

CHRISTABEL ESCAREZ | 206-701-4934 | CHRISTABEL.ESCAREZ@GMAIL.COM

WEDDING OFFICIANT

Congratulations on your engagement! And thank you for thinking of me to help facilitate the big day!

Applying for your marriage license

There are two parts to a wedding: the ceremony and the paperwork! While I am happy to help bring magic into your wedding day and create the ceremony you hope for, federal law also requires you obtain a state-issued marriage license.



Marriage laws vary by state, but regardless of which state you're in, the fastest way for you to obtain a marriage license is to stop by your local county courthouse. If you're not in a rush (marriage licenses are usually valid 30-60 days from issuance), some states allow you to apply online - including Washington!

- ❖ Washington (Note: state law requires you obtain your marriage license at least three days before your ceremony!)

- [King County](#)
- [Pierce County](#)

- ❖ California

- [Alameda County](#)

- ❖ Hawaii

- [Oahu County](#)

Included with your marriage license is additional paperwork for your officiant (me!) to complete and submit to the county following the day of your wedding.

The Ceremony

Now, the ceremony. This is the fun bit (& the bit where I come in)! Wedding ceremonies vary from traditional to non-traditional; I'm here to help you figure out where on that spectrum you'd like your ceremony, create it with you, and - hopefully - officiate the wedding you've been dreaming about, day-of.

There's a whole lot of text below, but don't worry, I plan on going through all of this with you. Below, I've included a basic breakdown of standard ceremony for you to review and discuss prior to us meeting - but, again, this is your day and we can remove, add, elaborate on any of these pieces! I can also provide examples of specific portions of prior ceremonies I've officiated, upon request.



Procession

Will you be walking down the aisle? Will you have a procession? Do you have a song you would like playing? What is the order you would like to walk in? Will the groom process? Will I? I have both been a part of the wedding procession as well as preceded the procession and acted as emcee, announcing the beginning of the ceremony and requesting guests take their seats.

Opening Announcements

The welcoming of the guests, honor any individuals, make any additional announcements - such as turning off phones or announcing your hashtag :).

Marriage Address

Aside from facilitating the flow of the entire ceremony, I consider the marriage address to be the second largest piece to officiating a wedding. The marriage address is where I address your guests and I have the opportunity to set the tone of the ceremony. Traditionally, the marriage address includes (A) a brief recount or at least references to the couple's history and (B) what marriage means, etc. (B) is traditionally where specific homilies may be read, but how I frame (B) is "Why this? Why now?"

I write a personalized marriage address, per each couple. Unless you already have an idea for what you want me to write, we need to work together and I'll draft something for (B) according to answers you two engaged individuals provide for the following:

- Why the wedding? / what does this wedding signify to you?
- Why each other?
- Why now?
- + Any significant quotes or readings you would like me to include?

[I prefer going through these questions as a conversation with the two of you at the same time, or we can do this via email. feel free to have each of you email me directly so it's not a sneak peek at vows and the day-of can be a surprise for both of you!]

Additional components

Do you have any special readings you would like included in the ceremony? For example, you could have guests come up and share select readings, quotes, memories. One of my favorite touches is inviting parents of the couple to share when/why they knew the other engaged was a perfect fit for their child.

This is also where we would include any specific traditional ceremonial components (ex: traditional Filipino wedding ceremonies include the lighting of a unity candle, the placing of the veil, the placing of the cord, the exchange of coins, etc.).

Declaration of Intent

These are the "I do's." Prior to the exchange of vows, I will ask you to each repeat the below, with my lead.

[ENGAGED A], do you come here freely and without reservation to commit to
[ENGAGED B], in marriage? If so, please answer "I do."

Exchange of Vows

The traditional "til death do us part" and/or write your own. If you opt for both, I would first invite you to read your written vows to each other, then each repeat the below after me :

I, [ENGAGED A],
take you, [ENGAGED B],
to be my [husband, wife, partner],
to have and to hold,
from this day forward,
for better,
for worse,
for richer,
for poorer,
in sickness and in health,
until death do us part.

Exchange of Rings

Similar to the previous pieces, we can do this piece in whatever way feels special and use whatever words you most resonate with, but below is an example of what I have said in the past. I encourage you to look up examples of phrasings to find words you're excited to say.



[ENGAGED B], receive this ring
As a sign of my vow
To love, honor, and cherish you.
Today, tomorrow, the years to come.
As this ring has no end,
My love is also unending.

Pronouncement

How would you like to be pronounced? Ex: "I now present the wedded couple!" "I now declare you husband and wife!" Etc.

Recession, Closing Announcements

Would you like to recess, just as you processed? Do you want to do it just as a wedded couple, or would you like the guests of honor to also recess? Would you like me to follow, or would you like me to remain and make any closing announcements?

Signing of Certificate of Marriage

In the marriage license packet you received from the county, you received a marriage certificate to be signed on the day of your ceremony as well as additional paperwork that we must complete together for me to submit to the county and make this thing official! Then you're married, congratulations! Mabuhay!

Oof, you've made it to the end! I hope that was more helpful than overwhelming, and again, **I plan on going through all of this with you.** Thank you for thinking of me to officiate your wedding and I look forward to crafting a beautiful ceremony with you!

