

Registered Domestic Partnerships in Maryland



A PUBLICATION OF THE REGISTERS OF WILLS OF MARYLAND

Visit us online at REGISTERS.MARYLAND.GOV and find a directory of the Register's offices at the end of this guide.

Overview

Effective October 1, 2023, qualifying domestic partners may file paperwork to become "registered domestic partners," which guarantees certain protections and benefits during estate administration in Maryland. This publication is intended to explain who qualifies for this service, the procedures you will follow to become registered domestic partners, the benefits of this service, and how to terminate your partnership.

Disclaimer: This brochure is provided for informational purposes only and does not constitute or is intended to constitute legal advice. Please consult an attorney for any legal advice.

Instructions & FAQ's

1. WHO QUALIFIES?

To qualify to become registered domestic partners, the partners must affirm they are:

1. At least 18 years of age,
2. The sole domestic partner of the other partner,
3. Not married, and
4. In a committed relationship with the other partner.

2. HOW DO MY PARTNER AND I BECOME "REGISTERED DOMESTIC PARTNERS"?

1. The two partners must prepare a "Declaration of Domestic Partnership" to be filed with the Register of Wills in the jurisdiction in which they reside.
2. Each partner must state their (1) name, (2) date of birth, (3) home address, (4) social security numbers, and (5) sign the Declaration under the penalties of perjury. The Register may require proof of identification to verify each partner's information is accurate.
3. The Declaration must also be signed by a Notary Public.
4. The partners must pay a filing fee of \$25 made payable to the Register of Wills.

After providing identification and after review, the Register's office will issue each partner a "Certification of Domestic Partnership," which shall bear the seal and signature of the Register or authorized staff member.

3. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BECOMING REGISTERED DOMESTIC PARTNERS?

If one of the partners dies without a Last Will and Testament, meaning they died "intestate," the surviving domestic partner will be treated the same as a surviving spouse as follows:

1. The surviving registered domestic partner will have the same priority to serve as Personal Representative of the estate,
2. The surviving registered domestic partner will be entitled to the \$10,000 spousal allowance, and
3. The surviving registered domestic partner will inherit the same share of the probate estate.

If one of the partners dies **with or without** a Last Will and Testament, the surviving domestic partner is exempt from Maryland inheritance tax.

4. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MOVE?

The Registers will maintain a statewide database of all registered domestic partnerships. If you relocate to another jurisdiction in Maryland, you do not need to register again. You may file a Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership in a jurisdiction other than the jurisdiction where your partnership was initially registered.

5. HOW DO I TERMINATE MY REGISTERED DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP?

To terminate a registered domestic partnership, you may choose one of the following:

- **Mutual Consent:** Both parties may file a signed "Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership" with the Register. The termination will take effect *6 months* from filing.
- **Termination by One Party:** One party may file a signed "Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership" with the Register. That party must sign under the penalties of perjury that they will provide a copy of the Declaration to the non-signing party. The termination will take effect *6 months* from filing.
- **Termination Due to Abandonment:** One party may file a signed "Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership" with the Register. That party must sign under the penalties of perjury that they have been abandoned by the other party, have not been in contact with them for at least six months, and will provide a copy of the Declaration to the non-signing party if their location is known. The termination will take effect *immediately*.
- **Marriage:** One party may file a signed "Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership" with the Register of Wills and include proof of marriage of one or both parties. The termination will take effect *immediately*.
- **Death:** One party may file a signed "Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership" with the Register of Wills and include proof of death of one or both parties. The termination will take effect *immediately*.

NOTES

FORMS: The above-mentioned "Declaration of Domestic Partnership" and "Declaration of Termination of Domestic Partnership" are forms that will be available on the Register of Wills website on or about October 1, 2023. The "Certification of Domestic Partnership" is a document generated only by the Registers of Wills.

LIMITATION OF BENEFITS: The above-mentioned benefits of being registered domestic partners is finite, meaning there are some benefits for surviving spouses that will not be benefits for a surviving registered domestic partner. Most significantly, a surviving registered domestic partner will not have the statutory right to file an election for an elective share of the augmented estate of the decedent.

PERSONAL INFORMATION: While registered domestic partnerships will be public record, the domestic partners home addresses and any proof of identification required by the Register will not be public record.

DECLARATION OF DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP

The Declaration of:

Party 1:

_____	_____	_____
Full Legal Name	Social Security Number	Date of Birth

Home Address 1		

Home Address 2		

Party 2:

_____	_____	_____
Full Legal Name	Social Security Number	Date of Birth

Home Address 1		

Home Address 2		

Each of us states:

1. We are at least 18 years of age and are domiciled in _____, Maryland.
2. We are the sole domestic partner of each party in this declaration.
3. We are not married.
4. We are in a committed relationship with each party.

