



## Wedding Banns in Ontario

- Wedding by Banns is an option allowed within the Marriage Act of Ontario. The alternative is to obtain a marriage license from the local city hall.
  - Wedding by Banns is only available to couples for whom this is their first wedding. Divorcees are required to obtain a marriage license and each party must be in regular attendance in their church(es).
1. Acquiring Banns: If you don't already have the form you must contact the publication department requesting whatever number of banns you wish. They'll only receive requests by mail or Fax.
    - MAIL: Thunder Bay Production and Verification Services Branch, P.O. Box 4600, 189 Red River Rd., Thunder Bay, ON, P7B 6L8. ATTENTION MARRIAGE OFFICE.
    - FAX: 1-807-343-7284.
    - You MUST include your name, officiant registration number, address, and daytime phone number. You should request "Marriage by Banns" forms as well as additional copies of "Proof of Publication of Banns" (see below)
  2. The procedure is to publicly and verbally announce in a regular service the intention of marriage of the named couple. The announcement needs to be done only once no less than 5 days and no more than 90 days before the wedding date.
    - The announcement should include the following: *"As required by the Ontario Marriage Act for the publication of Banns we are pleased to announce the wedding of <groom> and <bride> on the <date> at <location>. Any known reason why this marriage should not happen should be reported to <name of pastor>.*
  3. If both persons are attending the same church, then the one announcement is adequate. If one person attends a different church on a regular basis, Banns must also be announced (published) in the other church. The license by Banns form has a part called "Proof of Publication of Banns" where the person who announces the Banns affirms ("Proof") that it has been done in the one church. If it is also announced in another church, there is an extra "Proof of Publication of Banns" that needs to be also filled out by the one who announces in the second church and that form included in the envelope when sending in the "Marriage by Banns."
  4. Carefully read the instructions and information required on the "Marriage by Banns" and the "Proof of Publication of Banns." It is easy to misunderstand the information required.
  5. At the time of the wedding all parties sign the "Marriage by Banns" exactly the same as is done in a marriage by license and as with a marriage by license, the details of the wedding and signatures of all parties MUST be recorded in a "Marriage Register". The church should already have this register, if it does not it can be obtained free of charge from the Marriage Office. This is required by the Marriage Act.
  6. Final Steps:
    - Tear off the short marriage certificate to give to the couple.
    - Mail to the Marriage Office the completed and signed "Marriage by Banns" (which includes one "Proof of Publication of Banns") and a second "Proof of Publication of Banns" if Banns were announced in two different churches.