

Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral
1324 South Normandie Avenue Los Angeles, California 90006
323-737-2424



WEDDING SACRAMENT AGREEMENT

This Agreement is entered as of this day, <<month/day/year>>, by and between Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral (hereinafter referred to as “Saint Sophia Cathedral” or “Cathedral”), and <<Bride>> and <<Groom>> (hereinafter referred to as “BRIDE and GROOM”).

WEDDING TIME

1. The BRIDE and GROOM’s wedding sacrament is scheduled for <<Date>>*, at <<time>>pm. The entire wedding party, grandparents, parents, bridesmaids, groomsmen, ushers, flower girl(s), ring bearer(s) and **the BRIDE and GROOM must arrive no later than 30 minutes prior to the agreed start time on the day of the wedding ceremony.** _____ (initials) *Please note: ALL sacrament dates are subject to postponement/change based on current COVID-19 local, state, federal and the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America mandates.
2. The ceremony of the BRIDE and GROOM must start on time. It is against Saint Sophia Cathedral policy to wait for late guests. The BRIDE and GROOM must inform their guests to arrive early. Weddings that begin late run the risk of a shortened (or no) photography session after the wedding. _____(initials)

BRIDE _____
Print and sign

1

GROOM _____
Print and sign

CLERGY

- 3. The BRIDE and GROOM must identify the name of the priest that will marry them at Saint Sophia Cathedral. For weddings under the **Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America**, one of the Saint Sophia Clergy will be present to bless the wedding sacrament of the BRIDE and GROOM. For Greek Orthodox weddings, please review our web page for 1. The Sacrament of Marriage – Ecclesiastical Requirements and 2. Sacrament Obligations of the Bride and Groom. The Cathedral Office will provide the **Greek Orthodox Ecclesiastical License** once the BRIDE and GROOM answer several spiritual / baptismal items for themselves and their sponsors. The BRIDE and GROOM must provide a **Civil Wedding License**. _____ (initials)

3a. Weddings belonging to the following Jurisdictions are also permitted in Saint Sophia Cathedral:

**Antiochian Orthodox Church --- Rumanian Orthodox Church --- Russian Orthodox Church
Serbian Orthodox Church --- Ukrainian Orthodox Church**

Armenian Orthodox Church:

- Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America
- Western Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America
- Eastern Prelacy of the Armenian Apostolic Church of North America
- Diocese of the Armenian Church of America

Coptic Orthodox Church

Syriac Orthodox Church – Patriarchate of Alexandria

- 3b. The BRIDE and GROOM must disclose their exact jurisdiction from the list above as well as complete the name of the priest from the jurisdiction that will bless their wedding sacrament and the name of his Southern California Parish, its address, telephone number and email contact information: _____ (initials)

Jurisdiction: _____

Name of Priest: _____

Parish Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____

If any of the above items are incomplete less than four months before the wedding date of the BRIDE and GROOM, the wedding ceremony will be removed from the calendar of Saint Sophia Cathedral:
_____ (initials)

The BRIDE and GROOM must meet with their priest to initiate the **Ecclesiastical License of their jurisdiction**. The BRIDE and GROOM must provide a **Civil Wedding License**. _____ (initials)

BRIDE _____
Print and sign

GROOM _____
Print and sign

FEES

- 4. **Non-Saint Sophia Stewards**: A Saint Sophia Cathedral Service Fee of \$4000 plus a \$1,000 refundable security deposit per couple for a total of \$5000 is required and payable in full 120 days prior to the sacrament. There is an additional \$500 fee for weddings scheduled on a holiday weekend: Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Days, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Day. These fees are applied to Sacraments by selecting the Pay Cathedral Service Fee link on the Saint Sophia web site. This fee includes the use of the Cathedral for no more than 2 hours (provided the wedding of the BRIDE and GROOM begins on time). The 2 hours begin ½ hour prior to the scheduled ceremony time of the BRIDE and GROOM through their wedding ceremony and ends no later than 1-½ hours after the scheduled wedding time. **Saint Sophia Stewards**: Please contact St. Sophia office. **All couples**: If payment in full is not made four (4) months prior to your wedding, your ceremony will be cancelled and removed from the Cathedral calendar.
_____ (initials).

4a. **Refundable \$1,000 Security Deposit**

The refundable Security Deposit will be held on file. After the sacrament date, the Sacrament Coordinator will inspect the Cathedral and surrounding grounds; and if there are no damages caused to the property AND if all Cathedral wedding policies and practices* are followed by the BRIDE and GROOM, their families, all guests, and all their vendors, the Security Deposit will be returned to the BRIDE and GROOM within seven (7) business days. _____ (initials).

