

NORMS FOR WEDDINGS AT THE CATHEDRAL BASILICA

The Cathedral clergy and staff have established the following norms. Failure to abide by these norms could result in the cancellation of a wedding date in advance or in the forfeiture of the security deposit afterwards. We affirm these norms as a sign of the seriousness with which we treat the marriage covenant, and we ask couples to accept them in that same spirit.

1. Payments. Couples will pay a \$500 non-refundable down-payment to officially schedule their wedding. The remainder fee is \$1,500. In addition to those, there is a \$750 security deposit, which is returned to the couple after the wedding, if they follow these norms. The deadline for the latter payments is 60 days before the wedding date.
2. Marriage Preparation. Couples must complete all the steps for marriage preparation in the diocese in which they live. For couples living in the Archdiocese of Denver, this would include an eight month preparation period, the FOCCUS inventory and review, an approved theological course or retreat, and an approved Natural Family Planning course.
3. Direct Contact. The Cathedral staff will communicate directly with the bride and groom during the process of wedding preparations. The staff will not speak to anyone else involved with planning, such

as hired wedding coordinators or parents of the couple.

4. Paperwork. Couples are responsible for getting all necessary paperwork to the Cathedral staff two months before the wedding. This includes the MA and MB forms and a newly issued copy of a baptismal certificate from the church of baptism. These certificates must have been issued within six months of the date of the wedding. Further, upon the completion of any other required programs, the couple is to submit the certificates of completion with the same deadline.
5. Deadline. Couples will have all required preparations for marriage completed at least two months before the wedding date, including classes, paperwork, music selection, and liturgical planning. The final payments have the same deadline.
6. Previous Marriages. Couples are to acknowledge that marriage is life-long and unbreakable. Therefore, the Church cannot validly celebrate a marriage where one of the parties has been previously married, either privately, civilly, or religiously. The couple is required to obtain a Declaration of Nullity (annulment) of the first marriage before a wedding date is selected and any marriage preparation process is begun. The Cathedral clergy are happy to answer any questions related to this sensitive matter.
7. Rehearsal. The following persons are recommended to participate in the rehearsal the day before the wedding: the priest, the groom and bride, the bridal party, and readers, anyone else who will be in the procession, including the parents, ring bearer, and flower girls. The couple will bring the civil marriage license to the rehearsal to give it

to Cathedral staff.

8. Confession. Catholic parties will avail themselves of the Sacrament of Confession (Reconciliation) in the last week before the wedding.
9. Reverence. The proper disposition for the couple is to gravely acknowledge that they are entering a holy place, to stand before God, and make a solemn, life-long, unbreakable vow. Couples agree to abide by all of the liturgical norms of the Catholic Church. The couple and their bridal party are to avoid all irreverent behavior. There are to be no surprises, improvisations, add-ons, stunts, props, or other hijinks at the ceremony. If the couple wishes to have a “grand exit” from the Cathedral, they may not throw rice or confetti. Loose glitter should not come onto the premises of the Cathedral at any time.
10. Silence in Church. Couples are to maintain a prayerful silence at the rehearsal and before and after the wedding. The Cathedral church must be left quiet for anyone who wishes to pray.
11. Liturgical Integrity. On major feast days and during the Octave of Easter, couples will not have a choice of their own readings; the texts of the Mass will be for the liturgically observed day, not for the Nuptial Mass. Additions to the ceremony, or the inclusion of any foreign cultural elements, must be in keeping with the Catholic faith and will be allowed only with the permission of the Cathedral Rector. No other priest or deacon, not even the celebrant, can initiate or approve these additions. Approved Hispanic traditions with the padrinos (arras, lazo, cojines, anillos, velación) are always allowed. Unity candles are strictly forbidden.

12. Attire. The couple agrees that they and all members of their wedding party will be dressed respectfully. The groom and his groomsmen are to wear suits or tuxedos. Men are not to wear hats. The bride and her bridesmaids must wear modest dresses. These are forbidden: low necklines/cleavage, backless dresses, high slitted or high-hemmed dresses, revealing the leg above the knee. Strapless dresses are allowed only if a shawl is worn.
13. Litter & Damages. Any wax, glitter, pedals, trash, or booklets left littering the Cathedral after a wedding party has left or any damages to the floor or pews or damage to anything else, will result in the forfeiture of the entire security deposit.
14. Intoxication. Couples agree to abstain from alcohol and drugs before the ceremony. If the clergy or staff suspect the couple are even partially intoxicated, the wedding will be cancelled. A compromised mental state, inhibiting full consent, would render the marriage invalid. Any guest who arrives even partially intoxicated will be removed from the Cathedral by security. No gum, food, or drink is allowed in the Cathedral out of respect for the Eucharist.
15. Photography. Couples should seek out a Catholic photographer who will understand the sacred nature of the liturgy. Photographers should be instructed to limit their activity to the side aisles and back of the church, never walking down the main aisle nor going up into the sanctuary (raised marble area with the altars). The couple have up to half an hour immediately after the wedding for photographs in the church. All photography must happen before the main altar, never with anyone going behind it. Photographers should be dressed in attire similar to guests. No flash photography or additional lighting is allowed in the church during the ceremony.

Photographers are to speak with the Cathedral Director of Sacred Worship when they arrive on the wedding day.

16. Videography. If a couple wishes to purchase videography, they should seek out a Catholic videographer who will understand the sacred nature of the liturgy. Aside from what the videographer has on his own body, no additional equipment or lighting is allowed, such as umbrella lights or boom mics. Alternatively, couples can hire the Cathedral's own low quality videography.
17. Punctuality. The Cathedral clergy and staff will not wait more than five minutes upon the wedding party for the start of the wedding. If either the bride or groom is not present at the designated time, the wedding will be immediately cancelled. The bride has access to a simple bridal room in the basement of the Cathedral for one hour before the ceremony. Likewise, the couple may have use of the Cathedral not earlier than one hour before the wedding. After the wedding, the couple has thirty minutes to take photos, clean up, and leave.
18. Flowers. Flower arrangements may be provided for the sanctuary, near the altar and pulpit. If a couple wishes to place flower arrangements at the high altar, it must be arranged by one of the Cathedral's officially approved florists. No real flower pedals are to be strewn down the central aisle. Any artificial pedals dropped by flower girls must be completely swept-up by the wedding party before they leave. Weddings during Lent will have limitations to flowers.
19. Booklet/Program. The Cathedral staff will not provide a booklet or program for weddings. If the couple wishes to produce one, they

are responsible for the printing of these booklets, passing them out before the celebration, and disposing of them all afterwards.

20. Lectors/Servers. Those who read the Scriptures during the ceremony must be in good standing with the Church; i.e., baptized Catholics, without publicly known grave sin, and, if married, are in a legitimate Catholic marriage. The same applies for those who act as altar servers. Any public official or celebrity, regardless of their relationship with the Church, are only permitted in these roles with the permission of the Cathedral Rector.
21. Clergy. Visiting clergy from outside of the Archdiocese of Denver will only be admitted to the sanctuary if they have previously provided a letter of good standing from their diocese or religious order to the Office of Clergy of the Archdiocese of Denver. All clergy are asked to keep Cathedral weddings strictly to 60-75 minutes, in total.
22. Pews. The Cathedral staff will not reserve pews for a couple. Couples are free to reserve pews on their own.
23. Civil license. The civil marriage license is to be given to the staff at the rehearsal and will be signed immediately after the ceremony before the side altar of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Cathedral staff will take the signed civil marriage license after the ceremony and mail it to the appropriate county.