

LEGAL AND JUDICIAL

Inter-Caste Marriage Registration in Nepal

27 August 2026

Learn about inter-caste marriage registration in Nepal, including legal requirements, documents, court process, costs, fees, and applicable marriage laws.

Inter-caste marriage registration in Nepal is legally available to couples who belong to different castes. Nepalese marriage law does not require spouses to belong to the same caste. The Constitution of Nepal protects equality before law and prohibits discrimination on grounds including caste, while Article 24 specifically protects individuals against caste-based untouchability and discrimination.

The [National Civil Code, 2074](#) provides the principal legal framework for marriage and marriage registration. Section 69 recognizes freedom of marriage, while Section 70 establishes the conditions under which a man and woman may conclude a marriage. These conditions concern matters such as consent, age, existing matrimonial relationships and prohibited relationships rather than requiring the parties to belong to the same caste.

Nepal also has specific legislation against caste-based discrimination. The **Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2068** prohibits preventing a person of marriageable age from entering an inter-caste marriage because of caste, descent, community or related grounds. [Adalat Lawyers in Nepal](#).

1. What Is Inter-Caste Marriage Registration in Nepal?

Inter-caste marriage registration means legally recording a marriage between two people belonging to different caste groups. The law does not create a separate civil registration procedure solely because the couple belongs to different castes. Instead, the couple must satisfy the general requirements applicable to marriage under the National Civil Code, 2074.

Section 69 recognizes freedom of marriage, and Section 70 specifies when a marriage may be concluded. The statutory requirements do not state that both parties must belong to the same caste.

The Constitution provides additional protection. Article 18 guarantees equality before law and prohibits discrimination in the application of general laws on grounds including caste. Article 24 prohibits caste-based untouchability and

discrimination and provides a right to compensation where the constitutional protection is violated.

Therefore, [inter-caste marriage in Nepal](#) is treated as a lawful marriage when the parties satisfy the applicable legal requirements.

2. What Laws Govern Inter-Caste Marriage Registration?

The main law governing marriage registration is the **National Civil Code, 2074**. Chapter 1 of Part 3 contains the principal marriage provisions, including Sections 67 through 84. Section 69 addresses freedom of marriage, Section 70 addresses conditions for marriage, Sections 76 to 80 address registration and marriage by registration, and Section 84 concerns limitation.

The [Constitution of Nepal, 2072](#) also protects inter-caste couples. Article 18 prohibits discrimination based on caste, while Article 24 prohibits caste-based untouchability and discrimination. These constitutional protections apply alongside the civil marriage provisions.

The **Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2068** is particularly relevant where a person attempts to prevent an otherwise eligible person from entering an inter-caste marriage because of caste or related grounds. The Act expressly addresses interference with inter-caste marriage.

Procedural matters are also supported by the applicable civil procedure rules and prescribed marriage-registration forms.

3. Where Can Inter-Caste Couples Register Their Marriage?

An inter-caste couple in Nepal can use the legally applicable marriage-registration route without selecting an authority based on caste. Where the couple chooses [marriage by registration](#), Section 77 of the National Civil Code provides for an application to the concerned District Court when the applicants are in Nepal.

The residence requirement must also be considered. Under Section 77, either the man or woman, or both, must have resided in the concerned district for at least 15 days before filing the application for marriage by registration.

The couple should distinguish between marriage registration after an already completed marriage and marriage by registration before the District Court. These are related but distinct statutory procedures.

Caste does not determine which District Court has jurisdiction. The applicable jurisdiction depends on the statutory registration route and residence requirements. The couple should therefore confirm the correct authority before submitting documents, particularly where one party is a foreign national or has recently moved districts.

4. What Legal Requirements Apply to Inter-Caste Marriage?

Inter-caste couples must satisfy the same general legal conditions for marriage that apply to other couples. Section 70 of the National Civil Code provides that both parties must have reached the legal marriage age and satisfy the other statutory conditions. The law does not make same-caste status a condition of marriage.

The principal requirements include:

- Both parties must have completed 20 years of age.
- Both parties must give the required consent.
- Neither party may have an existing matrimonial relationship.
- The parties must not fall within a legally prohibited relationship.
- The marriage must satisfy the applicable statutory requirements.

Section 71 also contains restrictions concerning marriage concluded through specified forms of misrepresentation.

Parents or relatives cannot lawfully turn caste difference into a legal bar to marriage. The Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act specifically prohibits preventing a marriageable person from entering an inter-caste marriage on prohibited caste-related grounds.

