

Harry D'Olive, Jr.
JUDGE OF PROBATE
BALDWIN COUNTY



BALDWIN COUNTY JUDGE OF PROBATE HARRY M. D'OLIVE, JR. ISSUES STATEMENT REGARDING NEW MARRIAGE LAW

For Immediate Release
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BAY MINETTE - The new Marriage Law will take effect on August 29, 2019, and couples in Alabama will begin following a different path in the process of becoming legally married, as lawmakers approved a bill in the 2019 legislative session that changes documents and proceedings necessary for a marriage to be valid.

Baldwin County Probate Judge Harry D'Olive, Jr. says the changes actually make becoming married easier, as there are less steps involved with the new law. "Currently, a couple must come into the Probate Office with proof of identification and appropriate forms to obtain a license within thirty (30) days before their wedding date. After obtaining the license, they must have a ceremony and are required to remit signed form back to the Probate Office within thirty (30) days after the wedding date. The new law removes the need for a license to be obtained in advance. Additionally, while couples certainly may have a ceremony if they wish, a ceremony will no longer be required."

A couple desiring to marry as of August 29, 2019, will simply have to do the following:

- Complete the form provided by the State (*more details regarding form below*)
- Take the form to a notary to sign and have notarized
- Deliver the form to the Probate Office for recording, along with the filing fee, within 30 days of the signatures

The form must be notarized before bringing it in for filing, and it must be filed in the Probate Office within 30 days of being signed. The filing fee will be \$73. Other requirements surrounding marriage, such as being of minimum age and not presently married, have not changed based on the new law. The information requested on the affidavit is also essentially the same as what couples previously had to provide, which is basic information about each spouse.

The Probate Office must receive and file the original form, but the Baldwin County office will provide a certified copy to the couple for their personal records. The effective date of the marriage is the latter of the dates of the signatures of the spouses. The required form and instructions will be available online through the Department of Public Health and there will be a link to that site from the Baldwin County webpage, which is www.baldwincountyal.gov. The current licenses issued for marriage are valid through August 28. If a couple plans to get married August 29 or later, they will need to comply with the new law and procedure.

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