



Ceremony Information Kit

Your Elopement – What’s involved?

Firstly, a big congratulations on finding your special person! What a wonderful feeling love is. I am honoured to be considered to officiate your Elopement Ceremony.

An Elopement Ceremony is perfect for couples with a small guest list, or who would just love a short and sweet Ceremony. It can include all of the elements of a traditional Ceremony and typically runs for about 15-20 minutes. There are some components that legally need to be included and everything else is fully customisable, meaning you can add bits in if you like or not include others – it’s absolutely up to you! I will guide you every step of the way to ensure you are 100% happy with your Ceremony that flows seamlessly and is very YOU.

Let’s have a look at the entire process in detail...

1. Lodging the NOIM (Notice of Intended Marriage)

It is very important that we lodge your NOIM (Notice of Intended Marriage) at least one calendar month prior to your Ceremony date. This is a legal requirement. I will send you an email with a link you can access which allows you to pre-fill the NOIM or am happy to help you fill it in upon our meeting. My receiving the completed NOIM renders it lodged and it is easiest to lodge the NOIM and sight the required documents (see point 3 below) during our face-to-face meeting.

2. There are some legal requirements that need to be met in order to proceed with the Ceremony. Here are some questions that will help determine our next steps:

- i. Will both parties be over the age of 18 on the Ceremony date?
- ii. Do both parties speak English?
- iii. Are all documents that are required to be sighted (please see point 3 below: “Documents to be sighted”) written in English?
- iv. Do both parties have all required documentation (please see point 3)?
- v. Are both parties free to marry? I.e. Never validly married, divorced or widowed.
- vi. Do you have 2 witnesses who are both over the age of 18 who can hear and understand the vows?

*If the answer to any of the above is “no”, there are further courses of action we will undertake in order to ensure all legal requirements are met. Once you have emailed me your responses, I can advise further if we need to do this.

3. Documents to be sighted at our face-to-face meeting

Both parties to the marriage must produce documentation showing proof of their date and place of birth. The **only** forms of acceptable identification for this purpose are:

- i. An original birth certificate (or extract) AND driver's licence, or
- ii. An original passport.

The passport does not have to be current – an expired passport will still show your date and place of birth. However, a cancelled passport **cannot** be used.

4. “Happily Ever...Before and After”

At our face-to-face meeting, it is a requirement that I briefly discuss with you both the wide range of pre-marriage counselling services that are available to you. I will give you a helpful brochure, named, “Happily Ever...Before and After”, which has more information available inside.

5. Fees

My services as your Marriage Celebrant are confirmed upon my receipt of payment. It is preferable for this payment to be made by direct deposit either before, during or immediately after our face-to-face meeting. Once you have decided to book me, I will send you an invoice with my direct deposit details attached.

6. Lodging the DONLIM (Declaration of no legal impediment to marriage)

This is a form that we lodge just prior to the Ceremony, on the day. This form is on the back of the Official Certificate of Marriage which is the one we sign during the Ceremony.

7. Legally required exact wording that must be used in your Ceremony:

i. The Monitum (said by me)

“I am duly authorised by law to solemnize marriages according to law.

Before you are joined in marriage in my presence and in the presence of these witnesses, I am to remind you of the solemn and binding nature of the relationship into which you are now about to enter.

Marriage, according to law in Australia, is the union of two people to the exclusion of all others, voluntarily entered into for life”.

ii. Exchanging of Wedding Vows (said by each of you)

“I call upon the persons here present to witness that I (name 1), take you (name 2), to be my lawful wedded wife/husband/spouse.

8. Other legally required inclusions in your Ceremony:

i. Witnessing by 2 people who are both over the age of 18 and can hear and understand the vows (or witness the vows in the presence of an interpreter).

ii. Signing of the relevant Certificates and Marriage Register.

Everything else is optional and up to you! I will ask you to write “Your story” and attach it to an email, which I will use as a basis for this section in the Ceremony. I can help with suggestions if you need, and will send the first draft of your script to you within 2 weeks of our meeting. From here, if you like you, can make any and all changes to the script and we will continue this process until you are 100% happy with it all.

9. Lodging all the legal paperwork

After your Ceremony, you are officially married!

I will collate all our paperwork and send it to Births Deaths and Marriages where they will process and store it.

And that’s all there is to it! It might look daunting but I will be here at every step of the way to make sure it is all completed properly, and to answer any questions you may have.

Please do not hesitate to email me or phone me if you have any questions.

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