



Making a complaint about a marriage celebrant

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What can we do if we have concerns about our marriage celebrant?

If you have a concern about the service you have received from a marriage celebrant in relation to your wedding you may make a complaint. If you have any concerns, you should discuss them with the celebrant first but if you are not able to do this, or believe your complaint requires further consideration, there is a special procedure set out in the Marriage Regulations to enable complaints concerning the performance of marriage celebrants to be responded to. The following information outlines the initial process to be followed.

How must the complaint be made?

The complaint must be in writing and made to:

**The Registrar of Marriage Celebrants
Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department
Robert Garran Offices
National Circuit
BARTON ACT 2600
Australia**

It must be made within 3 months of the matter complained of. You may seek an extension of time to make a complaint from the Registrar and the Registrar may grant an extension if he or she considers it is justified. This request must be in writing.

The complaint must contain the following details:

- The complaint must state your full name and contact details (anonymous complaints cannot be accepted);
- The name of the marriage celebrant to whom the complaint relates;
- The full details of the complaint; and
- Whether or not it is or has been the subject of other proceedings (such as a report to the police).

If you suffer from a disability and require assistance in preparing the complaint the Marriage Celebrants Section may be able to provide this.

Not all complaints will be accepted but if the Registrar decides to deal with the complaint you will be asked to provide any additional material you wish to provide in support of the complaint. This may include signed statements or statutory declarations from witnesses. The material must be in writing. The Registrar may also seek additional information from you if necessary.

You must provide to the Registrar a written statement consenting to the marriage celebrant being notified of the complaint and being given a copy of any information or material provided by you to the Registrar in support of the complaint.

If the Registrar does not receive such a statement the complaint cannot proceed and will be terminated. No complaint will be recorded.

What information will the marriage celebrant receive if the complaint is being dealt with?

The marriage celebrant will receive a written notice stating that the complaint has been made. They will receive a copy of the complaint and any supporting material provided by you. They will be given your name and that of any supporting witnesses, but no contact details will be provided.

They will be invited to respond to the complaint and provide any additional material they wish in writing in support of their response. This might include, for example, a signed statement from one or more witnesses.

The complaint will then be dealt with by the Registrar. If appropriate it may be dealt with by conciliation or a more formal determination process. If the Registrar decides the complaint is well founded, there are a number of steps the Registrar may take including several disciplinary measures against the celebrant. The Registrar does not have the power to require the celebrant to repay any money to you, although the Registrar may make a recommendation to that effect.