



Instructions for Marriage Judgement

General Guidelines

1. Complete and sign “Part One: The Proposed Marriage.”
2. Each party whose previous marriage(s) have been dissolved by civil decree must complete and sign a separate “Part Two: The Former Marriage,” for each former marriage. In the case of two or more marriages for either party, refer to “Third Marriages” in this document for the additional documentation needed.
3. The clergy person must be satisfied that the former marriage(s) have in fact been dissolved, and will so attest to the Bishop by signing the “Minister’s Certificate.”
4. The clergy person will write a letter, two or more pages in length, to the Bishop addressing the following:
 - a. How the member of the clergy has instructed the parties that continuing concern must be shown for the well-being of the former spouse, and of any children of the prior marriage in accordance with TEC Canon I.19.3b including,
 - i. What provisions have been made;
 - ii. How these provisions have been or are being carried out;
 - iii. Any significant unresolved issues from the former marriage.
 - b. How the member of the clergy has instructed the parties that marriage “is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong” in accordance with TEC Canon I.18.4, including:
 - i. Did the divorced person view their marriage as “unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong” from the outset?
 - ii. What do you see were the causes of the breakdown of the former marriage?
 - iii. What is different in the proposed marriage that makes the petitioners believe theirs will be lifelong?



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- c. How the member of the clergy has instructed the parties that Christian marriage is entered into within the community of faith, including:
 - i. What does the couple understand this to mean?
 - ii. What kind of involvement has each of them had in the life of the Church and particularly with your parish?
 - iii. Why does the couple believe that marriage in the Church is important?
 - iv. What relationship do they have with you and for how long?
 - v. Do you regard them as a Church family or becoming a Church family?
- 5. The clergy person who will officiate at the marriage must submit the completed application, including their accompanying letter, in printed form sixty (60) days prior to the wedding date in order to give the couple adequate time to complete their wedding arrangements. Applications submitted less than thirty (30) days prior to the wedding date will not be considered without weighty cause.

Send all completed applications and supporting documents in printed format to

The Episcopal Church in Connecticut
Attn: Jeanette Wheeler
290 Pratt Street, Box 52
Meriden, CT 06450



Instructions for Marriage Judgement

Third Marriages

Title I, Canons 18 and 19, outline The Episcopal Church's position on Holy Matrimony and give some guidelines governing the circumstances under which a bishop or priest could perform marriages.

Canon 19, Sections 2 and 3, and the subsections under these, give guidelines to the member of the clergy contemplating the remarriage of persons previously divorced. The canons are silent with regard to procedures in cases where a person requiring remarriage by one of our clergy has been divorced more than once. It has been the position in the Episcopal Church in Connecticut that in a case in which a petitioner for remarriage has been divorced more than once that we require some form of affirmation that relationship has strong markers for a secure and stable new marriage. In instances where a partner (or both partners) to a proposed marriage has had more than two marriages, we believe it is important that one or both persons undertake careful preparation with competent professional guidance to explore the reasons the previous unions ended in dissolution. This is an effort to support their new life together.

One of the ways we seek to do this is to ask the clergy person to have the parties meet with a professional counselor after meeting with the priest. The professional counselor will meet with the couple to adequately evaluate and give written feedback on the following questions:

1. Is the person entering into another marriage to "quiet" the pain of the previous marriages?
2. Is there a compulsive need to enter into serious relationships without serious thought or preparation?
3. Is there a persistence of emotions such as anger, grief, fear, etc., which could make it impossible or extremely difficult to fully commit oneself to the next marriage?
4. Are there personality patterns and traits currently operative which could make another marriage complicated?



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The counselor will alert the parties to any unhealthy patterns of interaction and encourage their seeking marriage counseling when problems arise in the marriage.

These are some of the reasons for the professional counselor evaluation. Our hope is that the proposed marriage will be a lifelong union of mutual physical, psychological, spiritual, emotional benefit to the parties marriage and to any offspring.



Application for Marriage Judgement

Part One: The Proposed Marriage

Petitioner 1

Name

First

Last

Address:

Current Church Membership:

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Baptized?

Church where baptism occurred:

Petitioner 2

Name

First

Last

Address:

Current Church Membership:

Date of Birth:

Place of Birth:

Baptized?

Church where baptism occurred:

Wedding Information

How long have you known each other?

Wedding Ceremony Date:

Wedding Ceremony Location:



Application for Marriage Judgement

Part One: The Proposed Marriage

Signatures

Petitioner 1

Print Name

Signature

Date

Petitioner 2

Print Name

Signature

Date

Minister's Certification

I hereby certify that I have counseled with these persons and that the facts stated herein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief, and I have satisfied myself by appropriate evidence that the prior marriage(s) are annulled or dissolved by a final judgment or decree of a civil court of competent jurisdiction.

I further state that I have instructed these persons in the nature of Holy Matrimony and have conformed in all ways to Title I, Canons 18 and 19, of The Episcopal Church.

I am willing to solemnize the marriage of these persons if permission is given by the Bishop.

Print Name

Signature

Email

Parish Name, Town

Date



Application for Marriage Judgement

Part Two: The Former Marriage

Complete one form for each previous marriage

Petitioner Name

First

Last

Former Spouse's Name

First

Last

Former Spouse's Date of Birth:

Date of Previous Marriage

Town and State of Previous Marriage

Was previous marriage a religious ceremony?

☐

Yes

☐

No

If yes, what faith or denomination?

Did you receive instruction on Christian marriage?

☐

Yes

☐

No

Children of previous marriage and dates of birth

In your opinion, what lead to the dissolution of your previous marriage?

Did you seek counseling?

☐

Yes

☐

No

From whom?

Was spouse present?

☐

Yes

☐

No

How many conferences were held?

What other efforts were made toward reconciliation?



Application for Marriage Judgement

Part Two: The Former Marriage

Complete one form for each previous marriage

Date of Termination of Living Together

Date of Final Divorce Decree

Has your former spouse remarried?

☐

Yes

☐

No

When?

Have you ever applied to an

Episcopal Priest to be remarried?

☐

Yes

☐

No

When?

Signature of Petitioner

Print Name

Signature

Date