

ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW YORK

PRENUPTIAL FILE – WITNESS AFFIDAVIT



The priest or deacon has the option to request witness' affidavits if needed to obtain further knowledge of the parties, and their intentions and readiness to enter a marriage. Witnesses should be family members or close friends who have known the bride/groom for several years.

Name of Bride/Groom for whom you are completing this Affidavit:

\_\_\_\_\_

1) How are you related to the above-named person? \_\_\_\_\_ Year you met him/her \_\_\_\_\_  
(Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Friend, etc.)

2) Does this person intend in this marriage: \_\_\_\_\_ Yes/No/Don't Know  
a) To give him/herself to the spouse for the total well-being of the common partnership of life? \_\_\_\_\_  
b) To accept children lovingly from God (intimacy without contraception) and see to their upbringing? \_\_\_\_\_  
c) To make an unconditional, permanent commitment to stay until the death of his/her spouse? \_\_\_\_\_  
d) To be faithful to his/her spouse throughout the entire marriage? \_\_\_\_\_

3) Was this person ever baptized?  Yes  No  Uncertain  
If yes, in which denomination and when? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Has this person ever been married at any time in his/her life, in any kind of ceremony whether religious or civil?  
 Yes  No If yes, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_  
List the full name(s) of previous spouse(s): \_\_\_\_\_

How did prior marriage(s) end?  Divorce  Death of spouse  Catholic Church annulment  Other \_\_\_\_\_

If married previously, is this person meeting his/her moral/civil responsibilities toward the former spouse(s) and any child/children?  Yes  No \*

5) Is this person related to his/her intended spouse by blood, marriage, or legal adoption?  Yes\*  No

6) Has this person ever been ordained a Catholic priest/deacon or been in a Catholic religious community?  Yes\*  No

7) Is any person or circumstance forcing or putting pressure upon the bride/groom to marry?  Yes\*  No

8) Does this person have or has ever had any physical, psychological, emotional or psychiatric problem?  
Or any problem with substance abuse, gambling, violence, etc.?  Yes\*  No

9) Do the parents of the bride/groom, you, or anyone else have any reservations about this marriage?  Yes\*  No

Please explain here any previous response that included an asterisk (\*) and use additional paper if needed:

If you know of any reason(s) why this marriage should not occur or have information you believe should be made known about this marriage, please explain and use additional paper if needed:

Signature of Witness

Signature Priest or Deacon

Type/print name

Type /print name

Address of Witness

Parish

\*SEAL

City/State

Date Signed

City/State

Date signed

## REFERENCE GUIDE

Always contact the Chancery with any questions!

### *Marriage Impediments (Code of Canon Law, canons 1083-1094)*

#### 1. Impediments of Divine Natural Law that cannot be dispensed by anyone:

- A) **Impotence:** Antecedent and perpetual incapacity of groom/bride to perform a complete conjugal act, i.e., marital sexual intercourse. Sterility or the inability to impregnate or to conceive is not an impediment.
- B) **Prior Bond; Ligamen.** A person with a prior bond cannot marry again as long as the first spouse is living since the marriage is presumed valid. If a decree of declaration of nullity or a dissolution is granted by a Catholic Tribunal, then the person could be free to marry.
- C) **Consanguinity:** Blood relationships in the direct line, any ancestor and descendant, i.e. parent, grandparent, etc., or in the second degree of the collateral line, i.e. brother and sister, legitimate, natural, or adoptive.

#### 2. Impediments of Ecclesiastical Law that a diocesan bishop or local Ordinary may dispense:

- A) **Disparity of Worship/Cult:** Is required for a marriage between a Catholic and a non-baptized person.
- B) **Perpetual Vow of Chastity:** If the person is a member of a religious institute of *diocesan* right, not pontifical right.
- C) **Abduction:** A marriage between a man and a woman whom he abducts or detains in order to marry.
- D) **Consanguinity:** Blood relationships in the collateral line.
- E) **Affinity:** Marrying someone who became a relative of the person through a valid marriage to some family member and is now free to marry, never in the direct line, in any degree.
- F) **Public Propriety:** A man/woman cannot marry a woman/man related by consanguinity in the first degree of the direct line to the woman/man he/she lived with together in an invalid marriage or in a notorious or public concubinage.

#### 3. Impediments of Ecclesiastical Law that only the Holy See may dispense:

- A) **Sacred Orders**
- B) **Perpetual Vow of Chastity:** In a religious institute of pontifical right.
- C) **Crime:** Murdering one's spouse or someone else's in view of marriage, or any mutual physical or moral action that causes the death or either's spouse to marry the surviving spouse.

### *Reception of Sacraments of Initiation Prior to Marriage*

A **marriage** is sacramental when both spouses are baptized validly. A marriage between a baptized person and an unbaptized person (or between two unbaptized persons) is not a sacrament, but presumed to be valid. A prior marriage of two non-Catholics is also presumed to be valid.