

1 **MARRIAGE PREPARATION EDUCATION**

2 2006 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Rosalind J. McGee**

5 Senate Sponsor: Allen M. Christensen

6

7 **LONG TITLE**

8 **General Description:**

9 This bill modifies the marriage counseling and education provisions by requiring a
10 reduction in marriage license fees for couples who voluntarily undergo marriage
11 education that meet specific criteria.

12 **Highlighted Provisions:**

13 This bill:

- 14 ▶ provides a mechanism for couples who undergo premarital education to receive a
15 reduction of the marriage license fee;
- 16 ▶ requires eight hours of premarital education;
- 17 ▶ frames the requirements for premarital education; and
- 18 ▶ limits who can conduct the premarital education to licensed or ordained ministers,
19 or their designees, persons who can solemnize marriages, marriage and family
20 therapists, social workers, or psychologists.

21 **Monies Appropriated in this Bill:**

22 None

23 **Other Special Clauses:**

24 None

25 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

26 **AMENDS:**

27 **17-16-21**, as last amended by Chapter 9 and renumbered and amended by Chapter 46,



28 Laws of Utah 2001

29 **30-1-30**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

30 **30-1-34**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

31 **30-1-36**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

32 **30-1-37**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

33 **30-1-39**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

34 REPEALS:

35 **30-1-31**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

36 **30-1-32**, as last amended by Chapter 227, Laws of Utah 1993

37 **30-1-33**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

38 **30-1-35**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971

39 **30-1-38**, as enacted by Chapter 64, Laws of Utah 1971



41 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

42 Section 1. Section **17-16-21** is amended to read:

43 **17-16-21. Fees of county officers.**

44 (1) As used in this section, "county officer" means all of the county officers
45 enumerated in Section 17-53-101 except county recorders, county constables, and county
46 sheriffs.

47 (2) (a) Each county officer shall collect, in advance, for exclusive county use and
48 benefit:

- 49 (i) all fees established by the county legislative body under Section 17-53-211; and
- 50 (ii) any other fees authorized or required by law.

51 (b) (i) As long as the displaced homemaker program is authorized by Section
52 35A-3-114, the county clerk shall:

53 ~~[(i)]~~ (A) assess \$20 in addition to whatever fee for a marriage license is established
54 under authority of this section; and

55 ~~[(ii)]~~ (B) transmit \$20 from each marriage license fee to the Division of Finance to be
56 credited to the displaced homemaker program.

57 (ii) The fee authorized by this Subsection (2)(b) shall be waived if the requirements of
58 Section 30-1-34 are met. If the fee is waived, the county is not required to transmit \$20 of the

59 marriage license fee to the Division of Finance.

60 (c) As long as the Children's Legal Defense Account is authorized by Section 63-63a-8,
61 the county clerk shall:

62 (i) assess \$10 in addition to whatever fee for a marriage license is established under
63 authority of this section and in addition to the \$20 assessed for the displaced homemaker
64 program; and

65 (ii) transmit \$10 from each marriage license fee to the Division of Finance for deposit
66 in the Children's Legal Defense Account.

67 (3) This section does not apply to any fees currently being assessed by the state but
68 collected by county officers.

69 Section 2. Section **30-1-30** is amended to read:

70 **30-1-30. Premarital education -- State policy.**

71 It is the policy of the state [~~of Utah~~] to enhance the possibility of couples to achieve
72 more stable, satisfying, and enduring marital and family relationships by providing
73 opportunities for and encouraging the use of premarital [~~counseling~~] education prior to
74 securing a marriage license [~~by persons under 19 years of age and by persons who have been~~
75 ~~previously divorced~~].

76 Section 3. Section **30-1-34** is amended to read:

77 **30-1-34. Certificate of completion of education -- Reduction of license fee.**

78 (1) The county clerk of any county [~~which has adopted this act shall issue~~] who issues
79 a marriage license to those applicants who [~~come within the premarital counseling~~
80 ~~requirements of this act when the applicants~~] present a certificate [~~from the premarital~~
81 ~~counseling board that the counseling has been completed or has been found to be adequate if~~
82 ~~the license application otherwise conforms to the requirements for issuance of a marriage~~
83 ~~license. For those applicants who would otherwise need approval of the district court in order~~
84 ~~to marry, the certificate shall take the place of court consent if the parents, guardian or~~
85 ~~custodial parent of the applicant have given their consent to the marriage.] of completion in
86 accordance with Subsection (2) shall reduce the fee for the license by the amount assessed
87 under Subsection 17-16-21(2)(b).~~

88 (2) In order to qualify for the reduced fee in Subsection (1), the parties shall submit a
89 signed and dated statement from the person who provided the premarital education confirming

90 that eight hours of premarital education were received.

