

## MEMORANDUM FOR BRIDES AND GROOMS

SUBJECT: Wedding Requirements and Procedures

1. **Purpose.** To provide information about requirements and procedures for scheduling your wedding at a Fort Meade Chapel.

2. **General Information.** Our goal is to assist you in making your wedding a sacred and memorable event. To accomplish this goal, you need to know the following information.

a. **Persons Entitled to Use a Chapel.**

- Active duty military and their immediate family members
- Retired military and their immediate family members
- Reserve Component personnel and their immediate family members
- DOD civilians and their immediate family members
- Regular attendees of chapel services at Fort Meade
- All couples above who are willing to meet each of the requirements and procedures specified in this memorandum

b. **Chapels Available for Use.**

- Main Post Chapel
  - Building 4419
  - Roberts & Llewellyn Avenue
  - Seating Capacity: 250
- Cavalry Chapel
  - Building 8465
  - 6<sup>th</sup> Armored Cavalry & Simonds Road
  - Seating Capacity: 300
- Argonne Hills Chapel
  - Building 7100
  - Rockenbach & Grandea Avenue
  - Seating Capacity: 700

c. **Scheduling.** All rehearsals are scheduled on Fridays and ceremonies on Saturdays. Due to time constraints and commitments to other weddings, it is imperative that rehearsals and ceremonies begin and end on time. Because of current force protection measures, we will only schedule one wedding per chapel each weekend and no two weddings may be scheduled for the same time. Based on completion of all scheduling requirements, you may choose which chapel and time you prefer depending on space and time available.

- **No weddings will be scheduled during the following days**
  - Weekends affiliated with Federal Holidays

- Weekend before and during Easter
- Weekend before and after Christmas
- **To tentatively make a wedding reservation**, you must turn in an application and provide all of the following information to the Family Life Center Receptionist, 301-677-3785. We cannot put your wedding on the calendar until you provide this information.
  - ID Card to show eligibility for use of chapel
  - Preference for a chapel, wedding date, and time
  - Wedding party information
  - Information on the officiating chaplain or civilian clergy
  - Date scheduled for the premarital seminar
- **To finalize your wedding reservation**, you must provide the following information.
  - Certificate of completion for Premarital Seminar from the Family Life Chaplain
  - Alphabetized guest list for the rehearsal and an alphabetized guest list for the wedding not later than 14 days prior to the rehearsal date
  - Letter of approval from Installation Chaplain for civilian clergy not later than 30 days before your scheduled wedding date
  - Information on cleaning team not later than 14 days before your scheduled wedding date
- **Rehearsals**
  - Fridays Only
  - Times Available: 1600-1700, 1700-1800, or 1800-1900
  - In consideration for the Visitor Control staff, the rehearsal party should be no more than 30 people. Exceptions are case-by-case.
- **Wedding Ceremonies**
  - Saturdays Only
  - You have a three hour time limit for set up, ceremony, and clean up
  - Main Post Chapel: 0900-1200, 1200-1500, or 1500-1800
  - Cavalry Chapel: 0900-1200, 1200-1500
  - Argonne Hills Chapel: 0900-1200, 1200-1500, or 1500-1800

d. **Musicians.** The instrumentalists listed below have been approved to use the organ at our chapels. You must coordinate directly with the musician for their services and fees.

- **Organists and Pianists**
  - Linda Ng 301-498-5888
  - Lisa Bussing 301-490-8512
  - Beth Hough 410-551-1224
  - Reid Kefir 410-757-7657
  - Sonyoung Nelson 301-598-2065
  - Terry Hendricks 410-674-7870
- **Vocalists**
  - Laura Dause 301-439-7676
  - Mary Lou Reynolds 443-804-7309
  - Beth Hough 410-551-1224

