

# REGISTERING A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP IN SCOTLAND

- By law both parties to a proposed civil partnership in Scotland are required to submit notice forms to the registrar of the district in which the civil partnership is to be registered informing them of their intention to register a civil partnership.
- Forms for giving notice can be obtained from any registrar of births etc. in Scotland or from the National Records of Scotland website at [www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk).
- Notice must be given in the three-month period prior to the date of the intended civil partnership and not later than 29 days before that date.

This leaflet gives general guidance only and should not be treated as a complete and authoritative statement of the law. If, after reading it, you are still in doubt you should seek advice from any registrar of births etc. in Scotland or from staff in Marriage/Civil Partnership Section of the National Records of Scotland (NRS), New Register House, Edinburgh EH1 3YT - email: [civilpartnership@nrscotland.gov.uk](mailto:civilpartnership@nrscotland.gov.uk)

## WHO CAN REGISTER A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP IN SCOTLAND

Any two persons, regardless of where they live, may register a civil partnership in Scotland provided that:

- both persons are at least 16 years of age on the day they wish to register their civil partnership
- they are not related to one another in a way which would prevent their registering their civil partnership (see the list at the end of this leaflet)
- each is unmarried or not already registered as a civil partner (any person who has already been married or registered as a civil partner must produce documentary evidence that the previous marriage or civil partnership registration has been ended by death, divorce, annulment or dissolution)
- they are capable of understanding the nature of a civil partnership and of validly consenting to its formation.

## WHERE TO REGISTER A CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

A civil partnership may be registered by a district registrar or an assistant registrar or a religious or belief celebrant who has who has been authorised by the Registrar General for that purpose or whose religious or belief body has been prescribed in regulations under the Civil Partnership Act 2004.

The registration of a civil partnership by a district registrar or an assistant registrar may take place either in a registration office or in a place that the local authority agrees to. Therefore, it is important that you should contact as early as possible the registrar for the registration district in which you want to register your civil partnership. A list of registrars is available on the NRS website at <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/registration/RegOfficeContacts.pdf>.

The registration of a civil partnership by a religious or belief celebrant may take place anywhere agreed between the celebrant and the couple.

## MAKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATION

It is important to make early arrangements for the date and time of your civil partnership registration.

- Contact the person registering your civil partnership before completing the notice of civil partnership if you are having a religious or belief celebrant.
- Make advance arrangements with the registrar. This is particularly important if the civil partnership registration is to be in towns and cities, where large numbers of people may want to register civil partnerships at certain times of the year.
- Arrange for two persons, aged 16 years or over, to be present at your civil partnership registration to act as witnesses.
- Be sure to let the person registering your civil partnership know if you change your plans or decide to postpone your civil partnership registration.

## HOW AND WHEN TO GIVE NOTICE

You can each obtain a civil partnership notice form, and information about fees, from any registrar of births etc. in Scotland. In most cases you can get the address of your local registrar from the telephone directory, or the local authority website. A list of registrars is also available on the NRS website at:

<https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files/registration/RegOfficeContacts.pdf>.

Alternatively, couples can find similar information from the NRS website by visiting [www.nrscotland.gov.uk](http://www.nrscotland.gov.uk).

- Each of you must complete and submit a civil partnership notice, along with the required documents (see below) and the appropriate fee, to the **registrar for the district in which the civil partnership is to be registered**.
- A fee must be paid to the registrar when you submit notice to register your civil partnership. The fee payable will depend on whether you intend to have a civil registration or a religious or belief registration.
- Timing is important. The notices must be submitted early enough to enable the registrar to satisfy themselves that you are free to register a civil partnership. Normally notices should be in their hands about TEN to TWELVE weeks beforehand. The **minimum** period is **29 days before the date of the proposed civil partnership registration**, but if you leave things as late as this you **could** be faced with the need to postpone your civil partnership registration.
- Only in exceptional circumstances will the Registrar General authorise a civil partnership registration to take place if 29 days' notice has not been given.
- Although you need not both attend personally at the registrar's office to hand in your civil partnership notice, at least one of you may be asked to attend there personally before the date of the civil partnership registration. This is necessary, in the case of a religious or belief registration, to collect the Civil Partnership Schedule (see page 3) or it might be necessary in the case of registration by a registrar to finalise arrangements with you.