We solemnly affirm under the penalties of perjury that the contents of this document are true to the best of our knowledge, information, and belief.

_____	_____	_____	_____
Party 1	Date	Party 2	Date

SIGNED IN THE PHYSICAL PRESENCE OF A NOTARY PUBLIC OR BEFORE A NOTARY PUBLIC THROUGH COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

State of Maryland, City/County of _____

On this ____ day of _____, 20____, before me, the subscriber, a Notary Public in and for the State of Maryland, City/County of _____, and known to me (or satisfactorily proven) to be the persons whose names are subscribed to within the document and acknowledged that they executed the same for the purposes therein contained. IN WITNESS hereof I hereunto set my hand and official seal.

[Notary Seal]

Signature

Notary Public (Please Print)

My Commission expires _____

**HOME ADDRESSES AND SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS NOT SUBJECT TO
PUBLIC INSPECTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ESTATES AND TRUSTS ARTICLE § 2-214**

(FOR REGISTER'S USE ONLY)

REGISTRATION NO. _____

REGISTER OF WILLS DIRECTORY

Allegany County

Hon. Mary Beth Pirolozzi
59 Prospect Square, 1st Floor
Cumberland, MD 21502
301.724.3760

Anne Arundel County

Hon. Jasmine Jackson
2011 E. Commerce Park Drive
Annapolis, MD 21401
410.222.1430

Baltimore City

Hon. Belinda K. Conaway
Courthouse East, 111 N. Calvert St.
Baltimore, MD 21202
410.752.5131

Baltimore County

Hon. Alexis Burrell-Rohde
401 Bosley Avenue, Mail Stop 3507
Towson, MD 21204
410.887.6680

Calvert County

Hon. Margaret H. Phipps
175 Main Street
Prince Frederick, MD 20678
410.535.0121

Caroline County

Hon. Linda A. Dunn
109 Market Street, Room 119
Denton, MD 21629
410.479.0717

Carroll County

Hon. Paul G. Zimmermann
55 N. Court Street, Room 124
Westminster, MD 21157
410.848.2586

Cecil County

Hon. Allyn Nickle
129 E. Main Street, Room 102
Elkton, MD 21921
410.996.5330

Charles County

Hon. Loraine D. Hennessy
11 Washington Ave., P.O. Box 3080
La Plata, MD 20646
301.932.3345

Dorchester County

Hon. Teresa D. Wheatley
206 High Street, P.O. Box 263
Cambridge, MD 21613
410.228.4181

Frederick County

Hon. Mary Rolle
100 West Patrick Street
Frederick, MD 21701
301.600.6565

Garrett County

Hon. Rita L. Watson
313 East Alder Street, Room 103
Oakland, MD 21550
301.334.1999

Harford County

Hon. Derek Hopkins
18 Office Street, First Floor
Bel Air, MD 21014
410.638.3275

Howard County

Hon. Byron E. Macfarlane
9250 Judicial Way, Suite 1100
Ellicott City, MD 21043
410.313.2133

Kent County

Hon. Kristi Osborn
103 North Cross Street
Chestertown, MD 21620
410.778.7463

Montgomery County

Hon. Paul J. Dollahite
50 Maryland Ave., North Tower 3220
Rockville, MD 20850
240.777.9600

Prince George's County

Hon. Cereta A. Lee
14735 Main Street, Room D4001
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772
301.952.3250

Queen Anne's County

Hon. Laura Nan Cook
107 N. Liberty Street, P.O. Box 59
Centreville, MD 21617
410.758.0585

St. Mary's County

Hon. Phyllis A. Superior
41605 Courthouse Dr., P.O. Box 602
Leonardtown, MD 20650
301.475.5566

Somerset County

Hon. Keith B. Ward
30512 Prince William Street
Princess Anne, MD 21853
410.651.1696

Talbot County

Hon. Patricia E. Campen
11 N. Washington Street, Suite 14
Easton, MD 21601
410.770.6700

Washington County

Hon. Lacy M. Flook
100 W. Washington St., Suite 3400
Hagerstown, MD 21740
301.739.3612

Wicomico County

Hon. Karen A. Lemon
101 N. Division Street, Room 102
Salisbury, MD 21803
410.543.6635

Worcester County

Hon. Terri Westcott
One West Market St., Room 102
Snow Hill, MD 21863
410.632.1529