

REGISTERING A DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP

These instructions have two parts: The Application Process, and Information about Domestic Partnerships.

The Application Process

We are registering domestic partnerships in a way that minimizes your face-to-face interaction with city employees. If you order a Certificate of Domestic Partnership, assume that it will take one or two weeks before you receive it in the mail.

Just follow these steps:

1. Download the Domestic Partnership Registration Form from the City's website and fill it out with a black pen as clearly and legibly as possible:
 - Print the name and birthdate of each partner.
 - Print the address of the common household.
 - Add a contact email address and phone number so we can call you if needed. (This contact information will NOT be made public.)
 - DO NOT sign the form until you are in the presence of a Notary Public.
2. Arrange a time for all of the partners to meet with a Notary Public licensed in Massachusetts:
 - Each partner must have a valid government-issued photo ID.
 - Each partner must sign the form in the presence of the Notary Public.
 - The Notary Public will complete the section titled "The Commonwealth of Massachusetts."
3. Place the form in an envelope with a check or money order payable to the City of Somerville in the amount of \$50. Add \$15 for each Domestic Partnership Certificate that you wish to receive.
4. Return the envelope with the form and the payment to us in one of two ways:
 - Drop it in the black dropbox just outside the School Street entrance of City Hall; or
 - Mail it to the Somerville City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143.

The City Clerk's Office will register your Domestic Partnership on the date it is received. If you ordered one or more Domestic Partnership Certificates, we will mail them to the common household.

Information about Domestic Partnerships

To enter into a domestic partnership in Somerville, each partner must jointly proclaim under the pains and penalties of perjury that:

- They are 18 years of age or older and mentally competent to contract;
- they are in a relationship of mutual support, caring and commitment and intend to remain in such a relationship;
- They consider themselves to be a family;
- They reside together;
- They are not married;
- They have not been in a domestic partnership which was terminated in the last 90 days; and
- They are not related by blood closer than would bar marriage in Massachusetts.

Being “related by blood closer than would bar marriage in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts” means that you may not enter into a domestic partnership with certain relatives, including any parent, grandparent, child, grandchild, parent’s spouse, grandparent’s spouse, child’s spouse, grandchild’s spouse, partner’s parent, partner’s grandparent, partner’s child, partner’s grandchild, sibling, sibling’s child, or parent’s sibling.

Domestic partnerships can only be terminated in two ways:

- The death of a domestic partner immediately terminates the domestic partnership for all of the partners immediately upon the death. The remaining domestic partners must notify the City Clerk of the death of the domestic partner and the date of the death.
- The filing of a Termination Statement by a domestic partner terminates the domestic partnership for all of the partners immediately upon the receipt of the Termination Statement by the City Clerk.

A domestic partner whose partnership is terminated must wait 90 days before registering a new domestic partnership.

To terminate a domestic partnership, follow these steps:

1. Download the Domestic Partnership Termination Statement from the City’s website and fill it out with a black pen as clearly and legibly as possible, or draft your own Termination Statement. It must contain the following elements:
 - It must state that a domestic partner is terminating the domestic partnership.
 - It must list each domestic partner and their current or last known address.
 - It must be signed by that domestic partner.
 - It must include a statement, *which you don’t sign*, that “I declare, under the pains and penalties of perjury, that this Termination Statement has been mailed by certified mail, or delivered by hand, to the other domestic partners at their current or last known address.” You will sign this statement before a Notary Public licensed in Massachusetts after you mail or deliver it to the other domestic partners.
2. Make a copy for each domestic partner, and mail it by certified mail, or deliver it by hand, to all of the other domestic partners at their current or last known address.
3. Appear before a Notary Public licensed in Massachusetts and sign the statement that it “. . . has been mailed by certified mail, or delivered by hand, to the other domestic partners . . .” The Notary Public will complete the section titled “The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.”
4. Deliver the completed and notarized Termination Statement to the City Clerk’s Office in one of two ways:
 - Drop it in the black dropbox just outside the School Street entrance of City Hall; or
 - Mail it to the Somerville City Clerk, 93 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, 02143.

The domestic partnership will be terminated on the date that the City Clerk’s Office receives the Termination Statement.