

## **LEGAL INFORMATION FOR AN AUSTRALIAN WEDDING**

As a registered marriage celebrant in Australia I am able to conduct your wedding ceremony anywhere in Australia, including its off-shore territories. I am also able to manage the legal aspects of your marriage quickly and efficiently, but there are some things you need to know.

Any adult, regardless of nationality, who is not already married, may be legally married in Australia provided they meet the criteria below. In some European countries you may need an Authentication/Apostille Stamp on your marriage certificate in order to register your marriage in your home country.

1. You must both be over the age of 18 years, or, if one (and only one) is younger and between 16-18 years of age, you must have a court order giving consent for that person to marry.
2. You must not be related as siblings (including adopted siblings), direct descendants or ancestors.
3. You must not be already married. You may 'elope' to Bali to get married and then want a wedding here in Australia with family and friends present. I can do a "Celebration of Marriage" ceremony but not a wedding ceremony in this circumstance. You may however find it easier to have a short legal ceremony here and then a big non-official ceremony in Bali. That I can do for you!
4. You must complete the form: "Notice of Intended Marriage" or (NOIM) between 1 and 18 months prior to your wedding. You may download a copy from the Federal Attorney Generals website, or I will provide it when we first meet.
5. Your NOIM must be completed at least one month and not more than 18 months before your proposed wedding date. It can be completed when we meet, or you can complete it, have your signature witnessed as prescribed on the form, and mail it to me.
6. The time may be shortened in very specific, extenuating circumstances by application to a prescribed authority. Please note, a marriage celebrant is not able to authorise a shortening of time, but can assist you with the process. If you are a distance away and time is short (eg say, just 5 to 6 weeks out) I can accept a scanned copy of the completed & signed NOIM by email with the original then sent by post or brought with you.

7. I must sight the following documents prior to your wedding day, but not necessarily when you lodge the NOIM:

- The official birth certificate or official extract of both bride and groom.
- If your name is different from that on your birth certificate I must see your change of name documents – or the document trail to demonstrate how you came to the name you are using – this may mean a series of marriage and death/divorce certificates).
- If born overseas and it is not practicable (i.e not possible rather than just difficult or time consuming) to obtain a copy of your birth certificate, a foreign passport showing your date and place of birth is acceptable.
- If previously married and divorced: a decree absolute or Certificate of Divorce is required. If divorced in Australia, this is obtained from the Family Court of Australia; and widowed: a death certificate must be presented.
- Photograph ID documents such as a driver's licence or a passport.

8. If any of the above documents are in a language other than English they must be translated by a NATI certified translator.

9. If I have not sighted all required documentation, prior to the wedding day, the wedding ceremony CANNOT proceed. It is the couple's responsibility to provide the necessary documentation. Please do not ask me to 'pretend' I have seen the required documents, I quite cannot do that it is against the law.

10. In the 2 weeks prior to your wedding date you must each complete a declaration stating that you are free to marry. This is usually done at your rehearsal.

11. You will need two witnesses over the age of 18 years at your wedding ceremony. It is not my responsibility to check ages, your word that they are over 18 is binding. If they are not, your marriage may be void.

12. Your ceremony concludes with you and your two witnesses signing two documents:

- The Marriage Register
- Your Official Marriage Certificate
- Your couple's certificate which will be presented to you as the finale to your ceremony.

13. I will then register your marriage with BDM providing all your invoice is paid in full.