

## **General Procedure**

One of the most interesting, and somewhat unusual, duties of a Florida Notary Public is to perform marriage ceremonies. The law giving Notaries the authority "to solemnize the rites of matrimony" was enacted in 1861. To solemnize a marriage, you should follow this general procedure:

1. The couple must obtain a valid Florida marriage license from a county court judge or Clerk of the Circuit Court and present it to you before the marriage ceremony. You should check both the effective and the expiration dates of the license to ensure that the license is valid. You should also require identification if the bride and groom are not personally known to you.
2. You then perform the marriage ceremony. An example of a simple, civil ceremony is printed below, first in English and followed in Spanish. It may be personalized, and the bride and groom may even exchange their own vows. But, the couple's vows must reflect their intentions to make a legally binding commitment to each other.
3. You are responsible for completing the certificate portion of the Marriage Record and returning it to the office that issued the license within 10 days after solemnizing the marriage.