

SAMPLE LETTER OF SPONSORSHIP FOR A NON-WISCONSIN RESIDENT MARRIAGE OFFICIANT

765.17 Nonresident officiating person; sponsorship. Any member of the clergy, licentiate or appointee named in [s. 765.16](#) who is not a resident of this state may solemnize marriages in this state if he or she possesses at the time of the marriage a letter of sponsorship from a member of the clergy of the same religious denomination or society who has a church in this state under his or her ministry.

By state statute 765.17, a letter of sponsorship is required for a non-Wisconsin resident clergy who is performing a marriage ceremony in the state. That sponsorship letter should:

- be written on letterhead from some church or religious denomination located within the state (to show the church or religious denomination is an actual entity within the state).
- be addressed "to Whom it May Concern". It must be dated and contain the name and signature of the in-state sponsoring officiant.
- specify that the sponsor is him or herself an authorized marriage officiant in Wisconsin.
- specify that the sponsor knows of the out of state officiant.
- state that, to the best of the sponsor's knowledge and belief, the out of state officiant is authorized to perform marriages for a religious denomination in the officiant's place of residence.

The out of state officiant keeps the original letter. He or she should provide the couple with a copy. The letter may be used whenever that out of state officiant is asked to perform a marriage in this state, as long as that officiant's authority to perform marriages in his or her place of residence has not been revoked. The County Clerk may ask to see the letter or take a copy of it.

Sample letter:

Date

To Whom it May Concern:

I am currently a (religious title) authorized to perform marriages through (name of church or denomination) in the state of Wisconsin.

In accordance with Wisconsin State Statute 765.17, I have been asked to provide a letter of sponsorship for (name of out of state officiant) who resides at (mailing address of out of state officiant) in order for (him/her) to perform a marriage in this state. I know of this person, and to the best of my knowledge and belief, (name of out of state officiant) is authorized to perform marriages by the church or denomination that (he or she) represents and that (name of the out of state officiant) is legally able to perform marriages in (state or country of residence of the out of state officiant).

Name and Signature of Sponsor