



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
JOINT BASE MYER – HENDERSON HALL
204 LEE AVENUE
FORT MYER, VIRGINIA 22211-1199

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF
IMND-MHH-CH

20 OCT 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Policy Memorandum CH-1,
Chapel Weddings

1. REFERENCE. Army Regulation 165-1, Chaplain Activities in the United States Army, Chapter 4-4g, 25 March 2004.
2. PURPOSE. To provide guidance to Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall (JBM-HH) for weddings conducted in the chapels on Fort Myer, Virginia.
3. APPLICABILITY. This policy applies to all eligible individuals who request chapel weddings within JBM-HH.
4. POLICY.
 - a. Persons authorized to use the chapel for weddings are:
 - (1) Active duty personnel and their legal children. The parent sponsor of a legal child must be on active duty at the time of the wedding.
 - (2) Retired military personnel and their legal dependents with a valid ID card. Two exceptions per month are authorized for retiree's children with no ID card. In this situation, the parents are sponsoring the wedding.
 - (3) Reserve component personnel on active duty.
 - b. Weddings will not be scheduled to accommodate reception plans made prior to scheduling one of the chapels.
 - c. When making a reservation, do not assume that a chaplain, priest, or pastor is provided by the JBM-HH Religious Support Office or Wedding Administrator. See paragraph 5.f for more information.
 - d. If the bride or groom (or both) is Catholic, the individual(s) must see a priest and fill out a Pre-Nuptial Investigation form prior to reserving the chapel for a Catholic wedding. Those authorized persons wishing to have a Catholic wedding on JBM-HH must adhere to the following:

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(1) If asking a priest friend or former pastor to perform the wedding, the requestor must contact the Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese for the Military Services (AMS) at 202-719-3603. He will approve all the paperwork (Pre-Nuptial Investigation Form, Request for Dispensation, etc.). Forms are available under "Resources" at www.milarch.org.

(2) The priest must also have his Ordinary send a letter that he is in good standing in his diocese.

(3) If everything is in order, the Judicial Vicar will send a "Visum" to the Catholic Pastor at JBM-HH who will then grant the delegation to the visiting priest to perform the wedding.

(4) The Catholic Pastor at JBM-HH will sign the Record of Marriage once the visiting priest has completed it and will send the record to the AMS.

(5) The visiting priest must inform the Churches of Baptism of the marriage.

c. Generally, weddings are in the Old Post Chapel; however, on rare occasions, the wedding couple may request to have their wedding at the Memorial Chapel. When a wedding is at the Memorial Chapel, the Wedding Administrator may not give out that time slot for another wedding to be conducted at the Old Post Chapel.

5. PROCEDURES.

a. Weddings are scheduled on a "first come, first serve" basis. Weddings are not scheduled on major religious days and observances including the Saturday before Easter, the Saturday after Thanksgiving and the last two Saturdays in December. The desired date and time will be confirmed when the JBM-HH wedding administrator receives the completed application.

b. Pre-marital counseling is strongly recommended for everyone seeking marriage in JBM-HH, and many clergy require pre-marital counseling prior to their officiating at a marriage ceremony. Couples need to understand their clergy's requirements and accomplish them prior to the wedding. Couples may choose from the below options for pre-marital counseling.

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(1) Counseling conducted by chaplains is available throughout the National Capital Region (NCR).

(2) Pre-marital counseling is acceptable from any chaplain or clergy who is in adherence with the couple's faith group.

c. Conducting a wedding at the Old Post Chapel.

(1) The Old Post Chapel is available for weddings on Saturdays at 1000, 1130, 1300 and 1430 hours for those faith traditions whose Sabbath is on Sunday. On Sundays after 1530 hours, the chapel is available for those faith traditions whose Sabbath is on Saturday.

(2) Rehearsals are conducted on Friday evenings, before the scheduled wedding, at 1700, 1800, 1900 and 2000 hours. The purpose of the rehearsal is to practice the sequence of the ceremony only; there is no music rehearsal. Rehearsal times are strictly enforced; if you are late, you will lose that portion of your rehearsal time.

