

MARITIME CONFERENCE OFFICE RE: LICENSING TO PRESIDE AT MARRIAGES

January 2005

Marriage, while not a sacrament in the United Church of Canada, is a sacred moment in the life of a couple and of a faith community. The presiding at a marriage by ministry personnel is always a function of ministry and, therefore, always a part of the pastoral relationship and the covenant between the Pastoral Charge, the ministry personnel, and the Presbytery. The Presbytery holds as part of its oversight of Pastoral Charges and ministry personnel.

The Maritime Conference Office is the religious authority recognized by the Provinces within the bounds of the Conference. As such, the Conference Office makes the formal requests to the Provincial departments for the licensing to preside at a marriage. Where eligible ministry personnel are regularly called/settled or appointed, the request to be licensed is done upon notification by the Presbytery of their call/settlement or appointment.

It is the intent of this new process to include the authorization of the Presbytery in the request for those ministry personnel eligible for a temporary marriage licence within the Conference. This in part reflects the following Section of The Manual of The United Church of Canada.

Exercise of Functions of Ministry.

365(a) This section applies to:

- i. Ministry Personnel in an appointment other than to a Pastoral Charge;
 - ii. Ministry Personnel retained on the roll without settlement or appointment;
 - iii. Ministry Personnel for whom a Pastoral Charge is one into which they were formerly settled or appointed; and
 - iv. retired Ministry Personnel other than ones then serving as United Supply.
- (b) If Ministry Personnel to whom this section applies wish to continue to exercise their ministry within the United Church, they may do so only under the oversight and discipline of the Presbytery; this is done through a formal association with a Pastoral Charge. If they wish to exercise any of the functions of ministry, they shall do so on behalf of a Pastoral Charge and with the approval of the Session or Church Board or Church Council of that Pastoral Charge.
- (c) If Ministry Personnel to whom this section applies receive a request concerning Baptism, Holy Communion, weddings, or funerals, they shall refer the request to a member of the Order of Ministry who has been settled in or appointed to that Pastoral Charge.
- (d) If Ministry Personnel to whom this section applies wish to preside at the Sacraments of Baptism or Holy Communion or at a wedding or a funeral, this may be done only with the permission of that Session of Church Board or Church Council and after consultation with a member of the Order of Ministry who has been settled in or appointed to that Pastoral Charge.

(over)

REQUEST FOR TEMPORARY MARRIAGE LICENCE WITHIN MARITIME CONFERENCE

Section A: to be completed by the eligible ministry personnel. Please forward this completed section plus the “permission” correspondence to ministry personnel’s *home* Presbytery.

Section B: to be completed by the ministry personnel’s *home* Presbytery. Once signed by Presbytery, please forward application only [i.e. do not forward “permission” correspondence] to Maritime Conference Office.

In the event the marriage may not be planned within the sanctuary of a Pastoral Charge, the Session [or its equivalent], as well as the resident ministry personnel, must still be contacted for permission. As a function of ministry, the person presiding is always acting on behalf of The United Church and, therefore, should make every effort to ensure that the marriage is recorded in the registry of the local Pastoral Charge.

A. To be completed by the Ministry Personnel making the request.

For those requesting a temporary marriage licence within Maritime Conference:

Name: _____ Phone/Email _____

Address: _____

Status: (check one) Ordained: Active _____ Retired _____ Retained _____
 Diaconal: Active _____ Retired _____ Retained _____

Membership: Presbytery _____ Conference _____

Province within which the marriage is to be conducted: _____

Date of marriage: _____

Names of those being married: _____

Location of marriage: _____

Congregation: _____ Other _____

Location of Church Register where marriage is to be recorded: _____

The following must be shown to Ministry Personnel’s *home* Presbytery: (as per Manual Section 365(d))

1. Copy of correspondence to Session [or its equivalent] of local Pastoral Charge seeking permission
2. Copy of correspondence from Session [or its equivalent] giving permission
3. Verification of consultation with resident ministry personnel (preferably written)

B. To be completed by Ministry Personnel’s *home* Presbytery and forwarded at least four weeks prior to the date of the marriage to: Maritime Conference Office, 32 York St., Sackville, NB E4L 4R4, Fax 506-536-2900, or info@marconf.ca.

On behalf of the applicant, _____ Presbytery has reviewed the information in Section A and requests Maritime Conference to complete the application as requested.

On behalf of Presbytery _____

Date _____