



Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Tribal Court

SMSC Community Center
2330 Sioux Trail NW
Prior Lake MN 55372

Clerk email: melissa@smsscourt.org
Clerk Direct: (952) 233-4246
Court Main: (952) 233-4245
Fax: (952) 233-4259

Getting Married in the Tribal Court

Planning the Wedding

- Contact the Tribal Court as far in advance as possible, but at least 2 weeks before the planned date to schedule the wedding and make an appointment with the Clerk of Court to complete the marriage application.
- Familiarize yourself with the Domestic Relations Code, Chapter 1, Section 3. The Clerk of Court will verify that the parties meet the requirements.
 - a. Both parties must be 18.
 - b. Any person declared incompetent by the Tribal Court may not marry without the consent of their parent or legal guardian.
 - c. Any persons related by blood may not marry (parent, whole or half sibling, aunt, uncle, niece, nephew, or cousin).
 - d. Same sex marriage is allowed.
 - e. A person already married may not marry unless:
 - 1. Their spouse has been absent for 5 years and is believed to be dead. A judge may make an Order under Chapter 1, Section 3, f. (2).
 - 2. There is clear and convincing evidence that their spouse was exposed to a specific peril of death less than 5 from the date last heard from.
- The application fee is \$35. Please bring payment to your appointment. The court accepts cash or checks only, not credit cards.
- Both parties must be present at the appointment and provide a government-issued photo identification card.
- Work with the Clerk of Court to determine the date, time, and location of the wedding. Tell the clerk if you have a preference for the Judge officiating your ceremony. If no preference is given, availability will determine which Judge officiates.

- Decide if you are writing your vows or choosing from one of the traditional or Native scripts the Clerk of Court has on file.
- Obtain 2 witnesses who are at least 16 years old to be present at the wedding.

The Wedding

- Both parties and guests should arrive at the tribal courtroom at least 15 minutes before the wedding.
- Make sure your witnesses are present.
- If you have prepared your own vows, remember to bring them with you.
- You may invite guests to the ceremony. Decorations are allowed but must be taken down and removed after the ceremony; nothing should be left in the courtroom.
- Please be prepared to leave shortly after the ceremony, as the courtroom may be needed for another function.

After the Wedding

- Immediately following the wedding ceremony, the Officiant and the witnesses must complete their portions of the Marriage License.
- If the ceremony is not held in the Tribal Courtroom, the fully completed Marriage License must be returned to the Clerk of Court at 2330 Sioux Trail NW, Prior Lake, MN 55372.
- Upon receipt of the completed Marriage License, the Clerk of Court will stamp, file, and certify the Marriage License.
- After filing, the Clerk of Court will provide you with a certified copy of the Marriage License (the Marriage Certificate).
- The court does not register the marriage license with the state, nor is registration required.
- The Clerk of Court will send a copy of your marriage license to Tribal benefits and services.
- If your marriage involves a name change, you will need to update records with the relevant agencies like the Social Security Administration, banks, and the DMV. If you need additional copies of your Marriage Certificate, please notify the Clerk of Court. Each certified copy is \$5.00.