

**REQUIREMENTS AND AUTHORIZATION PROCESS
FOR VIRGINIA CLERGY TO PERFORM
WEDDING CEREMONIES**

Pursuant to *Virginia Code Section 20-23* clergy must be affiliated with a local church in the City of Williamsburg or County of James City for consideration of authorization to perform wedding ceremonies in the Commonwealth of Virginia and must be granted authorization through the Court prior to performing such ceremony. **Clergy assigned to a church in another city or county are not eligible to apply in this Court, and must apply for authorization where their church is located.**

The Clerk's fee is \$22.00. Payment may be cash, money order, cashier's check or credit card and should be made payable to the "Clerk of Circuit Court". Mail your payment and documents to:

Williamsburg/James City County Circuit Court
Circuit Court Clerk's Office
Attn: Pam Sych, Master Deputy Clerk
5201 Monticello Avenue, Suite 6
Williamsburg, VA 23188

The Clerk's Office of the Circuit Court must receive the following to initiate the authorization process:

1. Completed Petition and Questionnaire with payment of \$22.00. The petition and questionnaire must be typed or printed legibly. Your signature **must be notarized**. (If your petition is not legible, it will be returned.) **PLEASE USE FULL NAMES**.
2. A copy of the Clergy's ordination certificate. If your religious society does not require ordination, you will need to submit a letter of explanation.
3. A **notarized** letter on official church stationery, signed by an official of the clergy's **local religious society**, stating that the prospective celebrant is in good standing with the local religious sector. This letter must contain information regarding your exact title, i.e. Minister, Priest, etc. and your exact duties and privileges within the church, i.e. according to the church that you are eligible to perform marriage ceremonies, etc.

Wedding ceremonies may be performed anywhere in the Commonwealth of Virginia. When completing the marriage certificate, remember to put that you were "authorized" in this Court and the year you were authorized by us.

The Circuit Court Clerk's Office has discretionary authority to grant the authorization for celebrants to celebrate the rites of matrimony pursuant to an Attorney General Opinion dated 11/29/2001.

The Judge may rescind any order made under this section at any time.

Please allow 30 days after our receipt of your request for the process to be completed. It is helpful if you include your e-mail address on the petition where indicated. This will assist us in contacting you should we need additional documents or clarification.

Petitioner's Full Name: _____

Case no.: CL _____

**PETITION TO PERFORM RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE CEREMONIES
(Virginia Clergy with local church only)**

Comes now the Petitioner seeking authorization to perform marriage ceremonies pursuant to Virginia Code Section 20-23.

Petitioner's full name: _____

Petitioner's address: _____

Petitioner is an ordained clergy in the religious sector of: _____

Petitioner's church name: _____

Petitioner's church address: _____

Petitioner's church telephone number: _____

Petitioner's home address:

Petitioner's e-mail address: _____

Petitioner's telephone number(s):

Home

Work

Cell

Your signature on this Petition certifies that you understand the ceremony must be performed in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Signature of Petitioner

Commonwealth of Virginia
City/County: _____

The foregoing Petition was sworn to before me, _____,
the undersigned notary, by _____, Petitioner, who appeared
before me on this _____ day of _____, 20____.

Notary Public

SEAL

My Commission expires: _____ Commission number: _____

Religious Qualification Questionnaire for Virginia Clergy

Name: _____

Name of church: _____

Church address: _____

Are you serving as the minister of your congregation? _____

How long have you been a minister? _____

Is your tenure for a definite period? _____ If so, state the length of your term. _____

How many other ministers are appointed to your church? _____

Describe in detail your credentials for being a minister (i.e. schooling, degree(s), seminars, etc.):

Describe the requirements your organization places on becoming an ordained minister (i.e. time requirements, schooling, training, etc.):

How do your responsibilities differ from those of the members of the congregation? _____

List the privileges and benefits derived from your ordination (i.e. perform baptisms, authority to preside over services, etc.): _____

List the documents that regulate the management of your religious organization (i.e. by-laws, charters, directives, rules, etc.): _____

Outline the leadership structure of your organization: _____

Applicant's Signature

Commonwealth of Virginia

City/County of _____

The foregoing Questionnaire was sworn to before me by _____, the Applicant, who appeared before me this _____ day of _____, 20_____.

Notary Public

My commission expires: _____ Commission number: _____