

**Some of the more than one thousand rights, benefits and responsibilities that accompany a marriage license include:**

- The right to visit a spouse in the hospital
- The right to make medical decisions for a sick spouse
- The right to make funeral arrangements for a deceased spouse
- Access to family courts for dissolution of relationships
- Death benefits for surviving spouses of firefighters and police officers
- Mutual responsibility for debts
- Joint assessment of income for determining eligibility for state government assistance programs
- Ability to sponsor a spouse from another country for a green card
- Community property ownership protections
- Child custody, visitation, and duties of financial support to children
- Eligibility for health benefits (without taxation) and COBRA benefits through an employer
- Ability to take leave to care for a sick spouse under the Family and Medical Leave Act
- Right to inherit a spouse's pension
- Entitlement to inherit social security and disability benefits upon the death of a spouse
- Ability to inherit jointly owned property without incurring tax penalties
- Right to file joint income taxes
- Ability to put a spouse on the deed to a home without incurring tax penalties
- Access to “family memberships”
- Domestic violence protections
- Immunity from testifying against a spouse
- Right to sue for wrongful death of a spouse