*Examples of policy and practice violations include but are not limited to punctuality (such as late arrival of BRIDE and GROOM and/or wedding party resulting in late start, purposely delaying start of ceremony for any other reason), uncooperative vendors, any violation of the Cathedral’s sacred space, failure to clearly disclose and communicate all ceremony details within a reasonable time prior to ceremony date, failure of any person associated with the wedding ceremony to follow the instructions and requests of any clergy or Saint Sophia Cathedral staff. _____ (initials).

In the event that there are damages and these damages exceed the amount of the Security Deposit, the BRIDE and GROOM will be billed at the prevailing rate(s) of repair(s) and replacement.
_____ (initials).

PARKING

- 5. The Cathedral provides a parking lot attendant for up to 300 guests. If over 300 guests attend the wedding, an additional fee may be required for an extra attendant(s). _____ (initials).

All large vendor trucks, limousines, and guest buses must enter and exit the Mariposa Avenue Gate. _____ (initials)

MUSIC

- 6. The only instrument permitted in the Cathedral during the wedding prelude, ceremony and recessional is the organ played by our organist / wedding director of music or his or her assistant. The fee for this is included in the Saint Sophia Cathedral Service Fee.

BRIDE _____
Print and sign

3

GROOM _____
Print and sign

MUSIC (continued)

A vocal soloist and other instruments such as the violin, trumpet, or flute are permitted only if the organ accompanies their melody. Music permitted in the Cathedral during weddings is from the Baroque and Classical periods of music literature along with selections from the hymnology of the Orthodox Church _____(initials)

Music from Broadway musicals, top 40 hits, contemporary music from movie scores, folk songs, and or any non-sacred music piece is strictly forbidden even if disguised as baroque / classical music. This is standard throughout our Ecclesiastical Metropolis. _____(initials)

Also, recorded music, sound tracks or CDs are not allowed in the Cathedral. Any music played outside the Cathedral from buses, limousines or bands does not begin until the wedding recessional is completely over. _____(initials)

WEDDING ATTIRE

- 7. When deciding on the wedding attire of the bridal party, the BRIDE and GROOM must respect that Saint Sophia Cathedral is a sacred house of worship. _____(initials)

RECEIVING LINES

- 8. Receiving lines are not permitted in the Narthex (entrance of the Cathedral) due to fire code regulations. At the conclusion of the BRIDE and GROOM’s wedding sacrament, the Cathedral is to be vacated in an orderly manner to avoid blocking the exits and to prepare for the next scheduled sacrament. _____(initials)

PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEOGRAPHY

Please note: The Dress Code for these vendors is all black.

- 9. Photography and Videography: *A wedding is a sacrament. Saint Sophia Cathedral is not a theater.* We request your Photographers and Videographers to review the Cathedral’s policies as listed below and schedule a meeting with our Sacrament Coordinator to discuss details and arrival times. However, the BRIDE and GROOM, must follow and understand all the details below. _____(initials)

PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEOGRAPHY (continued)

9a. PHOTOGRAPHY

Flash photography by photographers and guests is only permitted before and after the sacrament. Flash photography during the sacrament is not permitted, as excessive flashing has an adverse effect on the preservation of the iconography and décor of the Cathedral, and interferes with the sanctity of the sacrament. Photographers are to capture the “moment” without ruining or disturbing the “moment.” **No running.**

- Before and after the sacrament, one photographer may be in front of the first pew to take flash photographs of the wedding party during their procession down the aisle and their departure.
- During the sacrament, photographers may only take non-flash photographs with time exposures using the appropriate lens for distance from the side seating areas and the choir loft.
- During the sacrament Photographers may only move while the guests are standing or walk behind all seated guests to move from one side of the Cathedral to another. Never step on the bride’s dress. Never block the view of parents and family in the first pew. Once in a new location, no movement for 5 minutes.
- There are constant technological advances in photography. Any items/equipment (large or small; tall or short) beyond a standard camera or tripod, brought into the Cathedral for use during a wedding will be questioned, and subsequently accommodated or refused.
- At the conclusion of the sacrament, **NO POSED PHOTOGRAPHY** will be allowed inside Saint Sophia Cathedral. Posed photographs may be taken **outside** the Cathedral.
- ***No photographs or photographers standing on the steps of the icons, on the Pulpit, Royal Gates, and its steps, Bishop’s Throne (The Throne of Christ) and its symbolic lions – etc. _____ (initials)***
- The BRIDE and GROOM will provide the Cathedral with their photographer’s information. _____ (initials)
- **We have read all seven (7) bullet points above and agree to share these policies with our photographers. _____ (initials)**

Our PHOTOGRPAHY will be done by:

Photographer’s Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

PHOTOGRAPHY and VIDEOGRAPHY (continued)

9b. VIDEOGRAPHY:

