

Notice to 17-year Olds Who Want to Get Married

This Notice goes to all 17 year-olds who want court approval to marry. If you are under 18, the law says you must have a judge's approval to get a marriage license. If you are under 17, you can not get married under New York State law (Chapter 35 of the Laws of 2017).

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ):

Who needs permission to marry?

Anyone between 17 and 18 years old. You cannot get this approval until you are at least 17 years old. If you are under 17, you can not legally get married in New York State.

Where do I get permission to marry?

In the Family Court or Supreme Court.

What if I already have permission from my parent(s) or guardian(s)?

You still need approval from a judge.

What else do I need to know?

The law also says that you must be told about some of your rights under New York State laws and about where you can get help if you need it. Here is the information:

1. Divorce: After you are married, you and your spouse each have the right to end your marriage (get divorced) if you meet certain legal requirements. Divorce is complicated, and it is always a good idea to talk to a lawyer about it. This is general information:

The court system has information and forms on how to get a divorce. Learn more by looking at the Uncontested Divorce Instructions (the "Instructions") posted at <http://www.nycourts.gov/divorce/pdfs/Divorce-Packet-Instructions.pdf>.

There are several reasons you or your spouse can use to get a divorce in New York. One of the most common ways is the no-fault divorce. For a no-fault divorce, you do not need to prove someone is at fault. Instead, you or your spouse must swear or affirm under oath that your marriage is "irretrievably broken." That means that something has happened that cannot be fixed, and your marriage should end. You or your spouse also have to say that this breakdown in your marriage has lasted at least six months. The court cannot give you a divorce unless all issues have been decided. This includes custody and visitation for children (if you have them), and all money issues. One way to decide these issues is for you and your spouse to place your agreement about these issues in a signed statement in proper form. Another way is to have a Judge decide these issues in a court order.

2. Money Matters: If you get divorced, you may be able to get financial support (called maintenance) from your spouse. Or, your spouse may be able to get financial support from you. How this can happen is explained in the Uncontested Divorce Instructions. Also, any property the two of you have (for example, house, land, cars, bank accounts) can be split between you and your spouse.

3. Custody and Child Support: If you separate or divorce and you have children with your spouse, either of you can ask a court for custody of the children. The parent the children live with may be able to get child support from the other parent. For information, you can call the New York

State Child Support Program at 888-208-4485 (TTY 866-875-9975). Or you can visit their website, www.childsupport.ny.gov. You can apply for child support services at that website. You can also go to your county Child Support Office.

4. Domestic Violence: When most people think about domestic violence, they think about physical things—hitting, kicking, shoving, or punching. But, these are not the only ways that someone can be abused. Here are some of the many ways one person can get power and control over the other person in the relationship:

- isolation (keeping someone apart) from family and friends
- controlling another person's money or ability to get money or credit or forcing debts
- forced sex, sexting and other forms of sexual abuse
- verbal, emotional, or psychological abuse
- use of fear or threats or stalking in person or by phone, text or social media

This violence may happen slowly, over time. Other times it can happen quickly. Often it happens after some change in the relationship, such as marriage, divorce, pregnancy, moving in together, or breaking up. If you are scared of the other person in your relationship, or feel like that person makes all the decisions, even when you want to make some, and you are afraid of what might happen if you do not go along with that person's decisions, you might want to use some of the information here.

If you need immediate, emergency help because of violence, you can call 911.

If you are looking for more information, or want help with domestic violence against yourself or your children, you can call:

- New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline (24 hours a day): **800-942-6906**.
- New York City: **800-621-HOPE (4673)** or dial **311**.
- If you are **hard of hearing or Deaf**, dial **711**.

Other domestic violence information is available on these websites:

- Unified Court System: <http://www.nycourts.gov/topics/domesticviolence.shtml>
- New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence: www.opdv.ny.gov

5. Help for other needs or problems you may have: You may be able to get public benefits and other services. New York State has many different benefits and services for people who need them. You can get help buying food, temporary cash assistance, health insurance programs, special help for women, infants and children, assistance with the cost of heat and many other things. You may find these benefits and services listed and explained, and you may apply for them at <https://mybenefits.ny.gov/mybenefits/begin>. You can also apply at your local Department of Social Services or in New York City at the Human Resources Administration.