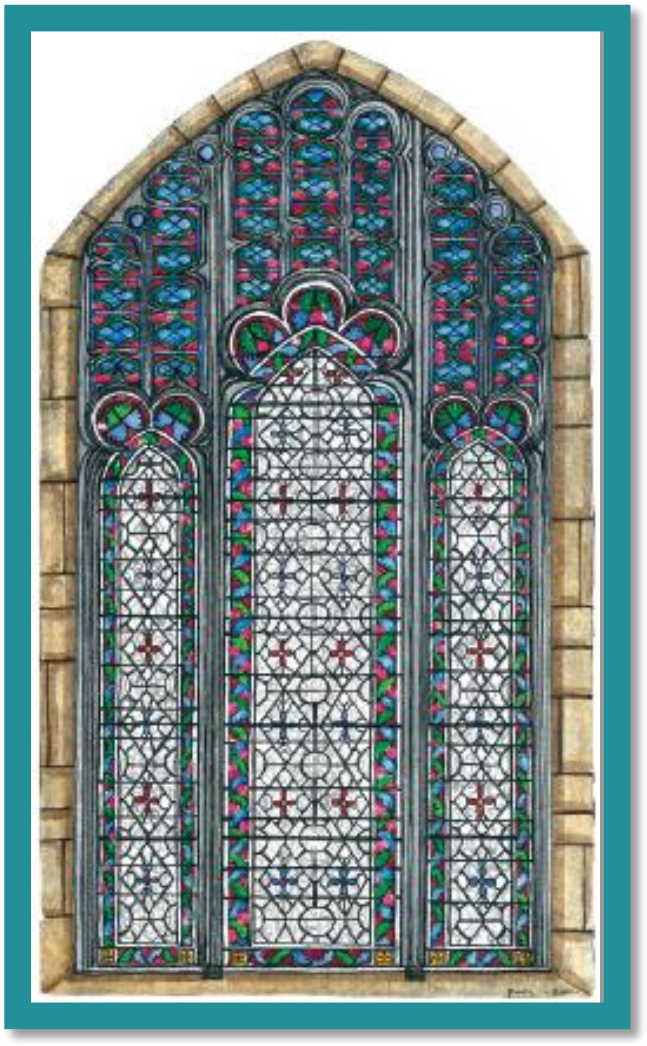
ST. CHARLES AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Wedding Policy & Guidelines



adopted by the Session of
St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church

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Introduction

Marriage is a gift God has given to all humankind for the well-being of the entire human family. Marriage involves a unique commitment between two people, traditionally a man and a woman, to love and support each other for the rest of their lives. The sacrificial love that unites the couple sustains them as faithful and responsible members of the church and the wider community. In civil law, marriage is a contract that recognizes the rights and obligations of the married couple in society. In the Reformed tradition, marriage is also a covenant in which God has an active part, and which the community of faith publicly witnesses and acknowledges.

-Book of Order, Presbyterian Church (USA), W-4.0601

For Christians, marriage is a covenant through which two people are called to live out together, before God, their lives of discipleship. The marriage service is an act of worship, inspiring both the participants and the congregation.

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church ("SCAPC" or "the Church") is pleased you are considering being married at our church. Although being a member is not a requirement to be married at SCAPC, we hope you will consider joining the SCAPC community.

How To Start

- Read the **Wedding Policy and Guidelines** carefully.
- Contact the Church to inquire about the availability of the church on the desired date.
- Complete and sign the Wedding Application.
- Mail wedding application, non-refundable deposit and refundable Good Faith Deposit (see page 13) to the church.

Preparatory Steps

1) Schedule Wedding Request

Contact the Director of Administration (see "**List of Contacts**" on page 16) to schedule your wedding at the Church. Church members should call as soon as they know the date of the wedding. Non-members should call no more than eight months before the date of the wedding.

Weddings are not held on the following occasions:
Palm Sunday weekend, Holy Week, the fourth Sunday of Advent weekend, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Day.

The Director of Administration will advise the couple of the fee schedule and direct them to the Church's website to get a copy of the wedding policies, guidelines and Wedding Application. The fees cover the cost of the Church's Pastor officiating the marriage service, the Director of Music/Organist, Wedding Coordinator and other building costs and utilities.