5. What Documents Are Needed for Marriage Registration?

The documents required depend on the registration procedure and the circumstances of the applicants. For marriage by registration, Section 77 requires specified personal information in the application, including information concerning the applicants and witnesses. The prescribed procedural form also provides the format for filing the application.

For a typical Nepali inter-caste couple, documents may include:

- Citizenship certificates of both applicants.
- Passport-size photographs.
- Residence-related documents where required.
- Completed marriage-registration application.
- Identification documents of the required witnesses.
- Divorce documents where a previous marriage ended through divorce.
- Death certificate of a former spouse, where applicable.

-
- Other documents requested by the competent authority.

Applicants should bring original documents and copies where required. Names, dates of birth and addresses should be consistent across documents.

Where one applicant is a foreign national, additional documents may be required, including passport, evidence of marital status, embassy documentation, translations and authentication. The exact requirements should be confirmed with the competent authority before filing.

6. How Does Inter-Caste Marriage Registration Work?

The [inter-caste marriage registration process in Nepal](#) generally follows the ordinary legal marriage-registration procedure. The couple does not need to establish that they belong to the same caste because caste similarity is not a statutory condition for marriage.

The general process is:

1. Confirm that both parties satisfy the legal requirements.
2. Determine the appropriate registration authority.
3. Satisfy the applicable residence requirement.
4. Prepare citizenship or passport documents.
5. Prepare photographs and witness documents.
6. Complete the prescribed marriage application.
7. File the application with the required fee.
8. Attend the required verification or inquiry.
9. Provide additional documents if requested.
10. Obtain the decision permitting the marriage where applicable.
11. Sign the required consent and registration documents.
12. Obtain the marriage registration certificate.

For marriage by registration, Section 78 provides for an inquiry and decision about whether the marriage is capable of being concluded. Section 79 deals with the consent deed, and Section 80 provides for registration of the marriage.

7. How Long Does Inter-Caste Marriage Registration Take?

The time required depends on the registration route, the completeness of documents, residence requirements and the workload of the competent authority. Caste difference itself does not establish a separate statutory waiting period.

For **marriage by registration**, Section 78 provides that the concerned authority must make a decision within seven days of filing after making the necessary inquiry as to whether the marriage is capable of being concluded.

This seven-day statutory decision period should not automatically be treated as a guarantee that every applicant will receive the final certificate within seven calendar days. The couple may first need to satisfy the 15-day residence requirement and provide complete documents.

Foreign-national cases may take longer because documents may require translation, certification or authentication. Missing information or discrepancies can also result in additional verification.

Couples should therefore prepare the complete file before filing and confirm the current procedure with the concerned authority.

8. What Government Fees Apply to Marriage Registration?

Government fees depend on the registration procedure and applicable rules. The prescribed application form for **marriage by registration** under the Muluki Civil Procedure Rules, 2075 records a fee of **NPR 500**. The official procedural form published by the Nepal Law Commission identifies the application as one made under Section 77 of the National Civil Code.

This prescribed application fee should not be confused with the total cost of the entire marriage-registration process.

Couples may separately incur expenses for photographs, copies, certificates, translations, authentication and other supporting documents. Foreign-national cases may involve additional embassy or consular costs.

Lawyer fees are also separate from government fees. A couple that completes the process independently may avoid professional legal fees, while a couple using a law firm may incur fees for consultation, document preparation, filing assistance and representation.

Applicants should confirm the current government fee and obtain an official receipt when making payment.

9. What Is the Total Cost of Registration?

There is no single total cost applicable to every **inter-caste marriage registration in Nepal**. The statutory application fee is only one part of the potential expense. The final amount depends on the documents already available, the

registration procedure, whether either party is a foreign national and whether the couple hires a lawyer.

Potential expenses include:

- Government application or registration fees.
- Photographs and photocopies.
- Certified copies of documents.
- Translation of foreign documents.
- Authentication or certification expenses.
- Embassy or consular charges where applicable.
- Transportation and administrative expenses.
- Lawyer's professional fees.

A straightforward marriage between two Nepali citizens may involve fewer expenses because both applicants generally possess Nepalese identity documents. A Nepali-foreigner marriage can require additional documentation and authentication.

Caste does not itself create an additional marriage-registration fee. Any professional fee should be clearly separated from government charges. Couples should ask for a written breakdown where they engage legal services.

