



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK

12400 Imperial Highway – P.O. Box 1024, Norwalk, California 90651-1024 – www.lavote.net

DEAN C. LOGAN

Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

December 22, 2009

The Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Kenneth Hahn Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Supervisors:

**REVISE REGISTRAR-RECORDER/COUNTY CLERK (RR/CC)
FEES FOR PUBLIC AND CONFIDENTIAL MARRIAGE LICENSES
(ALL DISTRICTS) (3 VOTES)**

SUBJECT.

The Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (RR/CC) re-examined the fees charged for providing Departmental services for Public and Confidential Marriage Licenses. It was determined that the current fees are no longer reflective of actual costs needed to realize full Departmental cost recovery.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOUR BOARD, AFTER THE PUBLIC HEARING:

Approve the attached ordinance revising RR/CC fees related to Public and Confidential Marriage Licenses to become effective thirty days from the date of Board passage, in accordance with Government Code section 25123.

PURPOSE OF RECOMMENDED ACTION:

The RR/CC provides a variety of services related to elections, recorder and county clerk operations. It is common practice to periodically re-examine fees to ensure the Department receives full cost recovery for administering services as permitted by applicable law. During a review of the above-mentioned fees, it was concluded that the current fees no longer facilitate full cost recovery nor are they an accurate reflection of the Department's cost for the service provided. Cost studies to determine the appropriate fees consisted of research, interviews and work observations of technical and support staff performing their duties to provide these services. The studies included applicable costs such as salaries, employee benefits, supplies, equipment and

overhead. The proposed revisions of fees have been reviewed and approved by the Department of Auditor-Controller and any required ordinance changes have been prepared by County Counsel.

IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS:

Goal No. 1: Operational Effectiveness: Maximize the effectiveness of processes, structure and operations to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services.

Goal No. 1/Strategy 1: Fiscal Sustainability: Promote sound, prudent and transparent short and long-range fiscal policies and practices that help ensure maintenance of critical, high priority County public services regardless of cyclical economic conditions.

Goal No. 1/Strategy 2a: Service Excellence and Organizational Effectiveness: Streamline and improve administrative operations and processes to increase effectiveness, enhance customer service and support responsive County operations.

JUSTIFICATION:

Public and Confidential Marriage License Fees

By law, to obtain a public or confidential marriage license, both applicants must appear in person at RR/CC Headquarters or a field office to complete an application, provide proof of identity and age (such as a driver's license or passport) and pay the existing fee of seventy (\$70) dollars. There is no need to disclose a blood test or health certificate, provide proof of California residency or citizenship and both licenses are valid for ninety (90) days. The public license is available for use *anywhere* within the State of California and a confidential marriage license is available for use *only* within the county where it is issued. Additionally, once recorded by Los Angeles County, a confidential marriage license will remain unavailable to the public with the exception of specified conditions.

Public and Confidential Marriage License fees were last updated in 2003 to recover the direct and indirect costs of providing the product or service or the cost of enforcing regulations for which the fee is levied. These fees no longer reflect the Department's actual cost and should be revised to include current expenses for employee salaries, benefits, supplies and equipment usage.

County Code 2.32.100 Marriage License Fee

The Department initiated fee evaluations consisting of research, interviews and work observations of Birth, Death and Marriage staff who performed duties for marriage license services. A portion of both the Public and Confidential Marriage License fees are paid out as surcharges to the State of California and other County Departments. The studies concluded that the current Public Marriage License fee of \$70 (\$37 is

distributed to other agencies and \$33 is retained by RR/CC) and Confidential Marriage License fee of \$70 (\$32 is distributed to other agencies and \$38 is retained by RR/CC) are no longer accurate representations of current costs and need to be updated to reflect actual cost recovery in order to achieve operational effectiveness, fiscal sustainability and service excellence. Upon review of this service, it has been determined that the appropriate fees should increase as follows:

Public Marriage License Fee from \$70 to \$90
Confidential Marriage License Fee from \$70 to \$85

FISCAL IMPACT/ FINANCING:

Approval of this recommendation will enable RR/CC to fully recover costs for services provided by increasing the portion of the collected fee retained by RR/CC from \$33 to \$53 for Public Marriage Licenses and from \$38 to \$53 for Confidential Marriage Licenses. Based on anticipated volume, the projected Departmental revenue increases from February 1, 2010 through June 30, 2010 are as follows:

| FEE | REVENUE INCREASE |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Public Marriage License | \$374,000 |
| Confidential Marriage License | \$142,000 |
| Total | \$516,000 |

FACTS AND PROVISIONS/LEGAL REQUIREMENTS:

The fees for public and confidential marriage licenses are authorized in Government Code sections 26840 through 26840.8. Government Code section 54985 authorizes the Board of Supervisors to increase the fee or charge, that is otherwise authorized to be levied by another provision of law, in an amount reasonably necessary to recover the direct and indirect costs of providing any product or service or the cost of enforcing any regulation for which the fee or charge is levied.

Government Code section 66018 requires a local agency to hold a public hearing at which oral or written presentations can be made. The Executive Office of the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with Government Code section 6062(a), published an official notice of the time and place of said meeting, including a general explanation of the fees to be revised.

All fees have been reviewed and approved by the Auditor-Controller's office while County Counsel has prepared the attached required ordinance that incorporates the proposed fees and revisions.

IMPACT ON CURRENT SERVICES:

The proposed fees will not impact current services provided by the Department.

CONCLUSION

Upon approval by your Board, the Executive Officer is requested to return one (1) adopted copy of this letter to:

Department of Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk
Finance and Management Division
12400 Imperial Highway, Room 7211
Norwalk, CA 90650
Attention: Brandy Jakobsen, Fees and Studies Section

Respectfully submitted,


DEAN C. LOGAN
Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk

NU:as:bj:jw

Attachments

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Robert E. Kalunian, Acting County Counsel
Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Wendy L. Watanabe, Auditor-Controller

ANALYSIS

This ordinance amends Title 2 – Administration, Chapter 2.32 of the Los Angeles County Code by amending section 2.32.100 Marriage license fee.

The fees for public and confidential marriage licenses are authorized by Government Code sections 26840 through 26840.8. Government Code section 54985 authorizes the Board of Supervisors to increase the fee or charge, that is otherwise authorized to be levied by another provision of law, in the amount reasonably necessary to recover the direct and indirect costs of providing any product, or service or the cost of enforcing any regulation for which the fee or charge is levied.

ROBERT E. KALUNIAN
Acting County Counsel

By 

PATRICE J. SALSEDA
Senior Deputy County Counsel
Government Services Division

PJS:er
Requested 10/30/09

ORDINANCE NO. _____

An ordinance amending Title 2 - Administration of the Los Angeles County Code, relating to marriage license fees charged to the public by the Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk.

The Board of Supervisors of the County of Los Angeles ordains as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 2.32.100 is hereby amended to read as follows:

2.32.100 Marriage license fee.

The registrar-recorder/county clerk shall charge a fee of ~~\$70.00~~ \$90.00 for issuing a marriage license, and a fee of \$30.00 for issuing a duplicate marriage license, and shall charge a fee of ~~\$70.00~~ \$85.00 for issuing a confidential marriage license, and a fee of \$30.00 for issuing a duplicate confidential marriage license. (Ord. 2005-0071 § 1, 2005; Ord. 2003-0073 § 1, 2003; Ord. 95-0012 § 1, 1995.)

[232100PSCC]