



# WEDDINGS IN THE BAHAMAS

## FREQUENT ASK QUESTIONS

*Can I get married the same day I arrive in the islands of the Bahamas?*

No, both parties must have resided in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas for at least 24 hours prior to the date of application.

*How long does it take to get the marriage certificate?*

It takes two business days, not counting Bahamian holidays.

*Can I get the certificate the same day if I arrive by cruise ship?*

Yes, exceptions are made for cruise ship arrivals, once you have met the 24-hour residency requirement and have your letter from the Purser's Office/Guest Services, signed by your ship's captain, confirming this fact.

*Will my marriage certificate be legal in my country?*

Yes, the Bahamian marriage certificate is a legal document issued by the Government of the Bahamas.

*Can I request a marriage certificate by mail?*

No, both parties must be in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas at the time of application.

*Could I use my marriage certificate from my country?*

No, only the Bahamian marriage certificate is legal in the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

*Can my priest/rabbi officiate at the wedding ceremony?*

The ceremony must be officiated by a local priest; however, your priest/rabbi can assist.

*Can I get married by a non-denominational or non-religious ceremony?*

Yes. Your wedding consultant or officiant can show you a variety of options for a traditional, religious, or strictly legal union.

*When can I get married?*

Weddings must take place between sunrise and sunset.

### *Can I get married over the weekend?*

Yes, you can get married on a Saturday or Sunday if you apply on a working Thursday or Friday.

### *Why do I need a certified copy of the marriage certificate?*

It is required by many credit institutions and insurance companies. Also, if the wife now wishes to have a passport with the married name.

### *Do I need a certificate for the renewal of vows?*

No, you do not need a certificate to renew your vows.

### *Can I rent wedding clothes in the Bahamas?*

There are several stores that offer full rental clothing. Allow plenty of time to make those arrangements.

### *I want to get married in The Bahamas, what are the requirements?*

- Anyone wishing to be married in the Bahamas must first request a license from the Registry. A marriage license is valid for three months. After a marriage has taken place, a Marriage Duplicate Register (Form No. 9) is sent to the Registry by the Marriage Officer as quickly as possible. From this document certified copies of marriage certificates are issued.
- The legal age of marriage in the Bahamas is eighteen (18).
- Both parties must be in The Bahamas at the time of the application.
- The Bahamas Law states that the couple must be resident in The Bahamas for 24 hours prior to the date of the application. A Bahamian-issued marriage license is valid for 90 days for those seeking early application. You can write the Registrar General prior to your arrival at: P.O. Box H-5553, Nassau, Bahamas, or fax to 242-322-5553.
- If either party is a minor (a person under 18 years of age), an affidavit of parental consent is required. Forms of consent may be obtained from the Registrar General's office.
- If either party has been divorced, the original final decree or a certified copy (with a raised or colored seal) must be produced. For European residents, the original decree or a certified copy (with a raised or colored seal) must be produced in the native language along with a translated certified or notarized copy in English.
- If either party is widowed, the death certificate of the deceased spouse must be produced.
- If either party is unmarried, for a citizen or resident of the U.S.A., a declaration certifying this fact must be sworn before a U.S. Consul at the American Embassy,

Nassau, Bahamas, for a fee of \$55 (effective February 1st, 1998), or a Bahamian Notary Public. (Please note, the U.S. Embassy is closed on American and Bahamian holidays.)

- If either party is unmarried and is a citizen or resident of a country other than the U.S.A., a declaration certifying this fact must be sworn before a Notary Public or other person authorized to administer oaths in that country and must accompany the application for the marriage license. The said declaration may also be obtained at a Notary Public in Nassau.
- The parties must produce either a Valid passport (stamped by The Bahamas Immigration to show date of entry into country) or a valid driver's license (with photo) plus a certified copy of your birth certificate plus a stamped immigration card from Bahamas Immigration (you receive this when you enter The Bahamas). A passport is required for persons who are residents of a Commonwealth country.
- The parties must produce evidence of the date of their arrival in The Islands Of The Bahamas (i.e., airline ticket, immigration card).
- Persons desirous of being married in a Family Island (any island outside of New Providence or Grand Bahama) can obtain the Marriage License at the Commissioner's Office on that Island and need not come to New Providence or Grand Bahama. Initial inquiries can be made at this office.
- No blood test is necessary.
- The fee for a marriage license is \$100.00.

NOTE: Marriage licenses are issued at the Office of the Registrar General located in the Rodney Bain Building on Parliament and Shirley Street in Nassau, which is open to the public Monday to Friday between the hours of 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. (Closed on weekends and Bahamian Public Holidays.)

Registrar General  
P. O. Box N- 532  
Nassau, The Bahamas  
Tel: 242-322-3316  
Fax: 242-322-5553

### *What do Bahamians need to know when getting married?*

Bahamians making application for a license must present valid government issued picture identification (passport or voter's card). The application contains information for both applicants and must be signed by the marriage officer who is to perform the marriage.

### *How do I locate the Registrar General's Office?*

The Registrar General's office is located at #1 Bay Street. Yet the most familiar landmark on the property is the Sheraton British Colonial Hotel. Any taxi driver will know where to take you.

If you are dropped off in front of the Hotel, go through their lobby and exit on the North side (which is the exit that takes you toward the beach/pool area). Once you are outside, follow the sidewalk all the way to the right. The first building on your left has a few businesses side by side, yet you will be entering the first door you come to. You can only enter on the South-eastern side of this building. If you get lost, just ask anyone for the Registrar General's office.

If the taxi drops you off on the side of the property facing the Straw Market, to the entrance of the Scotia Bank. Then, take the glass doors immediately to the right of the bank (this will lead you into a hall area with access to various businesses). Take the second set of glass doors on the right, which are immediately after the entrance to a liquor store. Once inside this area, you will walk past the security desk (on the right) until you reach the last glass door on the left. You are now outside, on the other side of the facility. Follow the sidewalk straight ahead until you come to the first building on your right. The entrance to the Registrar General's office will be the first door you come to in that building.

Contact Details:  
phone number is (242) 323-0594-6

### *Symbolic Wedding*

There is no marriage license required for a symbolic wedding, the bride and groom must be on island 24 hours prior to the wedding date.