10. Which Authorities Handle Inter-Caste Marriage Registration?

The relevant authority depends on the type of marriage registration being used. For **marriage by registration**, Section 77 provides for filing before the concerned District Court when the applicants are in Nepal.

Other government offices may provide supporting documents. For example, applicants may need documents concerning citizenship, residence or civil status from the relevant local authority. Foreign applicants may also require documents from their embassy or another competent authority.

The Nepal Law Commission publishes prevailing legislation and procedural rules but does not itself register individual marriages. The competent court or registration authority performs the registration function.

The **Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability (Offence and Punishment) Act, 2068** also provides a legal framework where someone interferes with an inter-caste marriage through prohibited caste-based conduct.

If a family member or another person attempts to prevent a lawful inter-caste marriage through threats, exclusion or prohibited discrimination, the appropriate legal remedy depends on the conduct and available evidence.

11. What Happens After Filing Marriage Registration?

After filing a marriage-registration application, the competent authority examines the application and supporting documents. For marriage by registration, Section 78 requires the authority to conduct the necessary inquiry and decide whether the marriage can be concluded.

Where the marriage is approved, the parties proceed with the statutory consent and registration stages. Section 79 provides for preparation of the consent deed, while Section 80 deals with registration of the marriage and issuance of the marriage registration certificate.

The couple should carefully check the certificate for spelling errors, dates, citizenship information and other personal details.

The legal effect of registration is not dependent on the couple belonging to the same caste. The registration establishes the civil marital status according to the applicable law.

If the authority refuses registration, the applicants should obtain the stated reason and consider the appropriate legal response. A refusal based solely on caste would raise separate issues under constitutional equality and caste-discrimination protections.

12. Can Foreigners Register Inter-Caste Marriage in Nepal?

A foreign national may be able to register a marriage in Nepal if the applicable legal and documentary requirements are satisfied. Whether the parties belong to different castes does not itself create a prohibition. For foreign-national cases, however, additional requirements may apply because the applicant's identity and marital status may need verification through foreign documents.

Documents may include:

- Valid passport.
- Evidence of marital status or legal capacity to marry.
- Embassy or consular documentation.
- Residence-related evidence.

-
- Passport photographs.
 - Certified translations where necessary.
 - Authentication or certification of foreign documents.

The exact requirements can vary according to nationality and the applicable registration route. Applicants should confirm the requirements with the competent District Court and relevant embassy before filing.

A foreign national should not assume that the documentation required for a Nepali-Nepali marriage will be sufficient. Document preparation should be completed before the intended filing date to reduce delays.

13. What Checklist Should Inter-Caste Couples Follow?

An **inter-caste marriage registration checklist** should focus on legal eligibility, jurisdiction and documentation. The couple should not treat family approval or caste agreement as a substitute for the statutory requirements.

Before filing, confirm:

- Both parties are at least 20 years old.
- Both parties freely consent to marriage.
- Neither party has an existing matrimonial relationship.
- The parties are not within a prohibited relationship.
- The correct registration authority has been identified.
- The required residence condition has been satisfied where applicable.
- Citizenship or passport documents are available.
- Required photographs are prepared.
- Witnesses and their identification documents are available.
- Previous-marriage documents are available where applicable.
- Foreign documents are properly translated or authenticated.
- Names and dates are consistent across documents.
- The prescribed application is complete.
- The current government fee has been confirmed.
- Original documents and necessary copies are ready.

The couple should also keep copies of the submitted application, receipts and supporting documents. If the marriage is being opposed because of caste, preserve relevant messages, notices or other evidence because such material may become relevant to a legal complaint.

14. When Should Couples Hire Marriage Lawyers?

A **marriage lawyer in Nepal** can assist an inter-caste couple with legal eligibility, document review, filing and procedural issues. Legal assistance is not necessarily required for every straightforward registration, but it can be useful where the circumstances involve additional legal or documentary issues.

A lawyer may be helpful when:

- The residence jurisdiction is unclear.
- One party is a foreign national.
- One applicant was previously married.
- Divorce or death documents require verification.
- Documents contain inconsistent information.
- Foreign documents require authentication or translation.
- The authority requests additional documents.
- Family members threaten or attempt to prevent the marriage.
- The couple needs assistance with a discrimination complaint.
- The couple wants professional filing or representation.

The Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act specifically protects marriageable persons from being prevented from entering an inter-caste marriage on prohibited caste-related grounds.

A lawyer can assess whether the conduct amounts to a legally actionable offence and identify the appropriate authority.

