



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF WEST VIRGINIA

Application for Consent to Remarriage After Divorce

According to the Canons of The Episcopal Church (Title I, Canon 19, sec. 3(c)), no member of the clergy shall solemnize the remarriage of any member of the Church unless there is appropriate evidence that the prior marriage has been dissolved by a judgement or decree in a civil court.

The member of the clergy must also have instructed the parties that concern must be shown for a prior spouse and any children of the prior marriage, when applicable.

The member of the clergy must consult with and obtain consent of the Bishop of the Diocese of West Virginia prior to solemnization of any remarriage.

This Application is not meant to be a hindrance to the solemnization of any marriage, but instead to be a means of reflection, healing, and hope. If you have any questions about this application or the process of receiving consent please contact the Diocesan Office.

The Application Process

1. Applications must be submitted to the Office of the Bishop at least 60 days prior to a decision.
2. The Application must be submitted by the officiating priest. Incomplete applications cannot be considered.
3. A separate Application needs to be submitted for each divorced person in the couple. Applications where both parties have been previously divorced should be submitted together.
4. The Declaration of Intent, as required by Title I, Canon 18, Sec. 4, signed by both parties of the intended marriage. A copy of this Declaration must be included with this Application.
5. Please note that if one or both parties has been divorced two times, a copy of a letter from a licensed professional counselor stating the couple has attended at least five sessions and in their professional opinion that:
 - a. They have come to terms with the end of any previous relationships and any unresolved issues
 - b. They have addressed possible patterns of behavior that led to the end of previous relationships
 - c. They have explored how each person deals with conflict in previous and current relationships
 - d. They have learned best practices for parenting children from previous marriages (if applicable).
6. If the proposed marriage is to be solemnized in a diocese other than the one in which the consent has been given to the officiating clergy, the consent shall be affirmed by the Bishop of that diocese in writing. A copy of such consent must be sent to the Diocesan Office.
7. Completed Applications should be submitted to:

The Episcopal Diocese of West Virginia
Attn: Bishop Cowden
PO Box 5400
Charleston, WV 25361

Applicant's Full Name:

Age: _____ **Known to me since:** _____

Church Affiliation and location:

Baptismal date: _____ **Place:** _____

Potential Spouse's Name:

Age: _____ **Known to me since:** _____

Church Affiliation and location:

Baptismal date: _____ **Place:** _____

Number of previous marriages, civil unions, etc.: _____

Beginning _____ Ending _____

Beginning _____ Ending _____

Date of Final Divorce/Annulment/Dissolution:

Court where Final Divorce/Annulment/Dissolution was entered:

Date and location of proposed marriage:

For the Officiating Priest:

- This ceremony will take place in the Diocese of West Virginia, or I have received written permission from the bishop of the diocese in which I have been asked to officiate.
- I have no reservations in solemnizing this marriage.
- I have enclosed a detailed letter giving my pastoral support to the couple's application.
- I have personally reviewed a certified divorce or annulment decree and kept a copy for my files.

In counseling this couple, I hereby declare that (please check):

- I have ascertained that they have not been refused marriage in the Episcopal Church to each other by any bishop or priest of this Church.
- I have reviewed with the applicants the DECLARATION OF INTENT required by Title I, Canon 18, Sec. 4. They have signed it in good conscience. (A copy of their Declaration must accompany this request.)
- They have received the instruction and counsel required by Title I, Canons 18 and 19 of The Episcopal Church.
- I am satisfied that they intend to maintain a loving Christian marriage as understood by teachings of this church and I am willing to officiate at their wedding.
- They have indicated their intention to live out their Marriage Covenant within the context of a worshipping Christian community.
- Notice that this marriage has taken place will be sent to the Office of the Bishop to complete this record, as required by Title I, Canon 19, Sec. 3(c).
- If one or both parties has been divorced two times, I have received and included a letter from a licensed professional counselor as required and described herein above.

Letter of Support from the Officiating Priest:

In a separate letter, please describe the topics addressed during premarital counseling and the number of sessions. If you did not facilitate premarital counseling, then the priest who did will need to write a separate letter. Your letter should include why you have been asked to officiate at this wedding and why you personally support this application.

Clergy Signature _____

Date _____

For the Applicant:

Please give prayerful and thoughtful responses to these questions, which are designed to give insight into your former relationship. These answers will need to be as thorough and complete as possible to allow the Bishop to make an informed decision.

Please answer these questions typed on separate pages.

1. What were all the major causes of your divorce? What do you feel you may have contributed to the situation?
2. What insights about yourself or others did you gain from the divorce? In your answer, please feel free to name any expectations, dreams, or hopes, which were unrealized your previous marriage.
3. What insights and strengths do you bring to this new relationship? How will this marriage be different from a previous marriage? These questions provide a space to reflect on how you have changed and grown as well as how you now relate to your potential new spouse.
4. What is your current relationship with your ex-spouse? What role has forgiveness played? Is there anything you need to seek forgiveness for or are there are things that you want to forgive your ex-spouse for in your previous marriage?
5. What part will faith play in the potential future marital relationship? How will the Church play a role in your potential new marriage?

Were children born to the marriage? Yes No

If so, how many children and their current ages?

Applicant Signature _____

Date _____



BISHOP'S JUDGMENT:

Approved

Disapproved

[More Information](#)

Bishop's Signature

Date _____