- Before and after the sacrament, videographers may tape the wedding party from different areas only during their procession down the aisle and their departure. Only one videographer may tape the processional from the front of the first pews – NEVER from behind the bride or bridal party in the center aisle. ***Taping or interviewing guests while sitting in the pews is not permitted.***
- During the sacrament, taping is only permitted from two stationary positions: by the symbolic lions to the left of the Bishop’s throne (The Throne of Christ) and in the choir loft. Camera lights and additional floodlight stands are not permitted as they distract from the reverence of the sacrament.
- During the sacrament, Videographers may only move while the guests are standing or walk behind all seated guests to move from one side of the Cathedral to another. Never step on the bride’s dress. Never block the view of parents and family in the first pew. Once in a new location, no movement for 5 minutes.
- There are constant technological advances in videography. Any items/equipment (large or small; tall or short) beyond a standard camera or tripod, brought into the Cathedral for use during a wedding will be questioned, and subsequently accommodated or refused.
- ***No video or videographers standing on the steps of the icons, on the Pulpit, Royal Gates, and its steps, Bishop’s Throne (The Throne of Christ) and its symbolic lions – etc.***
- Videographers are to capture the “moment” without ruining or disturbing the “moment.” **No running.**
- Drones are forbidden inside Saint Sophia Cathedral
- The BRIDE and GROOM will provide the Cathedral with their videographer’s information.
- **We have read all eight (8) bullet points above and agree to share these policies with our videographers _____ (initials)**

Our VIDEOGRAPHY will be done by:

VIDEOGRAPHER’s Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

PLEASE NOTE: The dress code for these vendors is ALL black.

AT ALL TIMES BEFORE, DURING AND FOLLOWING ALL SACRAMENTS PHOTOGRAPHERS AND VIDEOGRAPHERS MUST AGREE TO AND FOLLOW THE INSTRUCTIONS AND REQUESTS OF ANY CLERGY AND SAINT SOPHIA STAFF OR RUN THE RISK OF BEING ASKED TO LEAVE THE CATHEDRAL. _____ (initials)

BRIDE _____
Print and sign

GROOM _____
Print and sign

WEDDING REHEARSAL

- 10. If BRIDE and GROOM schedule a wedding rehearsal, **all members of the wedding party must be present and arrive early:** Parents, bridesmaids, groomsmen, ushers, flower girl(s), ring bearer and the BRIDE and GROOM. **Excessively late arrivals may result in a shortened rehearsal time and/or no rehearsal. (Rehearsals may only be scheduled through Saint Sophia Cathedral. Please contact the Saint Sophia Cathedral Wedding Sacrament Coordinator to schedule and book your rehearsal.)** _____ (initials)

If BRIDE and GROOM do NOT have a rehearsal, they agree to contact the Cathedral and/or Wedding Sacrament Coordinator at least one (1) month prior to their wedding to confirm all wedding plans and arrangements. _____ (initials)

[NOTE: The Cathedral recommends a minimum age of four years old for flower girls and ring bearers and any other children that will participate in the procession. Children must be able to walk on their own during the procession. Please make certain the hems on flower girl dresses are at the correct and a safe length for a child to walk down a 100-foot aisle. For safety reasons, wagons or carts pulled by others; small, remote controlled vehicles; or any other device to bring children down the aisle in the manner of a trendy display are not permitted. _____ (initials).]

FLOWERS / FLORISTS

- 11. Saint Sophia Cathedral is an elaborately decorated edifice with two permanent, large flower arrangements already in place on each side of the Solea. Additional flowers and decorations are not necessary. Glass containers, stands, or ceramic objects must not be used in the Cathedral. If you choose to add adornment to the Cathedral, the florist may provide bows and/or **small** flower sprays to the pews using soft clips or ties; flower petals for the flower girl. If additional floral sprays are brought into the Cathedral, there should be no more than two, and the total height of these arrangements, including the stand and vase, can be no more than seven or eight feet tall. Florists should arrive no later than one hour before the scheduled sacrament time of the BRIDE and GROOM. Florists must complete their work inside the Cathedral no later than 30 minutes before the scheduled sacrament time of the BRIDE and GROOM. _____ (initials)

Our FLORAL DECORATIONS (if any) will be done by:

Florist's Name: _____

Address: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

SAFETY GUIDELINES

12. For safety reasons, white aisle runners, throwing rice, flowers, birdseed and koufeta inside or outside the Cathedral are not permitted. Sparklers are not permitted. No flowers or flower petals may decorate the ground of the center aisle. Only the flower girl may drop petals for the bride in the center aisle. _____(initials)

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

13. The consumption of alcoholic beverages or food in the Cathedral and any part of the Saint Sophia Cathedral campus area before, during and after the wedding sacrament is strictly prohibited. _____(initials)

PROFESSIONAL WEDDING COORDINATORS

14. Professional Wedding Coordinators must follow all directions of the Cathedral’s Sacrament Coordinator who is ultimately responsible for all services provided at the Cathedral before, during and after the sacrament. Any details related to the wedding ceremony known by the professional wedding coordinator must be fully disclosed to the Cathedral’s sacrament coordinator. _____(initials)

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING:

15. The BRIDE and GROOM must answer the following questions:

How many guests ** will approximately attend the wedding sacrament? _____

How many bridesmaids and groomsmen? _____
(Please include your Maid of Honor and Best Man in this count.)