15. What Legal Services Support Inter-Caste Marriage Registration?

Legal services for **inter-caste marriage registration in Nepal** can cover the process from initial consultation to receipt of the marriage certificate. The appropriate scope depends on the couple's nationality, documents, residence and individual circumstances.

A law firm may assist with:

-
- Marriage eligibility assessment.
 - Review of citizenship and passport documents.
 - Residence and jurisdiction assessment.
 - Preparation of the registration application.
 - Review of previous-marriage documents.
 - Foreign-document verification guidance.
 - Translation and authentication guidance.
 - District Court filing assistance.
 - Court procedure and representation.
 - Response to document-related objections.
 - Advice concerning caste-based discrimination.
 - Legal remedies where someone unlawfully interferes with marriage.

Adalat Lawyers in Nepal can provide legal assistance concerning **inter-caste marriage registration, court marriage, marriage registration, document preparation and related legal remedies**, subject to the facts of each case.

The legal position is clear that caste difference itself does not create a general bar to marriage. Constitutional equality and the specific caste-discrimination legislation provide additional protection against unlawful interference.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can different castes legally marry in Nepal?

Yes. Different-caste couples can legally marry in Nepal if they satisfy the statutory conditions for marriage. The National Civil Code does not require spouses to belong to the same caste. The Constitution also prohibits discrimination based on caste, and the Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act prohibits preventing an eligible person from entering an inter-caste marriage.

Is inter-caste marriage legally recognized in Nepal?

Yes. An inter-caste marriage can receive full legal recognition when the parties satisfy the requirements under the National Civil Code and complete the applicable registration process. Caste difference is not itself a ground for invalidating a marriage. Article 18 of the Constitution guarantees equality before law and prohibits discrimination based

on caste.

Where can inter-caste couples register marriage?

For marriage by registration in Nepal, the couple applies to the concerned District Court under Section 77 of the National Civil Code. The applicable residence requirement must be satisfied before filing. Caste does not determine the District Court. The correct court depends on the statutory procedure and jurisdiction applicable to the couple.

What documents are needed for registration?

Documents generally include citizenship certificates or passports, photographs, the prescribed application and required witness identification. Additional documents may be necessary for previous marriages, divorce, death of a former spouse or foreign-national applicants. The precise requirements can differ according to circumstances, so applicants should confirm the current document list with the competent registration authority before filing.

Does caste affect marriage registration in Nepal?

Caste does not generally prevent marriage registration. The National Civil Code establishes conditions such as age, consent, marital status and prohibited relationships rather than requiring spouses to belong to the same caste. Article 18 and Article 24 of the Constitution also protect citizens against caste discrimination and untouchability.

How long does inter-caste registration take?

For marriage by registration, Section 78 provides a seven-day period for the concerned authority to decide whether the marriage can be concluded after necessary inquiry. This does not necessarily mean the entire process always finishes within seven days because residence requirements, missing documents, verification and foreign documents can affect the practical timeline.

How much does marriage registration cost?

The prescribed marriage-by-registration application form records a fee of NPR 500. The total cost can be higher because applicants may incur expenses for photographs, copies, certifications, translations, authentication and legal services. Foreign-national cases may involve additional expenses. Government fees and lawyer fees should be treated separately when calculating the total cost.

Can foreigners register inter-caste marriage in Nepal?

A foreign national may be able to register an inter-caste marriage in Nepal after satisfying the applicable legal and documentary requirements. Foreign applicants may need passports, evidence of marital status, embassy documents, translations and authentication. Requirements can vary by nationality and circumstances, so the couple should confirm the exact documents with the competent authority before filing.

Are witnesses required for marriage registration?

For marriage by registration, the application requires witness information under Section 77, and witnesses participate in the subsequent consent and registration process. Applicants should bring witnesses with the identification documents requested by the concerned authority. The precise practical requirements may vary depending on the registration procedure and should be confirmed before the filing or registration date.

Can lawyers assist with inter-caste marriage registration?

Yes. Lawyers can assist with eligibility checks, document preparation, jurisdiction, applications, District Court procedures and representation where permitted. They can also advise couples facing unlawful caste-based interference. The Caste-Based Discrimination and Untouchability Act prohibits preventing a marriageable person from entering an inter-caste marriage on prohibited caste-related grounds.

This document is provided by Adalat Lawyers for general informational purposes only and does not constitute legal advice. For advice on your specific circumstances, please contact our team.