

M19 Registers, Indexes and Quarterly Copies

Summary of Learning Points

When you have read this Chapter you will have learnt the following:

	Paragraph
1 Who is issued with marriage registers and	1 - 2
(i) the superintendent registrar's role with regard	
to the registers in the district	3 - 4
(ii) where emergency stock is held	5
(iii) how and when indexes must be compiled and	
who may search them	6 - 8
2 When and why certified copies of all entries must be provided	9 - 11
3 How quarterly copies should be made from registers	
 held by registrars	12 - 14
4 How quarterly copies should be made from registers	
 held by incumbents, authorised persons, registering	
 officers and secretaries of synagogues	15 - 18
5 How a superintendent registrar should check quarterly	
 copies from registrars	19 - 20
6 How a superintendent registrar should check quarterly	
 copies from incumbents, authorised persons, registering	
 officers and secretaries of synagogues	21 - 24
7 How and when quarterly copies must be transmitted	
 to the Registrar General	25 - 32
8 Returns to Electoral Registration Officers	33

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Marriage Registers

1. Every registrar of births and deaths and every additional registrar is, by virtue of the local scheme, a registrar of marriages and is issued by the Registrar General with a marriage register for current use and a spare register to be taken into use when the current register is filled.
2. The Registrar General issues duplicate marriage registers for current use to the incumbent (rector, vicar or curate in charge) of every church or chapel of the Church of England (and Church in Wales), to every registering officer of the Society of Friends, to every secretary of a synagogue and, in the case of a registered building to which an authorised person has been appointed, to the authorised person or the trustees or governing body of the registered building. In all cases, new registers are obtained by using the re-order slip in the register or by sending your requests **<Redacted>** to the General Register Office (Registration Supplies Unit).
3. Superintendent registrars should keep a record of the marriage registers currently in use in his or her registration district, with a note of the last entry number used, to ensure that either a nil return or a certified copy of every entry without a break in sequence is received every quarter. The Registrar General supplies a book, form 73, for this purpose. Alternatively a superintendent registrar may wish to keep the record in an electronic format.
4. A superintendent registrar should ask for a filled register to be deposited as soon as he or she is aware from either this book or from the quarterly copies that a new register has been taken into use. When a registrar's register is filled, it should be deposited with the superintendent registrar twenty-eight days after the date of the last entry. When the duplicate registers in use at religious marriages are filled, one register should be deposited with the superintendent registrar and the other register remain in the custody of the religion.
5. If an incumbent or authorised person cannot use their current marriage registers, for example because the key to the safe has been mislaid, spare registers for his or her use in such an emergency are held at the following register offices. It is the responsibility of the incumbent or authorised person to arrange to collect the registers from the appropriate superintendent registrar and to notify Registration Supplies Unit if he or she takes emergency registers into use.

Birmingham	Essex (Colchester)	Nottingham
Brighton and Hove	Gwynedd (Bangor)	Oxfordshire (Oxford)
Bristol	Hull	Powys (Llandridnod)
Cambridgeshire (Cambridge)	Kent (Maidstone)	Plymouth
Camden	Lancashire (Lancaster)	Sheffield
Cardiff	Leeds	Shropshire (Shrewsbury)
Carlisle	Lincolnshire (Lincoln)	Somerset (Sedgemoor)
Carmarthenshire (Carmarthen)	Manchester	Southampton
Cornwall (St Austell)	Newcastle upon Tyne	Southend on Sea
Darlington	Northampton	Swansea
Devon (Exeter)	Norwich	

Indexes

6. When a marriage register is completed it is deposited with the superintendent registrar **<Redacted>**. The superintendent registrar has a responsibility to create a local index for the public to search.

7. Entering marriage registrations **<Redacted>** will enable an electronic local marriage index to be created which can be printed or exported into a file. The index will be a combination of all registrations, including those entries made by registrars, incumbents, authorised persons, registering officers and secretaries of synagogues. It should be noted that if the index is exported when there are outstanding returns due it will not be complete.

8. **<Redacted>**.

Quarterly Copies

9. In order that a central record of all marriages may be maintained and marriage certificates issued, everyone who holds registers under the Marriage Act 1949 is required to provide the Registrar General four times a year with certified copies of all entries made in registers during the preceding three months or, if there have been no entries, with a nil return. The quarters end on the last days of March, June, September and December and copies for any one quarter must not include copies of entries made in another.

10. The Registration of Marriage etc (Electronic Communications and Electronic Storage) Order 2009 provides for a registrar (or their deputy) to enter the quarterly return (i.e. the record) **<Redacted>** within a seven day period beginning with the day on which the entry is made.

Incumbents, authorised persons, registering officers and secretaries of synagogues must submit their quarterly returns manually four times a year to the superintendent registrar, for them to be certified and sent on to the Registrar General (see M19 15 – 18).

Registers held by registrars

12. If a current register is stolen and not recovered only the marriages which have not been recorded **<Redacted>** will need to be re-registered. Entering marriage registrations **<Redacted>** enables certified copies of as many entries as possible to be provided for central deposit at any given moment and keeps to a minimum the number of re-registrations that would have to be carried out if the registers were stolen.

13. **<Redacted>**

14. When the registrar is satisfied that the details entered <Redacted> are correct, the record must be certified as a true copy of the entry in the register. This can be done either at the time the record is entered <Redacted>

Registers held by incumbents, authorised persons, registering officers and secretaries of synagogues

15. The certified copies of all entries made in registers during the preceding three months or, if there have been no entries, the nil return which incumbents (the rector, vicar, or curate in charge) and authorised persons are required to make should be delivered to the superintendent registrar by the fifteenth day of April, July, October and January. The copies from authorised persons should be accompanied by the superintendent registrar's certificates.

