



The **Diocese of**
West Missouri

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Guidelines for Remarriage after Divorce

Please note that these guidelines should be followed whenever someone has been divorced and seeks remarriage.

Guidelines for Marriage After One Divorce

1. In all cases where one or both of the persons seeking marriage have been divorced, you are to use the **Request to Solemnize the Marriage of a Divorced Person** form found on the diocesan website.
2. The priest making the application should have an ongoing pastoral relationship with one or both parties seeking remarriage. Preferably they should be participating and supporting members of the congregation or have the intention to become full members.
3. Regarding the previous marriage(s), the following concerns should be addressed during pre-marital counselling:
 - a. The issues that ended the marriage have been addressed, and sufficient time has passed to grieve the previous marriage. Generally, this would be one year from the date of the filing for petition of divorce, or six months after the date of the final divorce or annulment decree.
 - b. Obligations to the former spouse and/or children have been or are being fulfilled responsibly.
 - c. The new partner was not in any way party to or responsible for the breakup of the previous marriage.
 - d. The person seeking a second marriage must demonstrate that they bring strength and insight into this new relationship and have a strong spiritual understanding of the sacrament of marriage.
4. The clergy person must receive certified copies of final divorce or annulment decrees and retain copies for the congregation's files. Copies of those papers should be attached to the Request to Solemnize the Marriage of a Divorced Person form.

5. Both parties must sign the **Declaration of Intention** required by Canon I.18.4. This form can be found on the Diocesan website.
6. A date for the proposed marriage should not be formally set until permission has been obtained.
7. The **Remarriage after Divorce Report** form, found on the diocesan website, must be returned to the Bishop's office after the marriage is solemnized, indicating the date and place that the service was held.

Guidelines for Remarriage After Two or More Divorces

If one or both parties seeking marriage have previously been divorced two or more times, a letter must be written to the Bishop with a complete explanation as to why the cleric feels that this couple should indeed be married.

It may be helpful in this case to send the couple to a licensed, professional counselor for additional counseling, asking for a letter from said counselor stating their opinion that the couple have appropriately grieved and learned from the previous marriage(s) and are prepared to enter a Christian marriage, with all the commitments Christian marriage entails.