
Marriage on board Bahamian Ships

Notice to ship owners, managers, Masters, Approved Nautical Inspectors, Recognised Organisations and surveyors

1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Information Notice (IN) provides information on the process for applying to carry out marriages on board Bahamian ships.
- 1.2. This Notice is provided by the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) to describe the process for carrying out marriages onboard Bahamian ships, but it should be noted that responsibility for marriages lies with the Registrar General's Department, **not** the BMA. Accordingly, any enquiries relating to marriages on board should be relayed to the Registrar General (see Section 4 for contact details).

2. Application

- 2.1. Applies to all Bahamian ships on which marriages are intended to take place.

3. Introduction

- 3.1. The [Maritime Marriage Act, 2011, as amended](#)¹ provides for legal marriages to be carried out on Bahamian ships on the high seas. The Maritime Marriage Act is supported by the [Maritime Marriage Rules, 2013, as amended](#)².
- 3.2. "Marriage" in the context of the Maritime Marriage Act means "*a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife*" and "high seas" means "*all parts of the sea that are not included in the territorial sea, or the internal waters of a State, or in the archipelagic waters of an archipelagic State*".
- 3.3. Under the Act, the Registrar General may grant a licence to the Master of a Bahamian ship to be a marriage officer and the second in command (usually the Staff Captain) as a provisional marriage officer.

¹ The Maritime Marriage Act, 2011, as amended by the Maritime Marriage (Amendment) Act, 2012

² Maritime Marriage Rules, 2013, as amended by the Maritime Marriage (Amendment to Second Schedule) Rules, 2013 and the Maritime Marriage (Amendment to Second Schedule) (No.2) Rules, 2013

- 3.4. Every master or provisional marriage officer that wishes to conduct marriages on board Bahamian ships shall apply for the granting of a marriage officer licence by submitting the required application form to the Registrar General (see Form I of the First Schedule to the Maritime Marriage Rules, 2013, as amended).

4. Contact Details

- 4.1. All enquiries relating to marriages on board Bahamian ships should be addressed to the Registrar General's department:

Office address: The Registrar General
Registrar General's Department,
Office of the Attorney General & Ministry of Legal Affairs,
Shirley House, #50 Shirley Street,
P. O. Box N-532,
Nassau, N.P.,
The Bahamas.

Main Telephone No. +1 242 322 3316 or +1 242 322 8038
Fax Number +1 242 322 5553

Email address registrargeneral@bahamas.gov.bs