2) Wedding Application

To confirm the date of the wedding, the wedding application must be completed (***typed, not handwritten***) and returned to the church with the non-refundable deposit and refundable Good Faith Deposit to the attention of the Director of Administration.
Please mail application and fees to:

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church
1545 State Street
New Orleans, LA 70118
attn: Director of Administration

The wedding date will be secured only when the wedding application has been received with the required deposits.

Note: The Church receives many requests for marriage services. If there are two weddings on the same day, there must be at least three hours scheduled between them.

3) Pre-Marital Counseling

The purpose of pre-marital counseling is for the Pastor to meet with the couple and help them prepare for marriage. The officiating Pastor usually has three meetings with the couple. The couple needs to initiate counseling by contacting the Assistant to the Sr. Pastor to schedule these appointments.

4) Meet with the Wedding Coordinator

The Church's Wedding Coordinator will contact the couple to set up a meeting to review the policies and guidelines. The Wedding Coordinator will assist the SCAPC Pastor in directing the rehearsal and the marriage service. SCAPC's Wedding Coordinator are responsible to the Pastors for ensuring that the church's policies and guidelines for the service, decorations, photography and videography are followed. SCAPC's Wedding Coordinator is happy to work with the couple's contracted wedding planner/consultant, however, that person is required to abide by SCAPC's wedding policies and guidelines and

must defer to the decisions and interpretation of policies of the SCAPC Wedding Coordinator.

5) Meet with the Director of Music/Organist

The Director of Music/Organist (see "**List of Contacts**" on page 16) plays for all weddings. His fee is included in the wedding fee. The couple should make an appointment with the Director of Music/Organist, who will help the couple select the music for the marriage service. Please see page 8 for more details.

Check List Prior to Wedding

☐ 8 - 12 months	① Read all policies and guidelines thoroughly.
☐ 8 - 12 months	Secure date of marriage service: ① Complete wedding application, mail to church with non-refundable deposit and refundable Good Faith Deposit to schedule your wedding; ② Once the request has been approved, the wedding and rehearsal dates will be confirmed.
☐ 6 - 8 months	① Contact Pastor to set up pre-marital counseling sessions (as determined by the Pastor); ② The Wedding Coordinator will contact couple to set up a meeting to discuss the church's policies and the details of marriage service. ③ Give your florist the Florist Guidelines to review, sign and return to the Director of Administration. ④ Give your photographer(s) and videographer(s) the Photographer and Videographer Guidelines to review, sign and return to the Director of Administration. The Church reserves the right to approve or disapprove the photographer and/or videographer.
☐ 3 months	① Contact Director of Music/Organist to make final music selections. ② Outstanding balance is due.
☐ 2 months	Confirm final details with Wedding Coordinator.
☐ 3 – 4 weeks	Confirm wedding program with Pastor.
☐ 2 weeks	① Confirm arrival times with Wedding Coordinator and finalize marriage service details. ② Notify the Wedding Coordinator if donating flowers decorating the sanctuary to the church.

OTHER POLICIES

ORDER OF WORSHIP
The marriage service is a service of worship; therefore, it will follow the order from the Presbyterian Book of Common Worship. The Pastor will provide the couple with a copy of the service during their initial meeting.

GUEST PASTORS
A Pastor from the staff of SCAPC conducts all marriage services at the church. If a couple requests a guest pastor/priest, the SCAPC Pastor must approve the guest pastor/priest before they are invited. As a matter of protocol, the SCAPC Pastor will formally invite the guest clergy to assist in the marriage service.

RECEPTIONS
The church facilities are not available for wedding receptions.

REHEARSAL
Rehearsals are scheduled the day before the marriage service. The purpose of the rehearsal is to familiarize the wedding party of the many details of the marriage service, including specific training of ushers, and, therefore, the entire wedding party, including all parents, must attend. **The couple is required to bring their wedding license to the church the day of the rehearsal. The minister cannot perform the wedding without a valid marriage license**.

1) **Duration**
   The rehearsal will take approximately one hour in the sanctuary or a half hour in the chapel usually the day before the wedding.

