

## Requirements for Marriage in Greece

Our firm would be happy to handle the preparation and translation of all documents required for you to hold your marriage ceremony in Greece. We can also assist you with submitting documents and obtaining the license for this important event. After the marriage ceremony, we can arrange for the marriage to be registered with the Greek Authorities and ensure that it will be legally valid in Greece and abroad. For your convenience, we have prepared this document describing the requirements for marriage in Greece.

### **GREEK CITIZENS MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:**

- Bureau of Vital Statistics Certified Birth Certificate (Ληξιαρχική Πράξη Γέννησης)
- Law No. 1599/186 Declaration
- Divorce decree from the Bureau of Vital Statistics (Ληξιαρχείο), if applicable
- Bureau of Vital Statistics Certified Death Certificate (Ληξιαρχική Πράξη Θανάτου) of previous spouse, if applicable.

### **NON GREEK CITIZENS MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:**

- Photocopy of Passport
- Original or verified copy of Original Birth Certificate, duly certified by Apostille, if issuing country is a signatory to the 1961 Hague Convention. This document must be officially translated into Greek.
- If issuing country is not a signatory to the Hague Convention, Original Birth Certificate, duly verified by Foreign Ministry or Greek Consular Authority. This document must be officially translated into Greek.
- Certificate of No Impediment from native country or the country in which the applicant has resided for over 21 days. This document certifies that there is no impediment to the marriage (i.e. neither party is under 18 years of age, there is no existing undissolved marriage, attest to a valid divorce decree etc.) and must be signed by the marriage license applicant under oath. Some foreign Consular Authorities in Athens provide this document, in the form of an Affidavit of Marriage signed and notarized before a Consulate official. In the alternative, this document may be signed before a Notary Public located outside of Greece. If the document is not signed before a Consular Authority, it must be certified by Apostille. In either case, the document must be officially translated into Greek.
- If applicable, documentary evidence (death certificate or final/irrevocable divorce decree) of the termination of a previous marriage (the most recent, if more than one). This document must be certified by Apostille and officially translated into the Greek language.

### **SOME JURISDICTIONS WITHIN GREECE MAY ALSO REQUIRE THE FOLLOWING:**

- One wedding notice published in a local newspaper for each spouse (foreign names must be published in Greek characters), a photocopy of which must be submitted.
- Proof of residency within the Municipality (in the form of a utility bill receipt of tax declaration), if applicable.

- A specifically formulated Marriage License from the country/jurisdiction in which the spouses reside, if neither spouse resides in Greece. This document must be certified by Apostille and officially translated.
- Non Greek citizens should be in possession of a residence permit or a certificate indicating that they have applied for a residence permit, if they permanently reside in Greece or if the length of their stay in the country exceeds the residence permit free period. At the time of entry into the country, a stamp must be placed in the passport showing the date and place of entry. If the first port of entry is another Schengen state, the entry stamp should be placed in the passport upon entry into that country. Persons who lack port of entry stamps may be unable to perform or register their marriage.
- Cypriot citizens require a certificate (πιστοποιητικό ελευθερίας).
- Payment of fees by each of the future spouses deposited with a local tax office

#### **FOR CIVIL MARRIAGES :**

- Two witnesses over the age of 18, provided by the marrying couple, must attend the wedding ceremony, one of whom may act as an interpreter. The witnesses must be in possession of their passports or Greek Identification Cards.
- Marriage licenses are typically issued within eight days after submission of the application and are valid for 6 months.
- Upon issuance of the marriage license, the future spouses must jointly submit another application to the Mayor or President of the Community where the ceremony will be performed. This local official sets the date for the wedding ceremony.

#### **FOR RELIGIOUS MARRIAGES:**

- The documents indicated above must be taken to the priest who will perform the ceremony. He will then apply for and obtain the marriage license from the appropriate official.
- A waiting period is mandatory after the priest receives the documents.
- Greek law does not provide for the religious marriage of a Christian to a Non-Christian.
- Since each denomination has specific requirements for celebrating a marriage, detailed information must be obtained from the religious representatives in question.

#### **REGISTRATION OF A MARRIAGE**

- Office (Ληξιαρχείο) of the Municipality within which the marriage was performed, **within 40 days of the marriage ceremony.**
- Marriages may be registered by either spouse or by a third party who is in possession of a power of attorney signed before a Notary Public authorizing him/her to take all steps necessary to effect registration of the marriage.
- **Marriages which are not registered have no legal validity.**

#### **REGARDING LEGAL CONCERNS**

- Either marriage, civil or religious, is a fully recognized legal marriage. While it is possible to perform both ceremonies, it is not necessary to do so.
- Marriages performed in Greece which have not been registered with the Bureau of Vital Statistics (Ληξιαρχείο) are not legally valid.
- According to the Greek Law on Nationality, as amended on May 8, 1984, marriage does not result in the acquisition or loss of Greek nationality.

## **REGARDING OFFICIAL TRANSLATIONS INTO THE GREEK LANGUAGE**

The Translation Department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, located in Athens, Greece, provides official translation of foreign language documents. The Translation Department normally processes requests within 7 working days; however, it is possible to expedite their services, upon payment of an extra fee. Some Greek Consulates located outside of Greece also offer official translations of documents. Translations by any other entities will not be accepted.

## **REGARDING CERTIFICATION BY APOSTILLE**

All civil documents (birth, death, divorce decrees, marriage licenses etc.) must be endorsed with Apostille Certification. Apostille certification is a special form of authentication for documents intended for use abroad. Countries which are signatories to the 1961 Hague Convention provide this type of document verification. Documents originating from countries which are not signatories must either be verified by the Foreign Minister of the country in question or by the nearest Greek Consular Authority.

**Feel free to contact our office if you require any assistance or clarification regarding marriage in Greece.**

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