

LEGAL AND JUDICIAL

Interfaith / Inter-Religion Marriage Registration in Nepal

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Learn about interfaith marriage registration in Nepal, including legal requirements, documents, process, costs, fees, court procedure, and marriage laws.

Interfaith or inter-religion marriage means a marriage between two people who follow different religions, such as Hindu and Muslim, Hindu and Christian, Buddhist and Hindu, or Christian and Buddhist. In Nepal, the law does not make a person's religion a general condition for entering a legally recognized marriage. The principal legal framework is the [National Civil Code, 2074](#), together with the [Constitution of Nepal, 2072](#).

Article 18 of the Constitution provides equality before law and prohibits discrimination in the application of general laws on grounds including religion. Article 26 protects the freedom to profess, practice and protect one's religion according to one's conviction, subject to constitutional restrictions.

The National Civil Code establishes the legal conditions for marriage without prescribing that both parties must belong to the same religion. Section 70 focuses on matters such as consent, age, existing marital status and prohibited relationships. Therefore, an interfaith couple generally follows the same legal marriage requirements as other couples.

For couples who want a civil marriage without relying on a religious ceremony, [marriage by registration](#) before the competent authority can provide a formal legal route. The following sections explain the requirements, documents, procedure, time, cost, government fees, authorities and legal services relevant to interfaith marriage registration in Nepal. [Adalat Lawyers in Nepal](#).

1. What Is Interfaith Marriage Registration in Nepal?

[Interfaith marriage registration in Nepal](#) refers to legally registering a marriage between people belonging to different religious backgrounds. The couple may follow different religions, but religion itself is not listed as a general disqualification for marriage under Section 70 of the National Civil Code, 2074. The legal conditions apply to the parties rather than requiring them to share the same faith.

The Constitution also provides protection against discrimination based on religion. Article 18 states that general laws must not discriminate on religious grounds, while Article 26 recognizes an individual's freedom to profess, practice and protect their religion according to their conviction.

An inter-religion marriage may therefore be registered without treating religious difference itself as a legal obstacle. The couple must still satisfy the statutory marriage requirements. The legal registration should also be distinguished from a religious ceremony. A religious ceremony may be performed according to the couple's chosen faith or family practice, but the civil registration is governed by Nepali law.

2. What Laws Govern Interfaith Marriage Registration?

The **National Civil Code, 2074** is the principal legislation governing marriage and marriage registration in Nepal. Chapter 1 of Part 3 contains provisions from Sections 67 to 84 concerning marriage, including the right to marry, conditions for marriage, registration and marriage by registration. Sections 76 to 80 specifically address marriage registration procedures.

Section 70 sets the basic legal conditions for marriage. The official English version states that both parties must have attained 20 years of age, the parties must not have an existing matrimonial relationship, and they must satisfy the other statutory conditions concerning consent and prohibited relationships.

The **Constitution of Nepal, 2072** also matters because Article 18 protects equality and prohibits discrimination on grounds including religion. Article 26 protects freedom of religion.

The **Muluki Civil Procedure Rules, 2075** and applicable court procedures may also apply to the filing and documentation process. The Nepal Law Commission publishes the relevant civil legislation and procedural rules.

3. Where Can Interfaith Couples Register Marriage?

For **marriage by registration in Nepal**, couples who are in Nepal generally apply to the **concerned District Court**. Section 77 of the National Civil Code provides the statutory route for marriage by registration. The law requires either the man or woman, or both, to have resided in the concerned district for at least 15 days before filing the application.

The religious background of the parties does not by itself determine which District Court has jurisdiction. The relevant consideration is the statutory jurisdiction and residence requirement.

For couples who have already completed a marriage ceremony, marriage registration may involve a different registration route depending on their circumstances and the applicable provisions. The couple should therefore distinguish **marriage**

registration after a ceremony from marriage by registration through the District Court.

Foreign-national cases can require additional documentation and may involve embassy or consular authorities. Couples should confirm the appropriate District Court and documentation requirements before filing because the evidence required can vary according to nationality and circumstances.

4. What Legal Requirements Apply to Interfaith Marriage?

An [interfaith couple](#) must satisfy the ordinary legal conditions for marriage. The fact that the parties follow different religions does not replace or reduce those requirements. Section 70 of the National Civil Code establishes the basic conditions for a legally valid marriage.

The principal requirements include:

- Both parties must have completed 20 years of age.
- Both parties must provide the legally required consent.
- Neither party should have an existing matrimonial relationship.
- The parties must not fall within a prohibited relationship under applicable law.
- The marriage must not be concluded through prohibited misrepresentation.

