has the right to perform a ceremony.

Can we buy the marriage license at Harris County and return it at Dallas County?

Answer:

No...it has to be filed in the same county that it is purchased in.