

DISCLAIMER OF LIABILITY

PA law requires officiants to be ordained by “a regularly established church or congregation.”

This office will not determine what is/is not a church or congregation.

PLEASE BE ADVISED: IF you choose to be married by someone other than the officiants specifically listed & authorized by PA law, the burden of proof regarding the legality (or lack thereof) of your marriage will be upon you – should future issues arise that require a determination of the marriage’s validity.

To be recognized as legal by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, marriages must be performed under a valid marriage license duly issued by the Clerk of Orphans’ Court and **MUST BE OFFICIATED by one of the following individuals specifically recognized under PA law as authorized by officiate, to wit:**

1503. Persons qualified to solemnize marriages.

- (a) General rule, - The following are authorized to solemnize marriages between persons that produce a marriage license issued under this part:
1. A justice, judge, or district justice of this Commonwealth.
 2. A former or retired justice, judge, or district justice of this Commonwealth who is serving as a senior judge or senior district justice as provided or prescribed by law.
 3. An active or senior judge or full-time magistrate of the District Courts of the United States for the Eastern, Middle or Western District of Pennsylvania.
 4. An active or senior judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit who is a resident of this Commonwealth.
 5. A mayor of any city or borough of this Commonwealth.
 6. A minister, priest or rabbi of any regularly established church or congregation.
- (b) Religious organizations – Every religious society, religious institution or religious organization in this Commonwealth may join persons together in marriage when at least one of the persons is a member of the society, institution, or organization, according to the rules and customs of the society, institution or organization. (Amish and Quakers if you are a member)
- (c) Marriage license needed to officiate – No person or religious organization qualified to perform marriages shall officiate at a marriage ceremony without the parties having obtained a marriage license issued under this part.

Common Law Marriage is no longer valid in Pennsylvania