



## Annulment of Marriage – Connecticut

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- General Statutes of Connecticut: Title 46b Family Law
- [Connecticut Law About Annulment](#)
- [U.S. Catholic Bishops – Annulments \(Declarations of Nullity\)](#)

### WHAT IS A LEGAL ANNULMENT OF MARRIAGE?

Annulment of marriage is different from divorce. A divorce is the dissolution of a legally valid marriage. A legal (civil) annulment is a decree that the marriage was void when it took place, meaning that the couple was never legally married in the first place. With the divorce law reforms that took place in Connecticut in 1973, the number of annulments dealt with by courts has declined, and it is now considered a rare procedure. Annulment in Connecticut is a complex legal matter, in part because the grounds for annulment are found in a number of different statutes (laws), as well as in what is known as common law. Considering that this is a very complex area of the law, **anyone who considers seeking an annulment of marriage is cautioned to seek competent legal counsel before taking any action.** Because annulment is a family law matter, people seeking legal counsel should look for an attorney with experience in family law.

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### WHAT IS A RELIGIOUS ANNULMENT OF MARRIAGE?

**A religious annulment has no legal authority, and is not legally binding on either person. A couple seeking a religious annulment must also seek either a legal (civil) annulment or a divorce in order to end the marriage legally.** Religious annulments apply only to the sacred or sacramental aspect of marriage. A religious denomination may issue its annulment of marriage, or Decree of Nullity, if the marriage was sanctified within the church. For example, the Roman Catholic Church holds the exchange of consent between the spouses to be the indispensable element that “makes the marriage.” If a church tribunal finds that consent was lacking then there is no marriage, and may issue a Decree of Nullity. People seeking more information on religious annulments should consult a member of the clergy of the religious denomination which sanctified the marriage.

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*SOURCES: General Statutes of Connecticut: Title 46b Family Law; Connecticut Judicial Branch: Law Libraries; U.S. Catholic Bishops*

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