16. The certified copies of all entries made in registers during the preceding three months or, if there have been no entries, the nil return which registering officers of the Society of Friends and secretaries of synagogues are required to make should be delivered to the superintendent registrar by the twentieth day of April, July, October and January. The copies should be accompanied by the superintendent registrar's certificates.

17. The Registrar General supplies forms for quarterly copies but photocopies of the entries in the register may be accepted instead.

18. The supply of the necessary forms, the calling for the quarterly certified copies and nil returns, their collection or delivery and the payment of the statutory fee for each entry should be done by local arrangements.

Examination by the superintendent registrar

Copies from registrars

19. The superintendent registrar must check the records which have been entered <Redacted> and certified by the registrar. When satisfied that the copies are true copies of the register entry, the superintendent registrar must also certify the records <Redacted>. The superintendent registrar must check for the following

- (a) all entries were made in the same quarter;
- (b) the copies are properly certified; and,
- (c) there has not been a correction to the entry since the copy was made.

20. In the course of examining copies the superintendent registrar should look for any apparent errors in the entries. Any errors can be corrected only in accordance with the instructions in Chapter M20.

Copies from incumbents authorised persons, registering officers and secretaries of synagogues

21. The superintendent registrar's responsibility is limited in examining these copies because he will not normally be able to check the copies against the registers.

22. Any certified copies which do not relate to the quarter should not be cancelled but should be sent to the General Register Office, Receipts and Indexing.

23. Should any of the copies not have been certified, the superintendent registrar should try to get them certified by the appropriate person.

24. The guidance sent out to incumbents, authorised persons, registering officers and secretaries of synagogues details how a quarterly copy should be prepared. Any other defects in the copies should be reported to the General Register Office, Receipts and Indexing, special attention being paid to any case where-

- (a) the entry numbers do not run consecutively; or
- (b) particulars have been erased, written over or correction fluid used; or
- (c) the name of the building where the marriage took place has been omitted, or it appears that the marriage did not take place in the building specified in the superintendent registrar's certificate; or
- (d) in the case of a copy supplied by an authorised person, the marriage appears not to have been solemnized in the presence of an authorised person.

Transmission to the Registrar General

25. Section 58 of the Marriage Act 1949 requires every superintendent registrar to deliver the quarterly copies received by him/her to the Registrar General on such days as may be appointed by the Registrar General. Superintendent registrars are accordingly required to deliver the copies on or before the last day of April, July, October and January.

26. When sending the quarterly copies to the Registrar General the superintendent registrar must send with them-

- (a) any "nil" certificates received by him;
- (b) any superintendent registrar's certificate for marriage from an authorised person, a registering officer of the Society of Friends or a secretary (for marriages) of a synagogue.

27. The superintendent registrar must also send a report on Form 72 entitled "Superintendent Registrar's Form of Quarterly Report" of any of the following-

- (a) every entry which has been omitted in any such return;
- (b) any erasure discovered in the register; and
- (c) any error which has been discovered in the registers, stating whether it has been reported to the General Register Office. If no errors or defects are found the superintendent registrar should send a "nil" report.

28. If the superintendent registrar has received all the certified copies and “nil” certificates for a quarter, and has examined them before the last day of April, July, October and January, he should send them to the Registrar General without waiting until the end of the month. If he has been unable to collect all the copies of marriage entries from clergymen and authorised persons by those dates he must send off all copies and certificates that he has received. He should attach to them a list, on the form provided, of the copies that he has failed to obtain and state what steps he himself is taking or has taken to obtain them.

29. Quarterly copies of marriage entries should be arranged for delivery in the following order-

- (a) Churches and chapels of the Church of England arranged alphabetically in-
 - (i) parish name order; and
 - (ii) church name order within each parish.
- (b) Naval, military and air force chapels-
 - (i) licensed chapels,
 - (ii) registered chapels.
- (c) Registering officers of the Society of Friends (if any).
- (d) Secretaries of synagogues (if any).
- (e) Registered buildings in the order in which the bodies to which they belong first appointed an authorised person.

Envelopes

30. The manual quarterly copies and associated documents should be sent, unfolded, to Registration Events Team, General Register Office, Trafalgar Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 2HH. The district number should be written in the appropriate space on the envelope. Each envelope should also be marked “M” or “CP” according to whether the envelope contains manual copies of marriages or civil partnership schedules respectively. Envelopes should also be marked with the quarter and year of the enclosed quarterly copies.

31. If the copies fit into an envelope or parcel and weigh no more than 4kg then second class business reply should be used, for a larger amount of copies, the DX Secure service is to be used. The preferred means of requesting pick-up and delivery to GRO is by email to a dedicated team at DX’s Northampton Contact Centre (full instructions appear on the registrar’s website).

32. Other correspondence to the General Register Office should be sent separately.

Returns to Electoral Registration Officers

33. Under the provisions of the Representation of the People regulations 2001 (as amended) Electoral Registration Officers may inspect and make notes from marriage registers held by registrars and superintendent registrars in connection with their electoral registration duties. Where an Electoral Registration Officer requests information from a marriage register, suitable arrangements should be made to allow the marriage registers to be manually inspected.

M19 (Welsh) Notifications of Marriages

All returns made by Registration Officers under M19 of the Handbook should be made in English only.