



# Common-law Marriage - Connecticut

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## WHAT IS COMMON-LAW MARRIAGE?

Common-law marriage is an informal or non-ceremonial marriage, created by an agreement between a man and woman who have the legal right to marry. People who enter into a common-law marriage usually do not comply with legal formalities such as a marriage license. Connecticut does not recognize, and has never recognized, common-law marriage. Here are the states that recognize Common Law Marriages, <http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/common-law-marriage.aspx>

## OUT-OF STATE COMMON LAW MARRIAGES

Connecticut's Courts have followed the "...generally accepted rule that a marriage that is valid in the state where contracted is valid everywhere, unless for some reason the marriage is contrary to the strong public policy of the state required to rule on its validity." (Delaney v. Delaney)<sup>1</sup> This means that a common-law marriage recognized as valid in one of the states cited above will generally be accepted as valid in Connecticut. However, because common-law is established by court rulings rather than by legislation, people who have a common-law marriage, and then become residents of Connecticut, should not assume that their common-law marriage is automatically valid in Connecticut. If there are any legal disputes related to the common-law marriage, it may take a court ruling to establish a common-law marriage as valid. People who have a common-law marriage, and are considering a move to Connecticut, should consider consulting with competent legal counsel before moving to Connecticut.

## SOURCES:

- ["Common Law Marriage in Connecticut"](#)<sup>1</sup>, Connecticut Judicial Branch Law Library;
- [Connecticut General Assembly Office of Legislative Research "Common Law Marriage" Report # 2013-R-0264](#)

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**CONTENT LAST REVIEWED:** February 2019