

Thinking about getting married or forming a civil partnership?

Deciding to get married or form a civil partnership is a big life changing event only you and your partner can make. It can seem a little confusing when it comes to arranging and sorting the legal preliminaries for your big day, so hopefully this leaflet will help.

When do you want your ceremony?

We take bookings for ceremonies in Milton Keynes up to two years ahead, on a first come first served basis. So have a couple of dates and times in mind and be flexible for peak periods of the year or popular days. The legal paperwork issued after "notice" (that's what we call the legal preliminaries) last for 12 months so having a date in mind really helps with planning and arranging appointments.

Where do you want your ceremony?

Abroad – check out the advice on www.gov.uk to find out what you need to do.

Church of England or Wales – discuss your plans and agree a date with the church directly. You will not normally need our services.

Any other church / religious building – discuss your plans and dates with the religious premises directly as we may need to attend. If you live in Milton Keynes you will need to give notice with us up to a year ahead, so check early with them and then make any bookings and appointments needed with us.

With us – we can perform your ceremony in our Register Office, our licenced room or at one of our approved venues in Milton Keynes (see our website for full details). Make a provisional booking with your venue before contacting us to see if the date and time are available for us to perform your ceremony. You don't have to live in Milton Keynes to use one of our venues, however you will need to contact the Register Office where you live in order to give your notice.

If you live in Milton Keynes but want a ceremony in a different district you will need to make a provisional ceremony booking with them and book your notice appointment with us.

Where and when do you need to give notice?

You must attend in person and need to give notice in the area where you live and pay your council tax to (you must have lived at this address for nine days immediately before your appointment) so a couple might have to give notice in different districts.

After notice there is a waiting period before your ceremony can go ahead. This is currently 28 clear days, so we would recommend you book your notice appointment as soon as you can and up to a year ahead to ensure you can get an appointment.

Once you have given notice your ceremony must take place at the venue specified in the notice and within 12 months. If you need to change the location or the date beyond 12 months, fresh notices will be required.

Foreign nationals can also give notice with us and require a valid passport. We are unable to give advice on immigration matters. If either of you are subject to any immigration controls or visa restrictions, you must check with www.gov.uk before making an appointment to give notice with us. You will be referred to the Home Office (a fee is payable). Please be aware that the Home Office may extend your notice period to 70 clear days.

What documents are required to give notice?

We need to check that you are free and legally able to marry or form a civil partnership. To do this we need to see original documentation, in English, showing your:

- Name
- Nationality
- Address
- Age
- Marital Status

You must check our website for full details of documents we are legally able to accept.

Foreign divorce – if you were divorced outside of England or Wales

If a couple have a foreign divorce this may have to be referred to the General Register Office and it can take some time to confirm if they are acceptable under British law. The General Register Office is not able to provide a deadline for any decisions as they may need further information, therefore, you should allow plenty of time between giving notice and your possible ceremony date, which cannot be confirmed until authorisation is received.

You will need to bring the original paperwork issued by the court confirming that the marriage/civil partnership has legally ended. Photocopies will not be accepted and it must be in English or accompanied by a certified translation which exactly matches the original court document. We cannot confirm if a foreign divorce needs to be sent for authorisation until your notice appointment. There is a statutory fee for this.

Our venues

You can get married or hold your civil partnership in our statutory room, which holds the couple and 2 witnesses; have an enhanced ceremony in our ceremony room which holds up to 80 guests; or have your special day at one of our approved venues which hold larger numbers and range from a grand country house to overlooking our football ground. A list of these venues can be found on our website.



Fees

Fees are taken at the time of booking.

Fees for booking notices, ceremonies and all our other services are detailed on our website. You will also need to speak to our approved venues if you plan to have your ceremony with them.

Planning your ceremony

Your ceremony can be as formal or casual as you make it, whilst maintaining the integrity and legalities of the day. Our statutory ceremonies are intimate, you are seen together and our staff perform all parts of the ceremony. Our enhanced ceremonies allow you to choose your vows and have readings, music and more friends and family to witness your big day. So whatever your choice and budget there is a ceremony to meet your needs and together we will ensure you have a special experience to cherish in the years to come.

We do offer a ceremony planning meeting if you would like to meet us before your big day. There is a charge for this service.

Any questions

For more advice on what to do before or after your ceremony, such as re-registering any children, please visit our website. It contains checklist and further guidance, but if you have any further questions please email or call us. We aim to make your planning as simple and straight forward as possible.

Making a booking

To make a ceremony or notice appointment booking please go to www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars to book online or call **01908 372101**.

Please do check the website thoroughly first to ensure you have the correct documents available as booking fees are non-refundable.

Please have your debit or credit card to hand when you call us.



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Milton Keynes Registration Services

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Central Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ
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www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/registrars