- Robert Jefferson 301-677-6231
- Timothy Wells 301-677-6231

e. **Decorations.** Altar furnishings, two altar candleholders and the Unity Candle stand are available. The wedding party must provide candles, flowers, aisle runners, and other decorations. All candles must be dripless. Flowers for Sunday worship services are usually placed in the chapels on Friday and must remain in the chapel. With prior permission of the Chaplain Assistant on duty, you may move the chapel flowers during your ceremony. However, all flowers brought into the chapel for the wedding must be removed immediately after the wedding. You must also return the chapel flowers to their original location. Flowers and ribbons may be tied or masking-taped to the pews. Do not use tacks or scotch tape on the pews.

f. **Receptions.** You must make arrangements for receptions to be held elsewhere. Receptions are not permitted in the chapels.

g. **Fees.** Although there is no charge for the use of the chapel and no fee for the chaplain performing the ceremony, you may make a donation to the Consolidated Chaplains Fund. These funds are used for various chapel programs that benefit military members and their families.

h. **Access to the Installation.** Under Force Protection Condition (FPCON) A, B, and C, access to the installation for non-military ID card holders attending a wedding is permitted. However, under FPCON D, no non-military ID card holders will be allowed access to the installation. This means that these individuals will not be able to participate in your wedding during FPCON D. In any situation, entry through the gates may take up to an hour or longer because of unforeseen difficulties or random vehicle inspections at the checkpoints. See paragraph 3.d. for additional access control requirements.

i. **Sabers.** Sabers are available to use during weddings. They must be signed out from the Installation Chaplains Office.

### 3. **Basic Requirements for All Couples.**

a. **Premarital Seminar.** All couples must attend a one-day Premarital Seminar, held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month at the Family Life Center, in order to use a Fort Meade Chapel. However, you may tentatively schedule your wedding on our calendar after the Family Life Center confirms that you have a reservation for the premarital seminar. After completion of the seminar, the Family Life Chaplain will present you with a certificate of completion. Topics included in the seminar cover some of the most current and proven relationship information that helps couples achieve a satisfying and healthy marriage. To sign up for the seminar, call the Family Life Center Receptionist at 301-677-3785. We recommend that you plan your seminar attendance at least 60 days before your desired wedding date.

b. **Marriage License.** You must present a valid marriage license from the State of Maryland to the chaplain prior to the ceremony. There is a 48-hour waiting period required between the time the application is made and the time the license is issued. The license may be used anytime up to six months from the issue date, but may only be used in Anne Arundel County. You may get your license from the County Court House, Room 106, Church Circle, Annapolis, Maryland 21401. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 410-222-1434/1435. Fee for the license is \$55.00. Personal checks are not accepted.

c. **Chapel Clean Up.** The wedding couple is responsible for ensuring that the chapel facility is cleaned and organized in the same manner in which you found it. This is not the responsibility of the

Chaplain Assistant on duty. You **must** contract with the cleaning team. The cleaning team contact name and phone number must be included on the application. The cost of a cleaning team is negotiated between the wedding couple and the cleaning team. We have included the cleaning team contact and a checklist to ensure everything is properly attended to. The chapel staff will check after the wedding to ensure proper clean up has been completed. **The use of flower petals, birdseed, rice, or other confetti is strictly prohibited inside and outside the chapel.**

- **Cleaning Checklist**
  - Vacuum carpet in sanctuary
  - Empty trash cans
  - Remove programs from the pews
  - Remove all wedding decorations
  - Remove all hangers, bags, etc. from latrines and dressing rooms
  - Place all furniture and flowers back in original settings
  
- **Cleaning Team Contact**  
 Marcia Eastland 301-677-0386, 410-519-6941, 410-703-8273

d. **Civilian Guest Lists.** You must follow these instructions in order for your wedding guests, who do not have a military ID card and a vehicle registered by the military, to gain access to the installation.

