



Guide Sheet 3

Marriage Dissolution Certificates

Legislation requires Churches to maintain the Marriage Registers in their care and to make them accessible to the public.

Any person having lawful custody of a register book shall keep the book safely, and any such person who negligently loses the book, or wilfully or negligently destroys or defaces any entry in the book, or wilfully or negligently allows any entry in the book to be destroyed or defaced while the book is in his custody, commits an offence and shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [\$100.] **Marriage Act 1955: 6:35 (2)**

Part of the church's responsibility in maintaining the Registers is to ensure that all Marriage Dissolution Certificates are attached to the correct Marriage Certificate and the appropriate information recorded.

The dissolution certificate will be sent to the Minister of the parish in which the marriage took place. It is up to you, the minister, to follow through the process below. In parishes where there is a secretary the task may be handed over or perhaps delegated to the Session Clerk. Ultimately, however, it is the minister who will be held responsible to complete the task of attaching the dissolution certificate to the marriage certificate.

Steps

- Locate the appropriate certificate. Check carefully that the names on the two documents and the date of the marriage agree.
- Using a pencil only, note at the bottom right hand side of the marriage certificate the dissolution Court Reference Number and the date of the dissolution.

- Note also the marriage registration number.

This number will be an additional number written in hand by an officer from Births Deaths and Marriages.

e.g. DISSOLVED 26/2/2002

Ct/Ref: 02/7861

M/R 1986/F86

- Glue with PVA or a paste along an edge of the dissolution and attach to the front edge of the marriage certificate. Avoid placing over any marriage details. Fold up if necessary to protect the certificate from damage.

HINTS to Note:

- Do not place certificate on the back of the certificate which faces the dissolved marriage.
- Do not use sellotape or staples to attach the certificate. (The sellotape will eventually dry out and the staples will rust.)
- PVA glue is archives friendly. Other glues are acidic and will generally dry out over time causing the dissolution to lose its stick and leaving a discoloured mark. The certificate becomes dislodged and then is at risk of being lost or misplaced.

(A common practice in the past was to rule two lines through the marriage and to write dissolved in large letters. This practice is not acceptable as it defaces the original document.)

- If the parish registers are located in the PCANZ Archives forward the dissolutions to the Archivist to be entered and added to the parish collections.
- If the Registers are in a local repository it is the responsibility of a delegated person from the person to visit the Repository and undertake the above steps.

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visit our web site: <http://www.archives.presbyterian.org.nz>

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