

WEDDINGS IN THE DIOCESE OF PORTLAND:

A Guide for Out-of-State Clergy

Thank you for expressing interest in learning more about the celebration of marriages in the State of Maine. The following is a brief guide intended to summarize the requirements when an out-of state couple wishes to have a Catholic wedding in the Diocese of Portland. This Guide has been published by the Department of Canonical Services, which is happy to assist clergy and laypersons alike in providing information concerning the laws, customs, and practices of the Diocese of Portland. When working with a couple who intends to marry in Maine, please consider the following points:

1. If the entire program of marriage preparation, or at least the investigation of the parties' freedom to marry, has been conducted in another diocese, the Diocese of Portland requests that the premarital file be forwarded to the local chancery of the place where the marriage preparation was conducted. The Diocese of Portland expects that an official at the other chancery will review the file and forward it to the Department of Canonical Services of the Diocese of Portland.
2. Because either chancery may request more information regarding the couple's freedom, intentions, etc., out-of-state clergy should allot extra time before the wedding to allow for this review process
3. Once the Department of Canonical Services verifies that there are no canonical reasons to postpone the wedding, it will forward the file to the place of marriage, unless requested otherwise.
4. Dispensations for Disparity of Cult and Permission for Mixed Religion should be requested from the local ordinary of the Catholic party.
5. The Department of Canonical Services does not grant delegation to witness marriages. Delegation should be sought directly from the pastor/administrator of the parish where the wedding will occur. An out-of-state priest or deacon should provide the pastor with a recent "celebret" card or similar letter of "good standing" from his local ordinary.
6. In order to fulfill the civil law licensing requirements, out-of-state clergy need only to provide the date of their ordination on the marriage license.
7. In accord with universal law, when an out-of-state couple marries in the Diocese (even if an out-of-state priest or deacon presides), they are bound to observe all of the marriage norms of Diocese concerning the celebration of marriage [cf. cc. 13 §2 2°, 838 §4].
8. When a priest or deacon presides, weddings are not permitted out-of-doors.
9. If you have other specific questions about the marriage norms or policy of the Diocese of Portland, please contact the pastor/administrator of the place of marriage or the Department of Canonical

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