



## Marriage and Civil Union Navigation Services



Need more information? Contact our Navigation Services Team at 303-432-5130 or [navigation@jcmh.org](mailto:navigation@jcmh.org)

If you notice any changes or inconsistencies with our resources, please inform Navigation to help us stay current.

### **What is the difference between a marriage and a civil union?**

A civil union is a form of state-level relationship recognition for couples, regardless of gender, that entitles them to receive the same benefits and protections as married spouses. Unlike marriages, civil unions do not have any rights under federal law (such as federal income tax filing, survivor benefits of federal pensions, and social security). Same-sex marriage was legalized in 2015, but civil unions are still valid in Colorado.

### **How to enter into a civil union or marriage**

- Applications can be completed online or in-person at a county clerk and recorder office.
  - Apply online at <https://countyfusion3.kofiletech.us/countyweb/login.do?countyname=Denver>
- Both parties must appear in-person with a valid photo ID to pick up the license at the Office of the Clerk and Recorder. Denver's office is located at:  
201 W Colfax Ave Dept. 101 Denver, CO 80202  
Monday - Friday 8 am – 5 pm  
720-865-8400
- The couple must enter into the civil union or marriage within 35 days before the license expires and return it to the county within 63 days of the license being signed.

### **How to merge a civil union into a marriage**

Civil unions can be merged into a marriage without separately dissolving the civil union. You must obtain a marriage license through the process outlined above. Check with your clerk and recorder's office for specific information on the merging process.

### **Civil unions in other states**

Civil unions, domestic partnerships, and other similar relationships entered into in another state are recognized in Colorado.

Information obtained from Colorado Legal Services at <https://lawhelp.coloradolegalservices.org/resource/civil-unions-in-colorado-frequently-asked-que?ref=txyom#iE1C34015-D402-4591-B10D-E9E8DDBFB7A1>