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A **Justice of the Peace style or make-it-legal** ceremony lasts between four and fifteen minutes long; seven minutes is the average. It does not come with any customization or personalization. Meant for elopements or informal and intimate ceremonies, it is only available in select locations during the day, such as Grand Central, Central Park, Bryant Park, City Hall Park, the High Line, and North Forest Park (Queens). It is also an ideal option for “guerrilla style” ceremonies in the Metropolitan Museum of Art or Museum of Natural History. Honorarium ranges from \$175 to \$250.

A **standard** marriage ceremony usually lasts between six and eighteen minutes long. The couple selects one template from eight to twelve examples without any changes to existing text. They may, however, substitute favorite vows or write personal vows, incorporate a reading or two, and include a unity rite. Honorarium ranges from \$250 to \$350.

A **customized or personalized** ceremony is a truly unique service. These can be five minutes long or sixty minute long. It all depends on the “ingredients” desired by the couple. The couple e-mails what they love about each other, memories, anecdotes, as well as favorite vows, quotes, and rites. The officiant builds a new ceremony, which the couple approves or revises. Honorarium ranges from \$400 to \$500.

Officiant will use a civil or non-religious ceremony by default.

But the couple may request a spiritual or nondenominational religious ceremony.

All services include the automatic filing of your license, travel, and unlimited phone or e-mail correspondence. Generally, the earlier in the day and more centrally located the ceremony relative to the officiant, the lower the honorarium. However, officiant is not scheduling wedding ceremony planning meetings or rehearsals at this time. For larger weddings, the officiant arrives up to sixty minutes early to collect the license, greet the couple, and, if necessary, even do a walk-thru with the wedding party attendants.

All couples are responsible for making site arrangements, as well as any needs (florist, music, attire, et cetera). Most importantly, all couples must secure a marriage license somewhere in New York State to get married anywhere in New York State, which generally has a 24 hour waiting period that can be waived fairly easily in NYC. Getting that public record of your marriage is a two-part process: license plus ceremony. No officiant can get the license for you in New York. And no officiant can legally marry you without the license, so do not forget the license on your wedding day. Couples must review the requirements (nothing crazy) at the New York Clerk's office. For example, they can visit the NYC Marriage Bureau online to make sure they have all the paperwork (ex. identification and any divorce decree). The license is \$35 in NYC and \$40 elsewhere. In addition to the officiant, an adult witness must be present during the solemnization of matrimony: it is a NYS Domestic Law requirement. The officiant is solely and legally responsible for filing the marriage license after the ceremony.

MAKE-IT-LEGAL OR STANDARD CEREMONY OUTLINE

*This is an example. Exact wording may vary. But remember that the make-it-legal or Justice of the Peace style and the standard ceremony do **not** come with “tweaking,” changes, or “cut and paste” ceremonies submitted by the couple. No matter what, though, the couple may decide to exchange personal vows so long as they inform the officiant prior to the ceremony.*

Welcoming or Greeting: *“Welcome. We gather here today to witness and celebrate the joining together of N. and N. into the bonds of matrimony.”*

Optional Thank You (with standard or customized ceremony): *“On behalf of our nearly newlyweds, I’d like to express that your company is a great honor. N. and N. cherish each and every one of you. I know they plan to return your support today many times over in the future. After all, we are the results of the thousands whose love and hard work made this day possible. And we are here to complete the dreams they first imagined. Again, thank you for coming.”*

Optional Invocation or Nondenominational Prayer

Optional Moment of Silence (with standard or customized ceremony): *“Despite the wondrous beauty of this hour, perfect peace is impossible. Let us now take a moment of quiet contemplation to acknowledge those who are unable to join us in celebration.”*

Reflections on Marriage or Convocation (about friendship & support)

Optional Reading (with standard or customized ceremony)

Exchange of Wedding Vows & Rings (pick at least one, but you can choose all options too)

a. *“N., do you freely choose N. as your lawfully wedded wife/husband to love, honor, comfort, and respect in adversity and prosperity for as long as time is yours?”*

b. *“Please repeat after me (in phrases): I, N., take you, N., as my lawfully wedded wife/husband...to have and to hold...for better and for worse...for richer and for poorer...in sickness and in health...and to love and cherish...for all the days of my life.”*

c. *“Please wear this ring as a sign of our marriage vows.”*

d. *Couple exchanges personal vows.*

Optional License Signing (often placed after the ceremony; it depends on logistics)

Optional Unity Rite (only with standard or customized ceremony): *As a symbol of your new unity as a family, you will now X. Separately, these X represent your hopes and potentials as individuals. Each X is strong/beautiful on its own. But joined together, the X create a more amazing whole that is even greater than the sum of its parts. Each x enriches and strengthens the [whole].*

Optional Blessing or Benediction

Pronouncement: *“Inasmuch as you agreed upon the purpose of your marriage and expressed vows of love to symbolize your mutual commitment, then with the authority vested in me by the State of New York, I may now pronounce you to be legally wed.”*

The Kiss: *“Please seal and celebrate this marriage with a kiss.”*