The law therefore focuses on legal capacity and marital conditions rather than requiring religious uniformity. Section 71 also contains restrictions concerning marriages concluded through specified forms of misrepresentation, including circumstances involving an existing marriage.

Article 26 of the Constitution protects religious freedom. However, it also prohibits certain conduct, including conversion of another person from one religion to another through conduct falling within the constitutional restriction.

Accordingly, couples should distinguish their personal religious decisions from the civil requirements for marriage registration.

5. What Documents Are Needed for Marriage Registration?

The required documents depend on whether both applicants are Nepali citizens, whether either person was previously married, and whether one party is a foreign national. The application for marriage by registration requires specified personal and family information and witness details under Section 77.

For a typical Nepali interfaith couple, documents may include:

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- Citizenship certificates of both applicants.
 - Passport-size photographs.
 - Documents establishing the required residence.
 - Application for marriage by registration.
 - Identification documents of required witnesses.
 - Divorce judgment or certificate, if previously married and divorced.
 - Death certificate of a former spouse, where applicable.
 - Other documents requested by the concerned authority.

A foreign-national applicant may need a valid passport, evidence of legal capacity or single status, documents from the relevant embassy or competent authority, and certified translations or authentication where required.

Applicants should carry original documents and copies. Names, dates of birth, addresses and marital-status information should be consistent across the documents. A discrepancy can result in additional verification or delay.

6. How Does Interfaith Marriage Registration Work?

The [interfaith marriage registration process in Nepal](#) follows the applicable civil registration procedure rather than requiring the couple to obtain religious approval from both faith communities. The couple first establishes legal eligibility and identifies the appropriate authority.

The general process is:

1. Confirm that both parties meet the legal marriage requirements.
2. Identify the competent District Court or registration authority.
3. Satisfy the applicable residence requirement.
4. Prepare citizenship, identity, photographs and supporting documents.
5. Complete the prescribed marriage application.
6. Submit the application with the required fee.
7. Attend the authority's inquiry and verification.
8. Respond to any request for additional documents.
9. Obtain the decision that the marriage can be concluded.
10. Sign the required consent deed and registration documents.

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11. Complete registration with the required witnesses.
 12. Receive the marriage registration certificate.

For marriage by registration, Section 78 provides for an inquiry and decision concerning whether the marriage can be concluded. Section 79 deals with the consent deed, while Section 80 provides for registration and issuance of the marriage registration certificate.

7. How Long Does Marriage Registration Usually Take?

The time required for **interfaith marriage registration in Nepal** depends on the registration route, document preparation, court procedure, residence requirement and whether additional verification is necessary.

For marriage by registration, Section 78 provides that the concerned authority must make a decision within **seven days of filing the application** after making the necessary inquiry as to whether the marriage is capable of being concluded.

The seven-day period should not be treated as a universal guarantee that every couple will receive the final marriage certificate within seven days. Applicants may first need to satisfy the statutory 15-day residence requirement for the relevant District Court route. Missing documents, inconsistencies, verification requirements and foreign documents may also affect the practical timeline.

Foreign-national interfaith marriages can require additional time because documents issued abroad may need translation, certification or authentication. Couples should therefore prepare all documents before filing rather than assuming that religious difference alone determines the processing period.

8. What Government Fees Apply to Registration?

The government fee depends on the particular registration procedure and applicable rules. For an application for marriage by registration, the prescribed form under the [Muluki Civil Procedure Rules, 2075](#) records a fee of **NPR 500**. The Nepal Law Commission maintains the current civil procedure rules.

The statutory application fee is different from the total cost of completing an interfaith marriage registration. Applicants may separately incur costs for obtaining copies of citizenship documents, photographs, translations, certifications, authentication and other supporting documents.

Where one party is a foreign national, additional government or administrative charges may arise from embassy, consular, translation or document-authentication requirements. Those costs do not represent a special legal fee for interfaith marriage itself.

Applicants should obtain an official receipt for government payments and confirm the current amount with the relevant authority before filing. Fees can be affected by amendments to procedural rules or administrative requirements.

9. What Is the Total Cost of Registration?

There is no single total cost that applies to every **interfaith marriage registration in Nepal**. The final expense depends on whether both parties are Nepali citizens, whether the couple already has the necessary documents, whether a lawyer is engaged, and whether foreign documents require translation or authentication.

Typical expenses can include:

- Prescribed court or registration fee.
- Photographs and photocopies.
- Certified copies of documents.
- Translation expenses.
- Notarial or certification expenses where required.
- Embassy or consular documentation expenses for foreign nationals.
- Transportation and administrative expenses.
- Lawyer's professional fees, if legal assistance is used.

