

## General Procedure

One of the most interesting, and somewhat unusual, duties of a Florida Notary Public is to perform marriage ceremonies. The law authorizing Notaries "to solemnize the rites of matrimony" was enacted in 1861.

To solemnize a marriage, a notary must follow this general procedure:

### **Prior to the marriage ceremony**

- The couple must present to the notary a valid Florida marriage license obtained from a County Court Judge or Clerk of the Circuit Court.
- It is advised that the notary check both the effective and the expiration dates of the license to ensure that the license is valid.\*
- The notary must also require identification if the bride and groom are not personally known to you.

\*Note: The marriage license is only valid for 60 days after issuance. Thus, the ceremony must be performed before these 60 days expire.

### **Performing the marriage ceremony**

- An example of a simple, civil ceremony (in English and in Spanish) is included in this packet.
- The ceremony may be personalized, and the bride and groom may even exchange their own vows. However, the couple's vows must reflect their intentions to make a legally binding commitment to each other.

### **Completing the certificate portion of the Marriage Record**

- Detailed instructions regarding the completion of the certificate portion of the Marriage Record is included in this packet.
- Returning this certificate to the office that issued the marriage license no later than 10 after days of solemnizing the marriage.
- To find a complete list of all of the Clerks of Court in the State of Florida click here. (hyperlink?)