2) **Start Time**
   Rehearsals start promptly at the agreed-upon time. It is the responsibility of the couple to have the entire Wedding Party be present and on time. The church will be opened 15 minutes prior to the scheduled rehearsal time. **Those required to attend the rehearsal include the wedding party, all parents, readers, ushers, flower girl/ring bearer and anyone taking part in the processional and/or recessional**.

3) **Children in the Wedding**
   It has been our experience that children under the age of 5 are often ill at ease at weddings. Children participating in the processional will walk down the aisle to their parents and sit with their parents during the marriage service.

4) **Dressing Rooms**
   SCAPC does not have designated rooms for the wedding party to dress. The couple and their attendants should arrive at the church dressed for the marriage service.

5) **Marriage License**
   The couple must bring both marriage licenses to the rehearsal and given to the SCAPC Wedding Coordinator. The couple and two witnesses will sign the licenses at the rehearsal and the pastor will sign the license after the marriage service. A marriage license must be obtained within thirty (30) days of the wedding because the license expires and becomes invalid at midnight thirty (30) days after the date of issuance. A marriage license may be obtained from 1450 Poydras Street, Benson Tower, Suite 407 in downtown New Orleans. The website is https://ldh.la.gov/page/644.

6) Marriage Service Programs

The church does not print marriage service programs. If programs are to be used for the marriage service, bring programs to the rehearsal.

MUSIC

The marriage service is considered a service of worship. The music for the marriage service will be appropriate for a service of worship and will serve to strengthen and deepen the meaning of the marriage service.

1) Director of Music/Organist

The Director of Music/Organist will play for all weddings at the church. Should he be unavailable for a particular wedding date, the Director of Music/Organist will designate a substitute organist* to provide the music for the service. The Director of Music/Organist will assist the couple to select their music for use during the prelude, procession, and marriage service.

2) Soloists & Instrumentalists *

The Director of Music/Organist will assist the couple with additional vocalists and/or instrumentalists, if desired.

** Use of non-professional singers/instrumentalists is prohibited. Exceptions will be made only at the discretion of the Director of Music/Organist through prior arrangement. The use of microphones to amplify singers is not allowed.*

3) Fees for Musicians

All fees for additional singers/instrumentalists are to be discussed with the Director of Music/Organist. These fees are paid directly to the individuals by the family. Fees for additional singers/instrumentalists should be brought to the rehearsal.

4) Traditional Worship/Traditional Music

A marriage service is considered a service of worship and worship services at SCAPC are traditional in nature. All music used during the marriage service should be traditional and reverent, at least to the same degree and in the same sense as the music that is used in any worship service in this church. Music chosen for use in the context of a marriage service must meet these requirements and must be approved by the Director of Music/Organist. "Contemporary Christian", pop or other contemporary music that the Director of Music/Organist deems inappropriate will not be used. Popular favorites or songs of a sentimental character or secular connotation are not appropriate for the marriage service and are more properly reserved for the wedding reception. Pre-recorded music is not allowed.

5) Prelude Music

Music prior to the marriage service may be up to thirty minutes in length and may include selections for solo organ and, if applicable, vocal and other instrumental music. The organ music used during this time will be chosen from the Director of Music/Organist's repertoire. Specific appropriate selections may be requested but are subject to approval. The use of popular music or "show tunes" is not permitted. The Director of Music/Organist will make suggestions for appropriate vocal and/or instrumental music.

Listed below are suggestions of the type of music that might be used for the Prelude:
"My Heart Ever Faithful" - Bach
"Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring" - Bach
"Jesus, Shepherd, Be Thou Near Me" - Bach

"O Love That Casts Out Fear" - Bach
"O Perfect Love" - Barnby
"Eternal Source of Light Divine" - Händel
"The Gift of Love" - Hopson
"Biblical Songs" - Dvorak
"Five Mystical Songs" - Vaughan Williams (baritone only)
"Alleluia" from Exsultate, Jubilate - Mozart

Note: The use of musical settings of "The Lord's Prayer" is discouraged since it is included in the order of worship as a congregational prayer. Since weddings performed at this church reflect Reformed Presbyterian traditions, the use of any setting of "Ave Maria" as any part of the service is not allowed.

