
HOW DO I BECOME CREDENTIALLED TO PERFORM WEDDINGS?

Requirements for Credentialing Ministry Personnel

Note: *Fellowship Atlantic presently has member churches in four provinces. The policies quoted herein are from Vital Statistics - Nova Scotia, but other provincial policies are virtually the same.*

1. Fellowship Atlantic is required to register with the Registrar of Vital Statistics those who we officially credential to perform marriages. They are to be:

A minister, cleric or religious representative duly ordained or appointed according to the rites and usages of the religious body to which they belong or is by the rules of that body deemed duly ordained or appointed by virtue of some prior ordination or appointment.

2. Each year Fellowship Atlantic is required by law to send an updated list of those we credential to Vital Statistics. We must notify the Registrars to remove:

The name of every person so registered who has died, has ceased to reside in the Province or, has in any way ceased to possess the qualifications entitling them to be so registered.

3. Those who leave their province or ministry association are required by Vital Statistics to inform them of this change.

In the past, this has come as a surprise to some, but we are required to update our provincial lists each year and inform them of these changes. For pastors who are serving under another association, we recommend that you take the steps to become credentialed under that association. Below is the direct question and answer in Nova Scotia's requirements:

If I leave the religious denomination I am currently registered with at Vital Statistics and join another, do I need to contact Vital Statistics? Yes, you must contact Vital Statistics to avoid any interruption in your authority to perform marriages.

4. We will assess each situation carefully, so we can respond honestly to our governments.

Our assessment criteria are that the credentialed person:

- Is a current resident of the province for which he is licensed.
- Is a current pastor of a Fellowship Atlantic church, whether by ordination or appointment.
- Or is a current chaplain of Fellowship of Evangelical Baptists (FEBCC).

Exception will be given to a Fellowship pastor in ministry transition and seeking a new ministry position, and this exception is valid for 1 year.

Frequently Asked Questions:

- How do I obtain a temporary license to perform marriages?

Retired pastors or those serving in other types of ministry can request Vital Statistics for a temporary license through the local ministry or church you serve under.

1. Temporary licenses for clergy who are members of denominations already registered in NS are available, and these have expiry dates which are dependent on specific requirements, such as summer replacements.

2. For purposes of solemnizing marriages, a group counts as an "established religious body" in NS only if either (a) they have been established and recognized in NS for at least 5 years, or (b) they can prove that they have been established and recognized in another Province or Territory of Canada for 10 years

Fellowship Atlantic will help those seeking a temporary license and who are members of a Fellowship church to apply under our association. Temporary licenses are usually given for a 30-day period. Ensure that you apply well in advance. It is generally quicker if you request this through your local church or association. Contact the Regional Director for further information. <https://www.fellowshipatlantic.com/contact-us>

- **How do I contact Vital Statistics?**

- Nova Scotia Permits Directory - Vital Statistics - Marriage, Registration of Clergy

<https://www.novascotia.ca/sns/paal/vstat/paal310.asp>

This is the link to the Nova Scotia Marriage Act - see pages 4-7:

<https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/marriage.pdf>

- New Brunswick Vital Statistics (snb.ca).

<https://www2.snb.ca/content/snb/en/sites/vitalstatistics.html>

This is the link to the New Brunswick Marriage Act - see pages 4-6

<http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowPdf/cs/2011-c.188.pdf>

- FA PEI pastors must seek to be credentialed under a PEI Fellowship Atlantic church.

The link to the PEI Marriage Act [Marriage Act Regulations \(princeedwardisland.ca\)](http://www.princeedwardisland.ca)

<https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/M%2603GMarriage%20Act%20Regulations.pdf>

- Quebec pastors can be credentialed with [AEBEQ:](https://aebeq.qc.ca/) <https://aebeq.qc.ca/>

Quebec Vital Statistics link: <http://www.etatcivil.gouv.qc.ca/en/officiants/officiants.html>