Guidelines for arranging a marriage by dispensation in Scotland

### Authorisation and registration

The chaplain is likely to be an approved celebrant, as are most clergy and some humanists. A religious marriage can take place anywhere in Scotland, but civil marriage must be solemnised by a registrar in a registration office or other approved place.

### What you need to do

One party must lodge notice in person, at the local Registration Office (it may help to alert them in advance)

They must take all the necessary documents for both parties

1. ID for both parties: Birth certificate / Passport.

2. Proof of residence, e.g. a utility bill.

3. If either is divorced: Decree of Divorce / Decree Absolute

4. A letter signed by both parties, requesting dispensation to marry within the normal 14 day period and the reason for this.

5. A letter from the consultant in attendance, which must state that:

A. The patient is terminally ill, not expected to recover and unlikely to survive the normal notice period.

B. The patient understands the nature of the marriage ceremony and consents to it.

### What happens at the Registrar’s Office?

When all the documents have been presented, the local registrar will email a copy to the Registrar General in Edinburgh.

If satisfied, the Registrar General in Edinburgh will grant dispensation and authorise the Schedule (this can happen quite quickly and it may be worth waiting).

The party giving notice must collect the schedule in person from the Registration Office.

Once they have collected it and passed it on to the licensed celebrant, the ceremony can proceed as normal.

### When can the wedding take place?

Only after a dispensation is granted and the celebrant has the Schedule.

The couple shouldn’t delay, as this process may still take some days, though it often only takes hours.

### The Schedule

The celebrant must have received the Schedule before performing the marriage.

Both parties, two witnesses and the celebrant must sign the schedule after the ceremony.

The couple must return the Schedule, or arrange for it to be returned, to the Registration Office within 3 days of the marriage.

### Cost of giving notice for a marriage certificate

The cost of giving notice is currently £30 for each party. The hospice chaplain is unlikely to charge a fee, but if a registrar or external celebrant is involved, they may charge a fee.