The NPR 500 fee shown in the prescribed marriage-by-registration application should not be presented as the total cost of every interfaith marriage case.

A Nepali couple with straightforward documentation may have relatively limited additional expenses. A Nepali-foreigner couple may face higher costs because foreign documents can require additional formalities. A lawyer should clearly separate government fees from professional fees and third-party expenses.

10. Which Authorities Handle Interfaith Marriage Registration?

The authority depends on the form of marriage registration being used. For **marriage by registration in Nepal**, the concerned **District Court** is the relevant authority when the statutory conditions for that route are satisfied. Section 77 establishes the District Court application route for couples in Nepal.

Other government bodies can provide supporting documents. A ward office may issue or certify certain civil-status and residence-related documents. Foreign nationals may need documentation from their embassy or competent authority in

their home country.

The **Nepal Law Commission** is not the marriage registration authority; it publishes and maintains access to legislation and regulations. The relevant District Court or other competent registration authority performs the registration function.

The couple should first identify whether they require registration following an existing marriage ceremony or marriage by registration. This distinction affects the authority, documents and procedure. The different religions of the parties do not, by themselves, create a separate religious registration authority for the civil marriage.

11. What Happens After Filing Marriage Registration?

After an application for marriage by registration is filed, the competent authority examines the information and supporting evidence. Section 78 provides for necessary inquiry and a decision concerning whether the proposed marriage can legally be concluded.

If the authority determines that the marriage can proceed, the parties complete the next statutory steps. Section 79 provides for preparation of a **deed of consent**, which is signed by the parties and witnesses in the presence of the concerned officer. Section 80 then provides for registration in the marriage registration book.

After registration, the authority issues the marriage registration certificate. Section 80 states that the marriage is deemed concluded between the applicants from the date on which the marriage registration certificate is obtained.

The couple should carefully check the names, dates, addresses and other details appearing on the certificate before leaving the registration authority. Errors should be raised promptly through the appropriate correction procedure.

12. Can Foreigners Register Interfaith Marriage in Nepal?

A foreign national may be able to marry and register a marriage in Nepal if the applicable Nepali legal requirements and documentary conditions are satisfied. The fact that the foreign national and the Nepali citizen follow different religions does not, by itself, make the marriage invalid.

Foreign-national cases generally require more documentation than a marriage between two Nepali citizens. Depending on the circumstances, documents may include a passport, evidence of marital status or legal capacity to marry, embassy documentation, residence evidence, photographs and translated or authenticated documents.

The exact requirements can differ according to the foreign national's country and the procedure followed by the competent authority. Applicants should therefore obtain confirmation from the relevant District Court and, where

necessary, the concerned embassy or consular authority.

The Constitution protects freedom of religion under Article 26, but that protection does not eliminate immigration, civil-status or marriage-registration requirements.

Foreign-national couples should have their documents reviewed before filing to reduce the risk of delays caused by missing authentication, translation or marital-status evidence.

13. What Checklist Should Interfaith Couples Follow?

An **interfaith marriage registration checklist** should cover both legal eligibility and administrative documents. Religious difference itself should not be treated as a substitute for the statutory requirements.

Before filing, couples should confirm:

- Both parties have completed 20 years of age.
- Both parties freely consent to the marriage.
- Neither party has an existing marriage.
- The parties are not within a prohibited relationship.
- The correct registration authority has been identified.
- The applicable residence requirement has been satisfied.
- Citizenship or passport documents are available.
- Required photographs are prepared.
- Required witnesses are identified.
- Previous-marriage documents are available where applicable.
- Foreign documents have required translation or authentication.
- Names and dates match across documents.
- The prescribed application is complete.
- The current government fee has been confirmed.
- Originals and copies are available.

The couple does not generally need to prove that both parties follow the same religion because the statutory marriage conditions do not impose a same-religion requirement. Section 70 instead establishes the legal conditions for marriage.

14. When Should Couples Hire Marriage Lawyers?

An **interfaith marriage lawyer in Nepal** can help couples understand the applicable legal route, review documents and handle procedural issues. Legal assistance can be useful even though religious difference itself does not create a separate legal procedure.

A lawyer can be particularly helpful where:

- One party is a foreign national.
- The residence requirement is uncertain.
- One party was previously married.
- Divorce or death documents must be verified.
- Foreign documents require translation or authentication.
- Names or dates differ between documents.
- The couple is unsure whether to use District Court marriage by registration or another registration route.
- The authority requests additional legal documents.
- The couple wants assistance preparing and filing the application.

