517.09 SOLEMNIZATION.

Subdivision 1. **General.** Both applicants shall declare in the presence of a person who is not the same individual as the applicant or the witness, authorized to solemnize civil marriages and two attending witnesses that each takes the other as spouse.

Subd. 2. **Refusal to solemnize; protection of religious doctrine.** Each religious organization, association, or society has exclusive control over its own theological doctrine, policy, teachings, and beliefs regarding who may marry within that faith. A licensed or ordained member of the clergy or other person authorized by section 517.04 to solemnize a civil marriage is not subject to any fine, penalty, or civil liability for failing or refusing to solemnize a civil marriage for any reason.

Subd. 3. **Refusal to participate or support solemnization; protection of religious belief.** (a) Except for secular business activities engaged in by a religious association, religious corporation, or religious society, the conduct of which is unrelated to the religious and educational purposes for which it is organized, no religious association, religious corporation, or religious society shall be required to provide goods or services at the solemnization or celebration of any civil marriage or be subject to civil liability or any action by the state that penalizes, fines, or withholds any benefit to the religious association, religious corporation, or religious society under the laws of this state, including, but not limited to, laws regarding tax exempt status, for failing or refusing to provide goods or services at the solemnization or celebration of any civil marriage, if providing such goods or services would cause the religious association, religious corporation, or religious society to violate their sincerely held religious beliefs.

(b) The exception in paragraph (a) applies to employees, agents, and volunteers acting within the capacity of their employment or responsibilities with a religious association, religious corporation, or religious society.

History: *(8570) RL s 3560; 1945 c 409 s 1-3; 1951 c 255 s 1; 1951 c 700 s 2; 1978 c 772 s 9; 2013 c 74 s 5; 2024 c 101 art 3 s 2; 2025 c 35 art 11 s 9*