How many children will participate in your procession as members of your wedding party?
_____ Ring Bearer(s) _____ Flower Girl(s) _____ Other (describe _____)

How many photographers? _____

How many videographers? _____

How many limousines? _____

How many guest party buses? _____

***Please note: Because of the COVID-19 pandemic and according to our federal, state, county, and city along with the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of American and Metropolis of San Francisco mandates, the number of individuals allowed into the Cathedral may be limited. Additionally, all persons entering Saint Sophia Cathedral will be required to wear face coverings per CDC guidelines.*

OTHER DETAILS

- 16. Disclose in writing to the Sacrament Coordinator any other details (e.g. Flying doves, outside drones, etc.) Note: Marching bands, mariachis, horse(s) and carriage(s), or any other type of non-approved ecclesiastical music are not allowed on Saint Sophia Cathedral property. Only professional vendors are allowed to furnish doves for release on Cathedral property. Pets and/or untrained doves/birds are not allowed to be released anywhere on the Cathedral campus. Please contact Saint Sophia Cathedral for more information. _____ (*initials*)

LAST MINUTE CHANGES

- 17. Last minute changes must be cleared through the Saint Sophia Cathedral Sacrament Coordinator and should be avoided unless there are extenuating circumstances. _____ (*initials*)

CELEBRATORY HAND GESTURES

- 18. The only celebratory hand gesture or behavior permitted inside the Cathedral is applause typically after the BRIDE and GROOM's sacrament. _____ (*initials*)

NO SMOKING

- 19. Saint Sophia Cathedral and all buildings on the property have a strict no smoking policy. Smoking is forbidden anywhere in or near the Cathedral. **The Cathedral is a holy place. Please respect it!** _____ (*initials*)

CANCELLATION OR POSTPONEMENT

20. Cancellations: If cancellation occurs within fifteen (15 days) after booking the wedding, Saint Sophia Cathedral shall withhold fifty (50%) percent of the wedding fee. If the wedding is cancelled at any other time after the 15-day period, all fees paid are non-refundable. Should BRIDE and/or GROOM cancel the wedding, Saint Sophia Cathedral will permanently remove the date from the calendar. Postponements: Should BRIDE and GROOM postpone their ceremony, Saint Sophia Cathedral will permanently remove the scheduled wedding from the calendar, and apply deposit and any fees previously paid to the rescheduled date. In the event of either a cancellation or a postponement, BRIDE and GROOM must notify Saint Sophia Cathedral.

BRIDE and GROOM must notify Saint Sophia Cathedral in writing of any cancellation and/or postponement of a scheduled wedding ceremony. Saint Sophia will follow with written confirmation of the same. _____ (initials)

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

21. BRIDE and GROOM agree to indemnify and hold Saint Sophia Cathedral and Saint Sophia Foundation its clergy, employees, staff, officers, Directors, and/or Trustees of any said parties harmless for any damages, personal injuries, death, losses or liability of any kind whatsoever that occur on the property before, during and after their wedding ceremony. The Saint Sophia Cathedral and Saint Sophia Foundation assume no responsibility for damages, loss or theft of any personal property brought into or onto the Cathedral and Foundation Property or for any injuries related to their wedding ceremony. _____(initials)

ATTORNEYS' FEES AND COSTS

22. In the event that any claim, demand or lawsuit shall be made or instituted against the Saint Sophia Cathedral, Saint Sophia Foundation, or any of its employees, officers, Directors, and/or Trustees of any said parties, the undersigned BRIDE and GROOM agree to hold said parties free and harmless from any attorney's fees, damages, lawsuits, disputes or judgments. In the event of a legal dispute or litigation between the Parties to this contract, the prevailing Party shall be awarded reasonable attorney's fees and costs. _____(initials)

ACCEPTANCE and ACKNOWLEDGMENT

23. BRIDE and GROOM agree that, by virtue of their initials herein and throughout this document and signatures below that they have read and understood and will abide by the policies and procedures outlined within this agreement. _____ (initials)

23a. We have both have read and acknowledge the letter from Fr. John Bakas, Dean of Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral. _____ (initials)

Date signed: _____

BRIDE _____
Print and sign

GROOM _____
Print and sign