

serviceministries.org

*Service Ministries*sm

Weddings
with Integritysm



630.551.1000

630.892.2400

10 Questions to Ask
Your Officiant

Because the integrity of your upcoming marriage is important to you, Service Ministries (a ministry of the Christian Congregation) has provided the following resource to assist you in your search for legitimate clergy.

Who can marry us in Illinois?

The IDPH answers the question this way:

To be valid, a marriage must be performed by one of the following individuals:

- *a judge of a court of record or a retired judge of a court of record;*
- *a judge of the Court of Claims;*
- *the county clerk in counties having 2 million or more inhabitants (Cook County);*
- *a public official whose powers include solemnizing marriages; or*
- *an officiant performing the marriage in accordance with the principles of any **religious denomination**, Indian nation or tribe or native group provided that when such principles require an officiant, **the officiant be in good standing with his religious denomination**, Indian nation or tribe or native group.*

If you are seeking a judge, know that Illinois no longer has Justices of the Peace. Be aware that some “officiants” will lead you to believe they are a Justice of the Peace. The office of Justice of the Peace was abolished in 1962.

If you are seeking a clergy person, know that many advertising as a wedding officiant possess faux credentials. Asking a potential officiant questions about their credentials and experience may help you identify a truly legitimate clergy person.

This questionnaire is provided to help you find an officiant with integrity, proper credentials, commitment to serving you, and the legal authority to officiate your wedding.

Name of Officiant and their affiliation:

1. Are you ordained?
2. How long have you been ordained?
3. What religious organization provided your ordination?
4. Are you in good standing with your denomination?
5. Were your credentials obtained by mail or through internet sources?
6. What seminary degree do you hold?
7. What ministry are you involved in when not officiating weddings?
8. Have you ever missed or arrived late for a wedding? (Ask about the back-up plan for an unforeseen accident or illness and if the plan includes qualified officiants.)
9. Will you officiate our wedding or send someone else?
10. Can we design our own ceremony and what resources do you provide to help us to create it?

*Service Ministries*sm