



Diocesan Policy Regarding Remarriage

Any remarriage in the Episcopal Church is subject to Canon I.19.3 and in addition you may assume the following as standard protocol in the Diocese of East Tennessee.

If one or both persons desiring to be married have divorced **once** with a former spouse still living, the bishop will grant permission for the marriage if:

1. Canon I.19.3a has been satisfied: the front page and signature page of divorce decree and request for marriage be submitted to the bishop **at least 30 days** before intended date of marriage.
2. The couple has undergone counseling by the clergy **or** a professional counselor.
3. The attached form has been thoughtfully completed and submitted to the bishop.

If one or both persons desiring to be married have been divorced **twice** with one or more former spouses still living, no assumption should be made that the bishop will grant the request. Each decision will be made on an individual basis and will be considered by the bishop if:

1. Canon I.19.3a has been satisfied: the front page and signature page of divorce decree and request for marriage be submitted to the bishop **at least 30 days** before intended date of marriage.
2. The couple has undergone counseling by the clergy **and** a professional counselor.
3. The attached form has been thoughtfully completed and submitted to the bishop.

If one or both persons desiring to be married have been divorced **three or more times**, the assumption may be made that the bishop will not grant the request. However, grace demands that we look at each circumstance individually and if extenuating circumstances are present, the request will be reviewed.

1. Canon I.19.3a has been satisfied: the front page and signature page of divorce decree and request for marriage be submitted to the bishop **at least 30 days** before intended date of marriage.
2. The couple has undergone counseling by the clergy **and** a professional counselor.
3. The attached form has been thoughtfully completed and submitted to the bishop.

The attached forms are intended to be an aid for clergy as they counsel and direct the couple seeking remarriage. In filling out the forms with the couple, clergy will receive insight that can guide future sessions with them.



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF EAST TENNESSEE

Reconciling All Things in Christ

Application Seeking Permission to Solemnize a Remarriage

Please complete and submit all pages at once. Sections A through D are to be completed by the priest who plans to solemnize the marriage in conversation with the couple. Section E is to be completed by the couple in conversation with the priest. Please print all information lines.

Section A

On ___/___/___, I, _____ was informed that the couple
(Date) (Name of Priest)
named below wish to be married at _____ on ___/___/_____.
(Name of Parish/Venue) (Date)

Section B - Information on Partner 1

Name: _____ Date of Birth: ___/___/_____

Address: _____

(City) (State) (ZIP) Telephone: _____

Baptized: ___/___/_____ Denomination: _____ Active Member of a Church? _____

How many previous marriages for Partner 1? _____ **If none, proceed to Section C.**

Number of previous spouses still living: _____

Date of previous marriage(s): ___/___/_____ Places: _____
_____/___/_____ _____

Number of children by previous marriage(s): _____ If yes, ages: _____

Date(s) and Place(s) of Divorce Decree(s): _____

Are there any obligations (financial or otherwise) from previous marriage(s) to a spouse(s) or children?

Are they being honored? _____ Is the intention to continue honoring them? _____

Section C - Information on Partner 2

Name: _____ Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Address: _____

(City) (State) (ZIP) Telephone: _____

Baptized: ____/____/____ Denomination: _____ Active Member of a Church? _____

How many previous marriages for Partner 1? _____ **If none, proceed to Section C.**

Number of previous spouses still living: _____

Date of previous marriage(s): ____/____/____ Places: _____
____/____/____ _____

Number of children by previous marriage(s): _____ If yes, ages: _____

Date(s) and Place(s) of Divorce Decree(s): _____

Are there any obligations (financial or otherwise) from previous marriage(s) to a spouse(s) or children?

Are they being honored? _____ Is the intention to continue honoring them? _____

Section D - To be filled out by Priest

How long has this couple known one another? _____ How long have you known them? _____

Have you examined the Divorce Decree(s)? _____ Date of decree(s): _____

Did you provide the premarital counseling? _____ If not, who did? _____

Number of sessions: _____

What do you believe to be the most helpful insight the couple learned in the counseling process?

If either party has more than one divorce, please **attach statement from professional counselor** stating their findings and opinion regarding the suitability of the couple for marriage.

Should additional space be required, please attach an additional page or document to this form.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

When two people come to the Church seeking its blessing at the celebration of their marriage it is our understanding that they are then inviting the Church to be a participant in their marital union. Accepting this invitation we seek to instruct them as to the nature, meaning and purpose of Holy Matrimony as Christians understand it following the model given us by the relationship between Christ and His Church. Further, we offer as a community of faith and love, to support them in their marriage in the years ahead.

Following the Canons of the General Convention of the Episcopal Church, the priest who is to solemnize the marriage of a divorced person is required to consult with and obtain the consent of the Bishop of the Diocese prior to the wedding ceremony.

The purpose of this application is to ascertain the intention of the couple with regard to their relationship to the Church, that the bishop might give his consent in good conscience.

Having read the above, and in consultation with your priest, please take time to discuss and answer the following questions. *(If you need more space, please attach an additional page or document to this form.)*

1. When relationships fail, the failure is rarely one-sided. Have you discussed with your priest, and your partner, your part in the failure of your previous marriage(s)?

Partner 1: Yes No N/A

Partner 2: Yes No N/A

2. As a couple, please describe what role you see the Church playing in your new relationship and how you plan to participate in the life of the Church?

3. If there any additional information you would like the bishop to know?

The following is to be signed by both individuals of the intended marriage.

We, _____ and _____ understand the teaching of the church that God’s purpose for our marriage is for our mutual joy, for the help and comfort we will give to each other in prosperity and adversity, and, when it is God’s will, for the gift and heritage of children and their nurture in the knowledge and love of God. We also understand that our marriage is to be unconditional, mutual, exclusive, faithful, and lifelong; and we engage to make the utmost effort to accept these gifts and fulfill these duties, with the help of God and the support of our community.

Signed: _____ and _____

Date: ____/____/_____



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF EAST TENNESSEE

Reconciling All Things in Christ

Record of Marriage

To The Rt. Rev. Brian L. Cole, Bishop of East Tennessee,

This will certify that on ____/____/____ I did solemnize the marriage of
(Date)

_____ and _____

at

(Church and City)

as required by Canon I.19.3.c.

The Bishop's consent was given on ____/____/____.

(Signature of Officiating Clergy)

____/____/____
(Date)

Within five days of the marriage, please return this Record of Marriage to:

**Episcopal Engagement Specialist
Episcopal Diocese of East Tennessee
814 Episcopal School Way, Knoxville, TN 37932**