



Iowa County
Recorders Association

Local Government Mandates Study Committee

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Underfunded & Unfunded Mandates In The County Recorders' Offices

Underfunded Mandates

- **Iowa Department of Natural Resources**
 - Vehicle Licensing & Renewals
 - Groundwater Hazard Statements

- **Iowa Department of Revenue**
 - DOV Forms

- **Iowa Department of Public Health**
 - Vital Records (Birth, Marriage, Death)

Unfunded Mandates

- Marriage Application Processing

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Marriage Application History

- **July 1, 1997**
 - Marriage Application Process switches from the Clerk of District Court's office to the Office of the County Recorder
- **Marriage license processing fee was \$30**
 - All of which was remitted to the State of Iowa
- **County Recorder's take on more responsibility**
 - Code of Iowa required County Recorder's to process marriage license requests for no additional fee to the user.
- **Process subsidized by County Taxpayers**
 - County Property Taxpayers across the State of Iowa started to subsidize a user-based service.



Marriage Application Fees Evolves

- **2005**
 - IDPH raises certified copy fees to \$15 by Administrative Code
- **County Recorder Retains \$4 of certified copy charge**
 - The County Recorder retained \$4 of the cost of a certified copy to cover costs associated with processing.
- **Marriage Applications Fees change to \$35**
 - Cost includes a certified copy of the marriage certificate
- **State retains all processing fee**
 - Of the \$35 charged to the customer, \$31 is remitted to the State of Iowa. The County Recorder retains \$4 for the processing of the certified copy after the marriage certificate has been filed.



Marriage Application Fee Breakdown

- **Marriage Application Fee Prior to January 1, 2014**
 - \$20.00 – State General Fund
 - \$8.00 – State Registrar/Vital Records
 - \$3.00 – State General Fund
 - \$4.00 – County Recorder (fee for certified copy)
- \$35.00 – Total

- **Marriage Application Fee beginning January 1, 2014**
 - \$15.00 – State General Fund
 - \$13.00 – State Registrar/Vital Records
 - \$3.00 – State General Fund
 - \$4.00 – County Recorder (fee for certified copy)
- \$35.00 – Total



Keep In Mind...

- *That the application for a license to marry and the fee for such was originally a Clerk of District Court function, which is a state-funded office whose monies went into the state general fund. On July 1, 1997, vital records duties previously performed by the Clerks of District Court were transferred to the County Recorder's office, a county-funded office. The monies generated from processing the License to Marry, however, were never duly transferred to the County Recorder's office.*



Marriage Application Process

Application Process		
Task	Materials	per unit cost
print marriage application	archival paper (\$82.64 /ream)	\$0.18
	printing cost	\$0.04
process application w/ applicants	staff time - 15 minutes (\$15/hour)	\$3.75
process certificate address update form	printed form - cost	\$0.04
prepare marriage license/certificate	staff time - 10 minutes (\$15/hour)	\$2.50
store for 3 day wait		na
review w/ applicant	staff time - 3 minutes (\$15/hour)	\$0.75
send applicant w/ packet	#10 return envelope	\$0.04
	license - printing cost	\$0.04
	certificate	\$0.04
	9x12 envelope to keep all material	\$0.13

After ceremony		
Task	Materials	per unit cost
certificate return - proof for legality	staff time - 2 minutes (\$15/hour)	\$0.50
book & page document, index, put in book	staff time - 4 minutes (\$15/hour)	\$1.00

storage shelves/cabinets for record books		
storage book for records	(\$150 per book - holds 200)	\$0.75

Total Cost Per Marriage	\$9.76
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How These Costs Affect A County

Floyd County, IA

- **Marriage Applications processed from 2008 through 2013**
 - 1,512 marriage applications
 - Approximately 856 hours of work
 - Average wage of deputies over 5 year period in Floyd County per hour
 - \$20.30
 - Total cost (wages only) to the county for processing without compensation (34 minutes)
 - **-\$17,376**
- **County Recorder's have been processing marriage applications for no additional fee for 15 years. That cost (wages only) over the entire state is at a conservative**

-\$2,262,000.



How do we compare

- **Minnesota**

- Marriage application fee \$115 without pre-marital classes
 - \$40 with pre-marital classes
 - State share - \$75/\$15
 - County share - \$25
 - Certified Copy – 1 included/\$9 for additional

- **Missouri**

- Marriage application fee \$46
 - State share - \$17
 - County share - \$29
 - Certified Copy – \$9
(not included in application cost)



Thank you

for your time and consideration of these
important issues that affect Counties.

Questions?