- Every person giving notice is required to sign a declaration to the effect that the particulars and information given on the notice are correct. Subsequent checks may be made by National Records of Scotland to ensure a party was indeed free to enter a civil partnership.

## DOCUMENTS TO BE PRODUCED

When giving or sending the civil partnership notice forms to the registrar each of you must supply the following:

- Your birth certificate or, if you are adopted, your adoption certificate.
- Evidence of your usual residence.
- If you have been married or in a registered civil partnership before and the marriage or civil partnership has been dissolved or annulled, a decree of divorce or dissolution or annulment or a certified copy decree. A decree of divorce or dissolution granted outwith Scotland must be absolute or final - a decree nisi is not acceptable.
- The registrar will ask to see your valid passport or other document to provide evidence of your nationality.
- If your spouse or civil partner is deceased, the death certificate of your former spouse or civil partner.
- If any of these documents is in a language other than English, a certified translation in English must also be provided.
- Do not delay giving notice simply because you are waiting for any of the documents mentioned above to come to hand. If time is getting short it is better to give notice first and then pass the documents to the registrar when they become available; but they must be made available to the registrar before the civil partnership registration. Provided the documents are in order the civil partnership registration can proceed as arranged.

If you are subject to immigration controls you will have to provide extra documentation to that outlined above. In particular, you will need to provide a Declaration of Immigration Status form which can be obtained from the registrar of the NRS website. Evidence to support the statement you make on the Declaration of Immigration Status form will also be required. If you are in any doubt about what is required, or if you need further information, you should consult the registrar or contact NRS.

## THE CIVIL PARTNERSHIP SCHEDULE

When the registrar is satisfied there is no legal impediment to the civil partnership registration, they will prepare a Civil Partnership Schedule from the information you have given them. The Schedule is a most important document - **no civil partnership registration can proceed without it.**

- If a religious or belief celebrant is registering your civil partnership the Civil Partnership Schedule will be issued to you by the registrar. The Schedule cannot be issued more than seven days before the civil partnership and the registrar will advise you when to call to collect it. The Schedule cannot be collected on your behalf by a relative or friend – the registrar will issue it only to one or both of the parties to the intended civil partnership.

- The Civil Partnership Schedule **must** be produced before the civil partnership registration to the person registering it.
- Both parties must confirm that (to the best of their knowledge) the particulars set out in the Civil Partnership Schedule are correct. The Civil Partnership Schedule must then be signed in black fountain pen ink by both parties, by the person registering the civil partnership and by the two witnesses.
- Thereafter, the registrar will use the Civil Partnership Schedule to enter the relevant information in his/her civil partnership register.
- A fee for the civil partnership registration and, if applicable, for the attendance of an authorised registrar if the location is somewhere other than the registration office is payable to the registrar in advance.

## **CIVIL PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATION CERTIFICATE**

After the civil partnership registration has been registered you can obtain copies of the civil partnership registration certificate from the registrar on payment of the appropriate fee.

## **DEGREES OF RELATIONSHIP WITHIN WHICH CIVIL PARTNERSHIP REGISTRATION IS UNLAWFUL**

### 1. Relationships by consanguinity

A party to a civil partnership may not form a civil partnership with their:

Parent	Aunt or uncle
Child	Niece or nephew
Grandparent	Great-grandparent
Grandchild	Great-grandchild
Sibling	

### 2. Relationships by affinity – see note below

A party to a civil partnership may not form a civil partnership with their:

Child of former spouse	Former spouse of grandparent
Child of former civil partner	Former civil partner of grandparent
Former spouse of parent	Grandchild of former spouse
Former civil partner of parent	Grandchild of former civil partner

### 3. Relationships by adoption

A party to a civil partnership may not form a civil partnership with their:

Adoptive parent	Adopted child
Former adoptive parent	Former adopted child

Note: Parties related within the degrees listed at 2 can register a civil partnership if both are 21 years of age or over at the time of the civil partnership registration and the younger party has not, before his or her 18th birthday, lived in the same household as the other party and been treated by that person as a child of the family.