



## Marriage – Change of Name Act

Any couple that becomes married within Ontario can assume either name, remain the same name, and/or use a combination of both names.

The **Record of Marriage** (bottom portion of the Marriage License that the married couple retains after the ceremony) **is not an official certificate**. If you require legal proof of the marriage, you must apply for a Marriage Certificate. If you assume the name of your spouse, it is considered an “alias”. Your legal name is the name that is found on your Birth Certificate.

The parties to the marriage ceremony have three basic options following marriage:

**OPTION # 1**                    Continue to use their last name

Under this course of action, the spouse, who wishes to continue to use his/her current last name, needs to take no action.

**OPTION #2**                    “Assume” the use of the Spouse’s last name

Spouses may “take” the other spouse’s last name, and use it, as a result of their marriage. Most government organizations, credit card firms, etc., will accept a copy of the formal marriage certificate by the Office of the Registrar General as proof of the marriage, and issue revised identification for the spouse in their new last name.

**OPTION #3**                    Legally change their last name

In this instance, the spouse elects the option under the Change of Name Act, completes the appropriate forms, and submits them to the Office of the Registrar General. These application forms are available at the Office of the Registrar General.

**If this is done within 90 days of the marriage, there is no charge, otherwise, a fee is charged.**

The Office of Registrar General amends the individual’s birth record, replacing his/her name on that record with his/her married name, and retaining the former name in brackets. The Office of the Registrar General then issues a change of name certificate. If the individual was born in Ontario, a new birth certificate will be issued and the Province will retain the original birth certificate.

If at some time, a divorce takes place, and the spouse wishes to return to the use of his/her former names, they must apply once more for a change of name. If they apply within 90 days of the date of the divorce, the fee is \$25.00; otherwise it is the full fee.

For any other information about the Name Change Act, please contact the Office of Registrar General at 1-800-461-2156