6) Processions

Dignified, joyous music may be used to accompany wedding processions. The "Bridal Chorus" from Wagner's Lohengrin and "The Wedding March" from Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream are pieces rooted in secular tradition and are not permitted.

The following is a partial listing of pieces that are suitable:
"Rigaudon" - Campra
"Crown Imperial" - Walton
"Allegro Maestoso" from Water Music - Händel
"Prelude" from Te Deum - Charpentier
"Three Trumpet Tunes" - Johnson
"Trumpet Voluntary" - Clarke*
"Trumpet Voluntary" - Stanley*
"Trumpet Tune" - Purcell*
"Psalm XIX" - Marcello
"A Mighty Fortress" - Walcha
"Rondeau" - Mouret*
"Toccata" from Symphony V - Widor
"Final" from Symphony III - Vierne
"Rondo" - Bull
"This Day Full of Gladness" - Dupré
**solo trumpet may be used*

7) Congregational Hymns

As in any service of worship, the singing of hymns is appropriate and provides an excellent means of congregational participation. Hymns may be used as processionals, as hymns of praise, or following particularly significant events in the marriage service.

Following is a list of suggested titles:
"All Creatures of Our God and King"
"Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee"
"Love Divine, All Loves Excelling"
"Sing Praise to God, Who Reigns Above"
"Come, Christians, Join to Sing"
"Be Thou My Vision"
"O Perfect Love"
"The Grace of Life is Theirs"

FLOWERS, DECORATIONS, AND CANDLES

The architecture, furnishings, and appointments of the Sanctuary and Chapel form a beautiful setting of reverence and quiet elegance. The couple should work with their florist to accommodate SCAPC's guidelines for decorations and flowers.

The pulpit, communion table, baptismal font, and pulpit Bible are not to be removed, altered, or concealed by decorations.

The use of nails, tacks, pins, staples, screws, wire, glue and tape is strictly prohibited.

1) Guidelines for Wedding Florist

It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure the florist receives a copy of the Guidelines for Wedding Florist.

2) Church Hours

The church is open Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. for floral delivery and installation. Saturday flower delivery must be arranged through the SCAPC Wedding Coordinator.

3) Flower Urns

In the Sanctuary, flowers may be placed in SCAPC's flower urns that are on pedestals on either side of the Chancel. The urns are 13" deep, 11" wide at top rim and 8" wide inside antique urns.

4) Christmas Decorations

Christmas decorations and flowers will remain in the Church once in place during the Christmas season. These are to be used if a wedding is scheduled during Christmas.

5) Multiple Weddings

If there are two or more weddings in the Church on the same day, we suggest that the flowers be shared.

6) Aisle Candles

Candles may be used in the chancel loft (except under the horizontal trumpets). All candles must be of the no-drip variety. The church does not provide candles. SCAPC recommends at least 12" no-drip tapers, with a 3/4" - 1" base. Metal candles with spring-loaded wax inserts are not permitted.

7) Aisle Runners

Aisle runners are not permitted.

8) Communion Table

a) The communion table may not be removed from the chancel area.
b) No flower arrangements may be placed on the table.

9) Flowers and Decorations

All flowers, decorations, etc. must be removed immediately from the church after the marriage service. The couple may donate their flower arrangements to SCAPC's Flower Ministry.

10) Rice/Birdseeds

No rice, birdseeds, confetti, flower petals, potpourri, or anything else may be thrown either inside or outside the building.

11) Other

Candles or other candelabras must be obtained from a florist or other vendor. All candelabras used must be of heavy construction and must be sturdy enough to resist tipping over.

PHOTOGRAPHY/VIDEOGRAPHY

All photographers/videographers must be approved by the pastor before the marriage service. Photographers and videographers must remain in the balcony and are not allowed to move around the sanctuary during the service.

1) Guidelines for the Wedding Photographer & Videographer

It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure the photographer and videographer receives a copy of the Guidelines for the Wedding Photographer & Videographer.

2) During the Service

Photographers and videographers are not allowed to move around the Sanctuary/Chapel during the service. Photographers and videographers can photograph the service from the balcony of the Sanctuary.

