Marriage to be performed in Switzerland

Âpril 2026

The Swiss civil status legislation is more formal and less liberal than in the USA. Therefore, the marriage preparation procedures may appear more complicated and be more costly in Switzerland than in the United States.

The Swiss civil office competent for the place of the celebration of your marriage have the right to require additional documents or information not specified below. The procedures may also vary from one Canton to the other.

The civil status office in Switzerland is solely responsible for accepting and processing the required documents. The arrangements to schedule the wedding date must be done directly with that office. English not being one official Swiss language (German, French and Italian), not all civil status offices might be able to communicate in English.

Documents not issued in the USA or Switzerland may require prior legalizations from other Swiss representations, which might involve additional fees, expenses and processing time.

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In general, the following documents are necessary for a marriage preparation procedure in Switzerland.

For a Swiss bride or Swiss groom:

- ☐ Certificate of civil status for Swiss nationals (Personenstandsausweis / certificat individuel d'état civil / certificato individuale di stato civile)
- ☐ Certificate of residence (if you are registered at a Swiss representation in the U.S., this can be replaced by a Certificate of registration and nationality)
- ☐ valid passport or identity card

For a foreign bride or foreign groom:

- ☐ Certified birth certificate (not older than 6 months), if born in the U.S. The document has to show the exact place of birth (city) and names of the parents.
- ☐ Statutory declaration concerning the current address and marital status (this document must be notarized by a notary public and replaces the certificate of civil status and the certificate of residence, which are not available in the USA).
- ☐ valid passport

In addition, for divorced persons:

- ☐ Certified final divorce decree (not older than 6 months), showing the exact date when the judgment was entered into effect and the completed form:
- ☐ Additional Information Necessary for Legalization of Divorce Decrees
  or if applicable
- ☐ Additional Information Necessary for Legalization of Domestic Partnership Divorce Decrees

In addition for widowed persons:

- ☐ A certified death certificate of the late spouse (not older than 6 months).

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With the exception of the travel documents, all the original documents will be sent to the competent civil status office in Switzerland and must not be older than six months. No documents will be returned. Photocopies are not accepted. Additional documents may be required if necessary.

Foreign civil status documents must be legalized by the Swiss representation responsible for that country. The requirements may be different from one country to the other. To find out which documents will have to be submitted, consult the website of the competent Swiss representation or contact the Swiss representation in the USA in charge of your marriage preparation.

The fees and payment methods for a marriage preparation vary from one case to the other depending on the type, country of issuance and number of documents to be legalized as well as depending on the evolution of the exchange rate CHF/USD. Please contact the competent Swiss representation to clarify the fees applicable to your case.