- Provide the Family Life Center Receptionist an alphabetized list of all rehearsal guests and an alphabetized list for all wedding guests (last name first), including children, not later than 14 days prior to the rehearsal date
- All non-military ID card holders, 16 years of age and older, must have a valid drivers license or picture ID, i.e. passport, school ID, etc.
- All vehicles without a military registration decal must report to the Visitor Control Center at the Reece Road Gate and show drivers license, vehicle registration, and proof of insurance

4. **Additional Requirements.** Because Chaplains at Fort Meade are committed to the success of your relationship, each one has requirements, in addition to the Premarital Seminar with the Family Life Chaplain, based on individual beliefs and denominational guidance. To assist you in finding a chaplain to conduct your wedding, the following information is provided.

FAITH GROUP	CHAPLAIN	TELEPHONE	UNIT OF ASSIGNMENT	ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS
CATHOLIC	FATHER MADU	301-677-3792	GARRISON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 month notice</li> <li>• Actively observing religious obligations</li> <li>• Obtain baptismal records, dispensation, ecclesiastical delegation, testimony of freedom to marry</li> <li>• Premarital Counseling</li> </ul>
United Methodist	CH Punke	301-677-6703	GARRISON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 month notice</li> <li>• Minimum of 4 counseling sessions</li> <li>• Priority to Garrison Unit</li> </ul>

ANME-CH  
 SUBJECT: Wedding Procedures and Requirements

				members and regular attendees of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fort Meade Chapel</li> </ul>
EPISCOPAL	CH VIEIRA	301-677-7959	GARRISON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 month notice</li> <li>• Priority to Garrison</li> <li>• Permission from Bishop of Armed Forces if pervious divorce</li> <li>• Careful review of divorce and remarriage situations</li> <li>• Minimum of 4 counseling sessions</li> <li>• Both must be active worship members in Christian Service</li> </ul>
CHURCH OF CHRIST	CH PAYNE	301-677-5410	902nd MI GROUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
AME	CH HINSLEY	301-677-5412	902 <sup>ND</sup> MI GROUP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
NSA/CSS Chaplain	CH WILLIAMSON	301-688-4314	NSA/CSS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visit or call the Chaplain Service Center</li> </ul>
EVANGELICAL COVENANT CHURCH	CH WELCH	301-677-4426	DINFOS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 month notice</li> <li>• Minimum of 3 counseling sessions</li> <li>• Priority to DINFOS personnel</li> <li>• Careful review of divorce and remarriage situations</li> <li>• Careful review of mixed faith situations</li> </ul>
LUTHERAN	CH HEUER	301-677-0811	70 <sup>TH</sup> INTEL WING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be Air Force personnel</li> </ul>
BAPTIST	CH WILSON	301-677-0811	70 <sup>TH</sup> INTEL WING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•</li> </ul>
WESLEYAN CHURCH	CH BOWERS	301-677-2943	FRIST RECRUITING BRIGADE	

PROTESTANT	CH KILLOUGH	301-677-7513	704 <sup>Th</sup> MI BRIGADE	•
ABCUSA	CH WALKER	301677-2549	FRIST CHAPLAIN RECRUITING	
CNMA	CH BOWLUS	301-677-3976	FRIST CHAPALIN RECRUITING	
NBCUSA	CH ALEXANDER	240-373-3500	USA NAVY	
EFCA	CH MCGAHA	301-677-0306	USA NAVY	

5. **Civilian Ministers.** Upon approval by the Installation Chaplain, civilian ministers may perform your wedding ceremony. To request the use of your civilian minister, your minister must provide the following information to the Family Life Center Receptionist, who will present it to the Installation Chaplain for approval.

- Clergy's Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Name of denomination
- Copies of all church credentials, i.e. license, ordination, etc., entitling him/her to conduct weddings

6. **Point of Contact.** Any questions concerning this memorandum should be addressed to Chaplain (LTC) Michael C. Punke, Installation Chaplain, at 301-677-6703.

Michael C. Punke  
 Chaplain (COL) USA  
 Installation Chaplain