3) After the Service

The wedding party may take pictures in the Sanctuary/Chapel up to 30 minutes after the marriage service. The post service picture taking must be completed as of one (1) hour after the published start time of the marriage service.

4) Photos/Video in the Sanctuary

Photographers and videographers are to follow the directives of the SCAPC Wedding Coordinator at all times, including where they may stand or move. The photographer and videographer should avoid being conspicuous and distracting. Non-flash pictures may be taken from the balcony during the service.

5) Flash Equipment

The use of flash equipment is not allowed in any area of the sanctuary, choir loft, or balcony during the marriage service. Flash equipment may be allowed only in the narthex (entry) prior to the processional and after the recessional. **Wedding guests are not permitted to take pictures during the marriage service**.

6) Video Equipment & Filming of the Marriage Service

The use of video equipment and filming of the marriage service will not be allowed if the Pastor has not approved its use **prior** to the wedding date. Video equipment must remain stationary and unmanned during the marriage service in the balcony of the sanctuary or behind the choir loft in the chancel area, without artificial lighting equipment.

7) Use of Photographic / Video Images

Use of photographic and video images for commercial purposes whether by news organizations or otherwise will require written approval by the Pastor.

8) Video Personnel

Video personnel should dress formally in attire appropriate for a service of worship.

OTHER INFORMATION

Payment
Payment in full is due three months prior to the marriage service.

The **refundable Good Faith Deposit** will be refunded provided the wedding party, guests and vendors show reasonable care and consideration for our facilities and staff.

The Sanctuary & Chapel
The Sanctuary will hold 480 people and the Chapel will hold 110. The couple has the church for 1 hour and 30 minutes starting 30 minutes before the marriage service. 7:00 pm. is the last time period for a marriage service to begin.

Wedding Party
The Bloomfield room and Phifer Library are reserved for the use of the wedding party for 30 minutes prior to the marriage service. The wedding party has use of the Sanctuary/Chapel for one (1) hour from the service published start time. The marriage service is approximately 30 minutes. The wedding party may take pictures in the Sanctuary/Chapel for up to 30 minutes after the service. If more time is needed, it must be scheduled in advance with the Wedding Coordinator with an additional $300 charge. Additional time must not exceed 30 minutes.

Personal Items
SCAPC will not be held responsible for items if lost, damaged or stolen.

Food, Beverages and Smoking
Food and beverages are not allowed in the sanctuary or the chapel.
Alcohol is not allowed on the premises at any time.
Smoking is not allowed in the building.
It is the responsibility of the couple to ensure your guests and vendors comply with this policy.

Receptions
Church facilities are not available for wedding receptions.

Procession Following Marriage Service
The throwing of rice, confetti, flower petals, birdseed, etc. is not permitted in any area of the church or its property.

