

X. MARRIAGE REGISTER-PREMARITAL FILES

A. Contents

Each parish is required to maintain a file of the papers collected during the period of marriage preparation. The file typically will include prenuptial forms, questionnaires, correspondence, notes and dispensation documents. Also, the person who assisted at the marriage is to see to it that the marriage license is promptly filed with the County Clerk.

B. Location

Ordinarily, the premarital file for each couple should be retained by the parish where the marriage is recorded in the Marriage Register.

C. Filing

The file for each couple is to be kept in its own envelope or folder, clearly marked with the parties' names and the date of the marriage. The files should be arranged in chronological order and kept together in a locked file cabinet or safe.

D. Retention

The premarital files are to be retained for seventy-five years. Expired files are to be destroyed or otherwise disposed of so that no one can gain access to them.

E. Transmission of File

If a legitimate request for the original copy of the file is made by an ecclesiastical tribunal, or if the Chancellor has approved the surrender of the file to a civil authority, the file should be hand delivered and receipted or mailed by registered mail with a receipt. A photostatic copy of the original file, along with the receipt, should replace the original copy in the parish's archive. If the original file is later returned, the photostatic copy should be destroyed.