



Code of Practice for Marriage Celebrants

1 Application of this Code of Practice

This Code of Practice applies to persons authorised under subsection 39 (2) of the *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth) to solemnise marriages (referred to as **marriage celebrants**).

2 High Standard of Service

A marriage celebrant must maintain a high standard of service in his or her professional conduct and practice.

3 Recognition of Significance of Marriage

A marriage celebrant must recognise the social, cultural and legal significance of marriage and the marriage ceremony in the Australian community and the importance of strong and respectful family relationships.

4 Compliance with Marriage Act and other laws

A marriage celebrant must:

solemnise marriages according to the legal requirements of the *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth); and

observe the laws of the Commonwealth and of the State or Territory where the marriage will be solemnised; and

prevent and avoid unlawful discrimination in the provision of marriage celebrancy services.

5 General Requirements for Each Marriage Ceremony

A marriage celebrant must respect the importance of the marriage ceremony to the couples and organising parties and, to that end, must do the following:

(a) provide each couple with information and guidance to enable them to choose or compose a marriage ceremony, where appropriate, that will meet their needs and expectations;

(b) respect the privacy and confidentiality of each couple;

(c) maintain appropriate facilities to interview couples and provide office facilities, including facilities for the secure storage of records;

(d) within a reasonable time before the marriage ceremony:

confirm all details with the couple; and

ensure the return of all personal documents belonging to the couple (unless it is necessary to keep them for the purposes of the ceremony); and

sign any necessary declarations;

(e) conduct a marriage ceremony rehearsal if requested by the couple;

(f) ensure that his or her personal presentation is of an appropriate standard for the marriage ceremony and respects the expectations of the couple;

(g) make efforts to ensure that the marriage ceremony is audible to all those present, making use of audio equipment if required;

(h) ensure accuracy in the preparation of documents and throughout the marriage ceremony;

(i) arrive at the venue for the marriage ceremony at the agreed time, but in any event, be available at the venue at least 20 minutes prior to the commencement of the marriage ceremony (except where the ceremony is to be held at the same venue as the previous wedding) to ensure that each couple receives a level of service which meets their individual requirements;

(j) as stated in section 50 of the Marriage Act, ensure that all relevant documentation is completed and forwarded to the registration Authorities within 14 days after the marriage ceremony;

(k) accept evaluative comment from couples and use any comments to improve performance;

(l) provide each couple with information on how any concerns or complaints in respect of the marriage celebrancy services may be made to the Attorney-General's Department.

6 *Knowledge and Understanding of Family Relationships Services*

A marriage celebrant must:

maintain an up-to-date knowledge about appropriate family relationships services in the community; and

inform couples about the range of information and services available to them to enhance, and sustain them throughout, their relationships.

7 *Adherence to guidelines*

A marriage celebrant must adhere to all guidelines for marriage celebrants approved by the Attorney General.