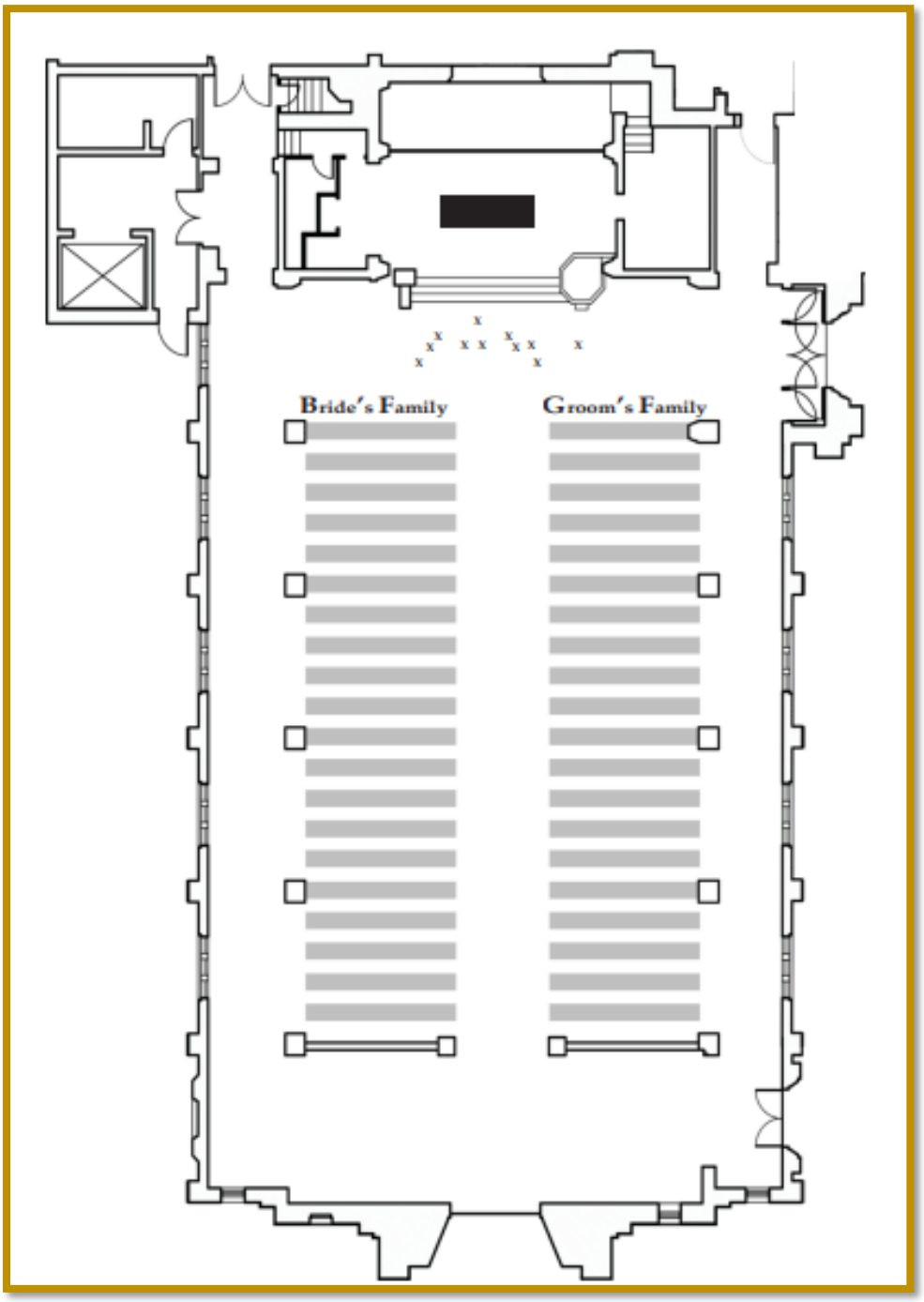
Guest Books / Registers
Guest books / registers should not be used at the church. They inhibit the seating of guests and are more appropriate at the reception.

Outside Vendors
All outside vendors (i.e., florists, photographers, videographers) will be held responsible for any damages incurred to the church property. If a company has not previously provided services at SCAPC, a representative must contact the Wedding Coordinator for the Pastor's approval.

Childcare
Childcare is not provided during the marriage service and no facility space will be available for children.

We hope that we have anticipated some of the questions you will have concerning plans for your wedding. Please contact your Wedding Coordinator whenever questions occur or for clarification of policies.

DIAGRAM OF THE SANCTUARY



ST. CHARLES AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1545 State Street, New Orleans, LA 70118
(504) 897-0101
www.scapc.org

LIST OF CONTACTS

Senior Pastor
Rev. Dr. Chris Currie
Office: 504-897-0101 ext. 212

Assistant to the Sr. Pastor
Caitlin Wallace-Rowland
Office: 504-897-0101 ext. 212
caitlin@scapc.org

Wedding Coordinator
Lynn Hoffman
Office: 504-897-0101 ext. 215
lynn@scapc.org

Director of Music/Organist
Steven Blackmon
Office: 504-897-0101 ext. 225
steven@scapc.org

Director of Administration
Lynn Hoffman
Office: 504-897-0101 ext. 215
lynn@scapc.org

Marriage License
The Orleans Parish Marriage License Office
Benson Tower
1450 Poydras Street, Suite 407
New Orleans, LA 70112
https://ldh.la.gov/page/644

Office Hours
Monday through Friday: 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.