



Vietnam: Marriage registration and Vietnamese marriage certificates

Introduction

The following note describes the conditions for legal marriage, registration and issuance procedure for Vietnamese marriage certificates.

The note is based on information obtained during fact-finding missions to Vietnam in January 2019 and April 2023 and open source information.

Conditions for legal marriage

Marriage is regulated by the Law on Civil Status of 2014 and the Law on Marriage and Family from 2014.

Marriage can be registered online or at the People's Committee Offices¹. According to the Vietnamese law on civil status, the marriage between two Vietnamese nationals is registered at the commune-level People's Committee of the place of residence of one of the parties.² The representatives of the Ministry of Justice mentioned that foreigners cannot marry at the commune-level People's Committees. Instead, they must marry at the district level. This information is supported by the Law on Civil Status, which further specifies that if one Vietnamese party resides abroad, the marriage must be registered at the district level.³

As a minimum, the following conditions must be met for a marriage to be legal:

- The man must be 20 years of age, while the woman must be 18 years of age.
- The marriage must be voluntary.
- It cannot be a sham marriage.
- Both parties must be unmarried and cannot cohabit as husband and wife with other people.
- The parties cannot be of the same direct bloodline – meaning relatives within three generations, adoptive family members, parents or children in law.
- The parties cannot be of the same gender.⁴

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¹ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023

² Law on Civil Status, November 2014, article 17.

³ Law on Civil Status, November 2014, article 37.

⁴ Law on Marriage and Family, June 2014, article 8 and 5; Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

According to the Vietnamese law on civil status, the applicants must both be present at the time of the marriage.⁵ Representatives of the Ministry of Justice further added that the couple must present their ID cards along with documentation of being unmarried and a family book. Documentation of being unmarried is also issued by the People's Committees.⁶

Upon the marriage registration, the justice and civil status officer records the marriage in the civil status book and signs it. Both parties will also sign the civil status book. The officer reports to the chairperson of the commune-level People's Committee who then issues two marriage certificates to the couple.⁷

Since mid-2022, all Vietnamese provinces and municipalities have implemented the possibility of online marriage registration.⁸ While it is possible to register the marriage online it is not possible to receive a marriage certificate without collecting it physically on the local offices of the People's Committee. Both husband and wife will have to be present when collecting the marriage certificates.⁹

There are only two originals of the marriage certificates. One for the husband and one for the wife. The original marriage certificates are issued only once and there is no possibility of reissuance of the original certificates. Only extracts can be issued.¹⁰

Marriage certificate

Upon registration of the marriage, the office of the People's Committee registering the event, will issue the marriage certificate. The certificate itself is printed by the Ministry of Justice and distributed to the local offices of the People's Committees, where the documents can be applied for and issued.¹¹

Certificates are personalised by printing, but it is possible to come across documents that are filled in by hand.¹²

According to the Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, a uniform format of the marriage certificate was introduced for nationwide usage in 2016. The overall appearance of the 2016 Vietnamese marriage certificate is a red pattern on normal paper (see image 1-2).¹³

⁵ Law on Civil Status, November 2014, article 18.

⁶ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, January 2019.

⁷ Law on Civil Status, November 2014, article 18; The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

⁸ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

⁹ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹⁰ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

¹¹ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, January 2019.

¹² The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, January 2019.

¹³ The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, January 2019; The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice, Hanoi, April 2023.

CỘNG HÒA XÃ HỘI CHỦ NGHĨA VIỆT NAM
Độc lập - Tự do - Hạnh phúc

Số:



GIẤY CHỨNG NHẬN KẾT HÔN

Họ, chữ đệm, tên vợ: Họ, chữ đệm, tên chồng:

Ngày, tháng, năm sinh: Ngày, tháng, năm sinh:

Dân tộc: Dân tộc:

Quốc tịch: Quốc tịch:

Nơi cư trú: Nơi cư trú:

Giấy tờ tùy thân: Giấy tờ tùy thân:

Nơi đăng ký kết hôn:

Ngày, tháng, năm đăng ký:

Vợ
(Ký, ghi rõ họ, chữ đệm, tên)

Chồng
(Ký, ghi rõ họ, chữ đệm, tên)

NGƯỜI KÝ GIẤY CHỨNG NHẬN KẾT HÔN
(Ký, ghi rõ họ, chữ đệm, tên, chức vụ và đóng dấu)



Image 1: The front side of a 2016 Vietnamese marriage certificate (NIDC reference material).

[illegible]

References

Oral sources

The Vietnamese Ministry of Justice (January 2019): Interviewed in Hanoi, Vietnam.

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The National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (June 2014): Law on Marriage and Family, <http://vbpl.vn/TW/Pages/vbpgen-toan-van.aspx?ItemID=11018>, retrieved 12 July 2023.

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