Legal advice should focus on the couple's actual circumstances rather than assuming that every interfaith marriage follows exactly the same process. Fairmont Law Firm in Nepal can assist with **interfaith marriage registration, court marriage, document review, application preparation and legal representation**, subject to the facts and applicable law.

15. What Legal Services Support Interfaith Marriage Registration?

Legal services for **inter-religion marriage registration in Nepal** can cover the process from initial eligibility assessment through receipt of the marriage certificate. The scope of assistance depends on the couple's circumstances and whether both parties are Nepali citizens or one is a foreign national.

A law firm may provide:

- Legal consultation on marriage eligibility.
- Review of citizenship and identity documents.
- Residence and jurisdiction assessment.

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- Preparation of marriage-registration applications.
 - Review of previous-marriage documents.
 - Assistance with foreign-document requirements.
 - Coordination concerning translations and authentication.
 - District Court filing assistance.
 - Representation during applicable proceedings.
 - Assistance responding to document queries.
 - Guidance concerning the marriage registration certificate.

The legal framework remains based primarily on the National Civil Code and applicable procedural rules. Religious difference does not itself require a special legal contract or religious conversion for civil registration. Article 18 of the Constitution protects equality regardless of religion, while Article 26 protects religious freedom subject to constitutional limitations.

Frequently Asked Questions About Interfaith Marriage

Can people from different religions marry in Nepal?

Yes. Nepalese marriage law does not make belonging to the same religion a general condition for marriage. Section 70 of the National Civil Code focuses on legal conditions such as age, consent, existing marital status and prohibited relationships. Article 18 of the Constitution also prohibits discrimination in general laws on religious grounds.

Is interfaith marriage legally recognized in Nepal?

Yes, an interfaith marriage can receive legal recognition when the couple satisfies the applicable requirements and completes the legally prescribed registration procedure. The National Civil Code governs marriage and registration without imposing a general same-religion requirement. The legal validity therefore depends on compliance with statutory marriage conditions rather than whether both parties follow one religion.

Where can interfaith couples register marriage?

For marriage by registration while the couple is in Nepal, the application is made before the concerned District Court under Section 77 of the National Civil Code. The applicable residence requirement must also be satisfied. Couples should first determine the correct jurisdiction and whether their circumstances require marriage by registration or another marriage-registration procedure.

What documents are required for registration?

Documents commonly include citizenship certificates or passports, photographs, residence evidence, the prescribed application and identification documents for witnesses. Previous-marriage documents may be required where applicable. Foreign nationals may need additional marital-status, embassy, translation and authentication documents. The precise documents depend on nationality, marital history and the registration route followed by the applicants.

Does religion affect marriage registration in Nepal?

Religion does not generally prevent marriage registration when the parties satisfy the statutory requirements. Article 18 prohibits discrimination in applying general laws on grounds including religion, while Article 26 protects religious freedom. The National Civil Code's marriage conditions do not require both parties to follow the same religion.

How long does interfaith registration take?

For marriage by registration, Section 78 provides that the concerned authority must make a decision within seven days of filing after necessary inquiry into whether the marriage can be concluded. This does not necessarily mean every case will receive the final certificate within seven days because residence requirements, missing documents and additional verification can affect the practical timeline.

How much does marriage registration cost?

The prescribed marriage-by-registration application form records a fee of NPR 500 under the applicable civil procedure rules. The total expense can be higher because couples may pay for photographs, copies, translations, authentication, administrative documents and legal services. Foreign-national cases can involve additional documentation expenses. Current government charges should be confirmed before filing.

Can foreigners register interfaith marriage in Nepal?

A foreign national may register a marriage in Nepal when the applicable legal and documentary requirements are satisfied. Foreign applicants commonly need additional identity and marital-status evidence and may require embassy documentation, translation or authentication. Because requirements can vary by nationality and circumstances, foreign-

national couples should confirm the documents with the competent authority before filing.

Are witnesses required for marriage registration?

For marriage by registration, Section 77 requires the application to include the names of at least two witnesses. The witnesses also participate in the later consent and registration documentation. Applicants should ensure that witnesses bring the identification documents required by the concerned authority. The exact practical documentation requirements should be confirmed before attending the registration process.

Can a lawyer handle interfaith marriage registration?

Yes. A lawyer can assist with legal eligibility, document review, application preparation, filing and applicable court procedures. Legal assistance can be particularly useful where one applicant is foreign, a previous marriage is involved, residence jurisdiction is unclear, or foreign documents require authentication or translation. Lawyer fees are separate from government registration fees and other administrative expenses.

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