91 (a) The premarital education shall be provided by:

92 (i) (A) a licensed or ordained minister; or

93 (B) the minister's designee, who shall be a person trained by the minister or

94 denomination to conduct premarital education;

95 (ii) a person authorized to solemnize marriages under Subsection 30-1-6(1)(a) or (b);

96 or

97 (iii) a person who practices marriage and family therapy and is licensed under Title 58,

98 Chapter 60, Part 2, Social Worker Licensing Act; Part 3, Marriage and Family Therapist

99 Licensing Act; Part 4, Professional Counselor Licensing Act; or Title 58, Chapter 61,

100 Psychologist Licensing Act.

101 (b) The education shall include, as a minimum, the following topics:

102 (i) commitment;

103 (ii) communication;

104 (iii) financial management skills; and

105 (iv) conflict management skills, including an understanding of what constitutes

106 domestic abuse.

107 (c) The duration of the premarital education shall be no fewer than eight hours.

108 (3) The statement from the person who provided the premarital education under

109 Subsection (2) shall be in the following form:

110 "I, (name of provider), confirm that (names of both parties) received at least eight hours

111 of premarital education that included the following topics: commitment, communication,

112 financial management, and conflict management skills including an understanding of what

113 constitutes domestic abuse. I am a licensed or ordained minister or the minister's designee, a

114 person authorized to solemnize marriages under Section 30-1-6, or a person who practices

115 marriage and family therapy and is licensed under Title 58, Chapter 60, Part 2, Social Worker

116 Licensing Act; Part 3, Marriage and Family Therapist Licensing Act; or Title 58, Chapter 61,

117 Psychologist Licensing Act."

118 (4) The names of the parties in the provider's statement must be identical to the legal

119 names of the parties as they appear on the marriage license application. The provider's

120 statement shall be filed with the license.

121 Section 4. Section **30-1-36** is amended to read:

122 **30-1-36. Activities included in premarital education.**

123 Premarital ~~[counseling]~~ education as used in this ~~[act]~~ chapter shall include but not be
124 limited to lectures, group counseling, and individual counseling ~~[and testing]~~.

125 Section 5. Section **30-1-37** is amended to read:

126 **30-1-37. Confidentiality of information obtained under counseling provisions.**

127 Except for the information required or to be required on the marriage license
128 application form, any information given by a marriage license applicant in compliance with this
129 ~~[act]~~ chapter shall be confidential information and shall not be released by any person, board,
130 commission, or other entity. ~~[However, the premarital counseling board or board of~~
131 ~~commissioners]~~ The county clerk may use the information, without identification of
132 individuals, to compile and release statistical data.

133 Section 6. Section **30-1-39** is amended to read:

134 **30-1-39. False representation of compliance -- Infraction.**

135 Any person ~~[coming within the provisions of this act]~~ applying for a marriage license
136 who falsely represents that he or she has complied with the requirements of ~~[a master plan for~~
137 ~~premarital counseling or who,]~~ Section 30-1-34 for the purpose of ~~[evading the provisions of~~
138 ~~this act, applies for a marriage license in a county within the state of Utah which does not~~
139 ~~require premarital counseling,]~~ receiving the benefit of Subsection 30-1-34(1) is guilty of ~~[a~~
140 ~~misdemeanor]~~ an infraction.

141 Section 7. **Repealer.**

142 This bill repeals:

143 Section **30-1-31, Premarital counseling board in county -- Appointment, terms,**
144 **compensation, offices -- Common counseling board with adjacent county.**

145 Section **30-1-32, Master plan for counseling.**

146 Section **30-1-33, Conformity to master plan for counseling as prerequisite to**
147 **marriage license -- Exceptions.**

148 Section **30-1-35, Persons performing counseling services designated by board --**
149 **Exemption from license requirements.**

150 Section **30-1-38, Fee for counseling.**

Legislative Review Note
as of 10-3-05 10:36 AM

Based on a limited legal review, this legislation has not been determined to have a high probability of being held unconstitutional.

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

Interim Committee Note
as of 12-21-05 6:46 AM

The Judiciary Interim Committee recommended this bill.

State Impact

Each marriage license includes an additional \$20 fee that is collected by the counties for Workforce Services Displaced Homemakers Program. Under the provision of this bill, a couple could have this fee waived if they elect to undergo marriage education. Since the provisions of the bill do not mandate participation in the program, a quantifiable estimate of fiscal impact is difficult. However, for every 10 percent of couples taking advantage of this program, Workforce Services will lose approximately \$50,000 in Dedicated Credit Revenues. Based on experiences in other states, the Analyst estimates a 10% revenue reduction.

| | <u>FY 2007</u> <u>Approp.</u> | <u>FY 2008</u> <u>Approp.</u> | <u>FY 2007</u> <u>Revenue</u> | <u>FY 2008</u> <u>Revenue</u> |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Dedicated Credits | \$0 | \$0 | (\$50,000) | (\$50,000) |
| TOTAL | \$0 | \$0 | (\$50,000) | (\$50,000) |

Individual and Business Impact

Eligible individuals would pay a reduced fee for a marriage license.
