

Updated Feb 2019

I am based in George so this is how it works at George Home Affairs. It should be the same at all Home Affairs Offices but I can't confirm if this is the case

Please be aware of the referral system regarding setting up an interview at Home Affairs with an immigration officer. This is when a couple get married in South Africa where one is an SA Citizen and the other is a non SA Citizen. An interview needs to happen with an immigration officer prior to the wedding taking place

Couple to present relevant documentation to the marriage department at Home Affairs in person.

If the documentation is correct then a representative from the marriage department will accompany the couple to immigration where an officer will take the documentation from the couple

Couples are not able to set up interviews telephonically and marriage officers or family members are not able to make appointments or submit documents on behalf of couples

What happens next: Once the couple go to Home Affairs George Branch in person. The immigration officer will send a copy of the entry stamp in the passport of the non SA citizen to The Ops centre for verification. This process can take a few days. Once the immigration officer at the local Home Affairs has received confirmation from the Ops Centre that the entry stamp is valid and has reflected on the movement system, the couple will then be called and a date will be set for the interview. Immigration officers also have to verify that the no lawful impediment letter (if the country of origin issues a no lawful impediment letter) is valid

How long does this process take: normally 10 working days is enough time, but Home Affairs don't give an exact time of how long the couple need to be (in this case) in The Garden Route prior to getting married

What can go wrong: The entry stamp is not reflected on the movement system in which case this will cause delays as the immigration officer has to investigate this at port of entry and the ops centre which is in Pretoria. When it comes to government departments resolving an issue like this, it could take longer than 10 days and there is not an urgency to resolve this before your wedding which can and does cause undue stress which you don't need

Documents that are required by the couple to take to Home Affairs Marriage department at George Branch for a referral:

- Copy of the passport of the Non SA Citizen together with the copy of the page containing the entry stamp into SA
- Copy of the ID book or new ID card for the SA Citizen. If an ID card then copies of both sides please
- Where applicable – final decrees of divorce where the current marital status is divorced
- Same with death certificate where a person's marital status is widow or widower
- Letter of no lawful impediment for the non SA Citizen. If it is not in English then it will need to be officially translated – see note below
- Copies of two witnesses ID books if they are SA Citizens or passport and page containing entry stamp into SA if witnesses are non SA Citizens
- Affidavit or no lawful impediment oath where a country does not issue no lawful impediment letters
- Signed letter from marriage officer confirming he is officiating the wedding ceremony for the couple
- 3x colour ID photos of groom and bride (although this is not required for the referral for the interview) but needed by the marriage officer to complete marriage register for day of wedding

SA Citizens who do not have green SA ID Books or the new ID Card. Home Affairs requires the green ID book or the new ID card for SA Citizens getting married in SA. SA Passports are not accepted. If an SA Citizen does not have an ID book or card then they will one will need to be applied for prior to their wedding

No Lawful impediment letter For the non SA Citizen getting married in South Africa, our Home Affairs require an official no lawful impediment letter from your relevant government department in your country of origin confirming your marital status and that there is no lawful impediment to you getting married. If they do not issue no lawful impediment letters (like for British Citizens) then you need an official letter on a letterhead signed and stamped from them stating this and only then will Home Affairs in SA accept a notarized oath which I will email you. Please note that the no lawful impediment letter will not be accepted if it is dated older than three months from your wedding date

Please note that it is the groom or bride's (whoever is the SA Citizen) responsibility to make sure that your marital status on the Home Affairs system is correct. This is not an issue if you have not been married before but if you are divorced, please make sure you have a final decree of divorce issued from SA containing a case number and the court name. and stamp. Home Affairs only accept a final decree of divorce issued in SA

A note about dual citizenship. If a person has dual citizenship for example SA and UK citizenship then that person must enter SA on their SA passport. It is an offence to enter SA on a foreign passport

As a disclaimer, the above information is the latest information (Feb 2019) we have received from Home Affairs. They can and do change policy and procedures without communicating with marriage officers. If couples are getting married in December close to Christmas or Easter where there are a number of public holidays, there could be more delays and a longer lead time might be required in terms of setting up an interview with an immigration officer. As marriage officers, we are not involved in the interview process and cannot be held accountable for Home Affairs actions in this regard. If in doubt then it is advisable to call Home Affairs George Branch and verify the above information.

George Immigration department
+27 (0)44 805 4117
+27 (0)44 805 4123
Head of Immigration: Zoleka Nkewana

Other immigration officers: Goniwa and Maverick

Best time to visit and call: before 9am

Address: York Street George

It is stressful dealing with government departments generally but even more stressful a week or two before your wedding. Some couples are choosing to do the legal side of their wedding at the local registry office in the country where they live and then I would do the ceremony in South Africa.

Kind regards

Gavin Marriage
Officer Garden
Route