

# Overview of marriage and divorce in the us



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## Until Death Do Us Part

Until death do us part? We have all heard this vow before. Some of us have even promised that to our partner before god, family, friends and someone who is certified to legally marry two people. It's usually a joyous occasion. The two that joined union, are headed down a lifelong path of unity, togetherness and self-fulfillment. At least that's the way it's supposed to be, right? For the most part, many of women grew up with the notion that, a woman is to find her prince charming and to marry and bare children with. The longer she waits the less chance of that happening. Boys are often told, to go find a wife, have kids and buy a house with a white picket fence, and get a family dog. That's part of living the American Dream. I feel for those reasons amongst others is the reason why people are rushing into marriages without fully knowing what they are getting themselves into. I too am a victim of rushing into a marriage with out thinking things through, or really knowing my partner. At the time, I figured it was a good idea. I was off on an unknown adventure, and I wanted someone to bring along with me, so we went to the local courthouse and joined union after only 4 months of knowing one another. Two long rough years and one child later, we found ourselves filing for divorce.

Why is it so easy to get a marriage license in the United States? All that is needed to be legally married is two forms of Identification from the bride and groom, a witness and a clergyman. It is a more difficult process to get a divorce than it is to get married. There is a more strenuous process in order to receive a drivers license, then it is to become married. It's too simple to legally get married, and it is affecting divorce rates. According to the Center

for Disease Control divorce rates in the U. S. are at an astounding 40 to 60%. What many people fail to realize, is that divorces actually have a negative impact on society. Those negative impacts can consist of decrease in education of the children and increased poverty levels. In my opinion, I feel the government should put a policy in place that places certain guidelines they must adhere to before they are able to get married. This would in return help lower divorce rates, and their negative impacts on society.

A child who comes from divorced parents, are at risk to suffer from health, physical, emotional and financial difficulties. Performance in school from children of divorced parents is usually lower than those whose biological parents are still married. There is also a more likely hood of the child not completing high school due to the trauma and painful feelings from the divorce. The child is more likely to turn to drugs in order to subdue that pain. Poverty is a common occurrence after a divorce. The splitting from a two-parent household to a single parent household could cut the income in half. Almost half of the people who are on Welfare are comprised of divorced parents. The federal and local government spend billions annually on programs to help sustain these single-parent families. This aid comes from tax money, and is one of the reasons why the US has such a large debt. A federal and state government intervention would help lower these numbers.

What type of intervention? Politicians should place a requirement that all couples looking to wed, would have to go through some form of premarital counseling. Pre-marital counseling is an effective tool to help couples to understand what they are about to embark on. It helps to give a greater understanding of what marriage really is, especially if they are planning on

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having children together. My current fiancé and I have had the opportunity to receive premarital counseling sessions. In the sessions, we addressed such issues such as: finance, communication, and commitment. All three topics are the most common reasons for divorce, and are important to discuss beforehand. Finances have the potential to be a strain on any relationship. Debt and merging finances are a few of the topics we discussed. We learned that healthy effective communication would teach couples to recognize triggers that may begin altercations. Communication is a great tool to learn about one another, and what is expected from each other. No fault divorces make it way too easy to just pass your partner without any questions. People who are planning to marry should realize that they are entering into a legal contract and be committed to that. I'm not saying one should stay in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, but we shouldn't be able to jump ship so easily once the waters become rough. Couples should also have to apply to get married, and then be required to wait a minimum of six months until being legally able to marry one another. This will give them time to go through marriage counseling. It allows for more time to cohabitate, allowing the couple to get to know one another, and reflect before completely committing.

One could argue that a government intervention of creating more stipulations in order to get married would be a violation of people's rights. I feel that it would not be anymore of a violation of rights, than what is required for a person to receive a driver license. It is a more strenuous and time consuming process to earn the right to drive a vehicle on the roads, than it is to get married. A driver license can also be taken away from a

person if they violate the laws that are set in place in accordance with operating a vehicle. Entering into a marriage is a serious matter and should not be taken lightly. People operating a vehicle on the road have the potential of affecting other drivers around them. Just the same as divorces have the potential to affect the community. Sure, most counseling does cost money. There is no doubt that some of the higher rated counselors may charge a substantial amount for their expertise, and some couples may not be able to afford such services. However, many church priest, pastors, or religious figures have gone through pre-marital counseling training, and offer their service for free or little charge.

Not every married couple will become a part of the divorce statistic. Many people who are married, or were married, would agree that it is hard. Too few really take the time to get to know one another before getting married. Even less people take the time to figure out what marriage is and what it requires of both individuals. Requiring couples to receive pre-marital and financial counseling will help to put into perspective of what they are actually going to commit to. This counseling, along with a wait period between applying for a marriage license and being able to get married, will not allow couples to rush into a speedy marriage, because those are most likely to fail. This intervention will help to lower the divorce rate, which will also lower the negative impacts on the economy and society in general.

## **Works Cited**

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