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Getting Married in Greece

U.S. citizens may marry in Greece in a civil ceremony, a religious ceremony, or both. You need not reside in Greece to marry in Greece, but the bureaucratic process to obtain a marriage certificate can take several weeks.

You may be required to present a marriage license issued by your State of residence in the United States. You MUST contact the local City/Town Hall in Greece for the local requirements before making your travel plans.

Foreigners who permanently reside in Greece should possess a residence permit. U.S. citizens may stay in Greece up to three months without a residence permit. You must obtain a stamp in your passport showing the date and place of entry upon entry into Greece or another Schengen country; otherwise, you will not be permitted to marry in Greece.

CIVIL MARRIAGE

Documents you may need and where to take them:

1. A passport or other travel document
2. An Apostilled birth certificate with an official translation (for a partner who was not born in Greece). The Apostille must be obtained in the United States. You may order your birth certificate or other state-issued document from the National Center for Health Statistics (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w.htm>) or through vitalcheck (<https://www.vitalchek.com/>) depending on the state that issued your document. More information on Apostilles can be found on the Department of State's [website](#).
3. If applicable, apostilled documentary evidence (death certificate or final/irrevocable divorce decree) of the termination of all previous marriages with an official translation.
4. An Affidavit of Marriage (if required by City/Town Hall where you are getting married) in Greek and English signed and sworn by the U.S. citizen(s) before a consular officer at the U.S. Embassy in Athens or U.S. Consulate in Thessaloniki – stating that no impediment to the marriage exists. The Consular Section prepares the affidavit form and provides the notarial service for USD \$50 or the Consular Exchange Rate Euro equivalent. The service is available by appointment at <https://gr.usembassy.gov/u-s-citizen-services/notaries-public/>. If both parties are U.S. citizens, both must sign an affidavit and pay the fee (\$100 for both). **You must plan on being in Athens for at least two days (Wednesday and Thursday or Thursday and Friday) to complete the required paperwork.** To schedule in Thessaloniki, email USConsulate@state.gov to determine which days you need to be in town.

5. To use the Affidavit of Marriage in Greece, it must be authenticated by the Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs validation department. A public fee voucher (paravolo) for 30 Euros is required for the authentication (<https://www.gsis.gr/e-paravolo>). Complete and print out the paravolo, go to any Greek bank with the voucher, pay the fee, and bring the receipt and affidavit to the validation department. In Athens, the address is 10 Arionos St., Monastiraki and is open daily 9:00 am – 1:00 pm; in Thessaloniki, Agios Dimitriou, Dioikitrio.
6. If one of the parties is a Greek citizen, a copy of a wedding notice published in Greek a local newspaper that predates the marriage license application. **You must contact City/Town Hall or your wedding planner for details.**
7. Present the documents above in person at the City Hall (Demarchio) or President of the Community (Proedros Kinotetos) where the marriage will take place.
8. If both partners are foreign nationals, each submits a separate set of documents. Authorities generally issue the marriage license eight days after the submission of the application. The marriage certificate is valid for six months, and the civil ceremony may be performed anywhere in Greece.
9. Upon receipt of the license, the partners jointly apply to the Mayor or President of the Community where they wish to marry. The official then sets the date for the wedding ceremony. Some city halls require an additional fee. The marrying couple must arrange for two witnesses to attend the wedding ceremony, one of whom will act as an interpreter. Witnesses should carry passports or Greek IDs.

RELIGIOUS MARRIAGE – contact the clergy directly!

In addition to the documents listed above, you may need to present your baptism certificate and marriage certificate to the member of clergy who will perform the religious ceremony.

1. **Greek Orthodox Ceremony:** Archdiocese of Athens, Tel. 210-3352322, E-mail: mardi@iaath.gr or your local Greek Orthodox Church.
2. **Protestant Ceremony:** St Andrew's American Protestant Church, Tel. 210-645-2583, <http://www.standrewsgreece.com>
3. **Roman Catholic Ceremony:** Saint Dionisios Aeropagitus Roman Catholic Cathedral, Tel. 210 362 3603, <http://www.cathecclesia.gr>
4. **Jewish Ceremony:** Jewish Community, Tel. 210 325 2875/2823/2773, www.athicom.gr, info@athicom.gr.

UNDERGOING BOTH CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS MARRIAGES

The couple must obtain two sets of the required documents to arrange a civil and a religious ceremony. One set should be taken to the City Hall, the other to the clergy member.

REGISTERING THE MARRIAGE

Marriages are not legal until registered, so don't skip this important step. **The U.S. Embassy does not register marriages of U.S. citizens in Greece.** Instead, you must record your marriage at the Vital Statistics Office (Lixiarcheio) of the city where the marriage is performed. All marriages, civil or religious, should be registered within 40 days following the ceremony. Late registrations require a fee determined by the locale. Marriages can be registered by either spouse, or by proxy with a power of attorney.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Either marriage, civil or religious, is considered a legal marriage. It is not necessary to undergo both.
2. According to U.S. statutes, marriages performed abroad that are valid under the laws of that country are generally considered valid in the United States. Verify with your state.
3. A U.S. citizen does not acquire Greek citizenship by marrying a Greek; a Greek citizen does not lose Greek citizenship when marrying a U.S. citizen.

