

PLEASE NOTE: Legislative Information **cannot** perform research, provide legal advice, or interpret Maine law. For legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.

An Act To Remove Clergy as Signatories on Marriage Licenses

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 19-A MRSA §655, sub-§1, as amended by PL 2001, c. 574, §6, is further amended to read:

1. Persons authorized to solemnize marriages. The following may solemnize marriages in this State:

A. If a resident of this State:

(1) A justice or judge;

(2) A lawyer admitted to the Maine Bar; ~~or~~and

(4) A notary public under Title 4, chapter 19; ~~and~~.

~~B. Whether a resident or nonresident of this State and whether or not a citizen of the United States:~~

~~(1) An ordained minister of the gospel;~~

~~(2) A cleric engaged in the service of the religious body to which the cleric belongs; or~~

~~(3) A person licensed to preach by an association of ministers, religious seminary or ecclesiastical body.~~

Sec. 2. 19-A MRSA §657, as amended by PL 2001, c. 574, §7, is further amended to read:

§ 657. Lack of jurisdiction or authority

A marriage, solemnized before any known inhabitant of the State professing to be a justice, judge, ~~or~~ notary public ~~or an ordained or licensed minister of the gospel~~, is not void, nor is its validity affected by any want of jurisdiction or authority in the justice, judge, ~~or~~ notary ~~or minister~~ or by any omission or informality in entering the intention of marriage, if the marriage is in other respects lawful and consummated with a full belief, on the part of either of the persons married, that they are lawfully married.

SUMMARY

This bill removes the authorization of clergy members to solemnize marriages.