(3) Weddings will begin and end on time. The combination of the wedding service and photo session will not exceed 55 minutes. The schedule does not permit exceptions.

(4) The bride may enter the bride's dressing room one hour prior to the wedding. Thirty minutes prior to the start of the wedding, you may set flowers and seat guests.

(5) Photographers and video recording are allowed but must not interrupt the sanctity of the religious service. Additional guidelines and requirements will be coordinated with the officiating clergyman prior to the service.

d. Rules for facility use and care.

(1) Pew decorations are not allowed.

(2) Aisle runners are not allowed.

(3) Candelabras are not allowed. Only provided altar candles are to be lit.

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(4) The Old Post Chapel seats 208 people maximum.

(5) The throwing of any items is prohibited inside the chapel and on chapel grounds. The wedding party is responsible for the behavior of their guests.

(6) Receiving lines and wedding receptions will not be held in the chapel facility.

(7) Except for use during communion, the use of alcohol in the chapel or on chapel grounds before and after the ceremony is strictly prohibited.

(8) Lounge furniture will not be rearranged.

(9) The chapel must be left in the same condition as it was found. No exceptions. The wedding party is responsible for the clean-up of the chapel, lounge and the bride's room. The wedding party must provide a set-up and clean-up team with names on their chapel application, to ensure cleanliness for other weddings and religious services within the chapel. If the chapel is left in unacceptable condition, the military sponsor will be contacted and appropriate action taken.

e. Music at the chapel wedding should reflect the sacredness of the wedding service. The music should follow your denominational guidelines and liturgical requirements. Only organists who are certified to use the JBM-HH Chapel organs can play them. There is no exception. Couples may contact the Wedding Administrator to check availability of contracted chapel organists or to discuss certification arrangements if they have their own organist in mind. It is the responsibility of the couple to provide the music for their wedding.

f. Clergy availability.

(1) Within the NCR, each branch of the Armed Forces provides wedding coverage for its own personnel. The unit chaplain will arrange to perform the ceremony. Only ordained clergy may perform chapel weddings.

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(2) Civilian clergy are welcome to perform the ceremony. However, they must be certified by the state of Virginia. Valid Virginia certification must be presented to the wedding administrator 30 days prior to the ceremony. It is not necessarily the responsibility of the clergy to choreograph the ceremony. Be sure to ask specific questions about the services provided, including the rehearsal information.

g. It is the responsibility of the JBM-HH wedding administrator to open and close the facilities, set up the altar, and ensure all chapel rules are followed.

h. Call the JBM-HH Chaplain's Office at 703-696-3532 no earlier than six weeks before your wedding, if you need help scheduling a saber arch team.

i. Security. A typed alphabetical list of wedding guests must be turned in to the Wedding Administrator one week prior to the wedding. This will ensure your guests have no difficulty entering JBM-HH.

j. Additional items available from the chapel: two candle holders with candles for the altar, kneelers, white silk flower arrangements for the altar and side shelves, a dressing room for the bride, six sabers, piano, and a tape system.

k. Items not available: dressing room for the groom and others, fresh flowers, photographer, babysitting service or nursery, and facilities or supplies for reception.

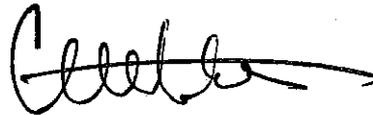
l. The chapel may be subject to closure on short notice for reasons of health, safety, unforeseen upgrades, maintenance or military necessity. If this occurs, you will be notified. You may request to have your wedding moved to the Memorial Chapel.

m. Due to fire codes, all aisles are to be clear of chairs, musical instruments and decorations. Candles may be used on the altar only.

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6. PROPONENT. Joint Base Myer-Henderson Hall Chaplain's Office is the proponent for this policy. POC is the chaplain at 703-696-3532 or fax 703-696-5996.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Coffman', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

CARL R. COFFMAN, JR.
Colonel, AV
Commanding

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