

Rabbi Steve Nathan
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Jewish, Interfaith, & Non-denominational weddings for all couples in the Poconos, Northeastern Pennsylvania, the Lehigh Valley and the Greater Philadelphia/Delaware Valley Region, as well as surrounding states.

What are my basic fees and what do they include?

- The complete fee for officiating at a wedding in the Poconos/NE PA region and elsewhere runs from \$800-\$1000. The fee is based on a number of factors, which we can discuss in our initial conversation.

- My fee includes all of the following: The meetings described in the next section, conducting the ceremony and guiding the couple in choosing any ritual items, such as ketubah (Jewish marriage document), ceremonial wine cups, etc). I also work together with the wedding planner in whatever ways necessary.

If necessary, the fee also includes a brief rehearsal prior to the ceremony. However, this is usually not necessary if there is a wedding planner involved, as that is really their area of expertise.

- A simple renewal of vows or a small private ceremony fees begin at \$400.

- If there is financial hardship, please let me know, as I am willing to adjust the fee.

- If I must travel more than 25 miles each way there will be a travel stipend based on the distance. If travel is more than 2 hours each way, I may also need lodging, depending upon what time the ceremony takes place.

What is the planning process and what is included in the complete officiation fee?

- I first meet with the couple to determine if we feel that we would be a good match. If we agree, then I ask each member of the couple to complete a questionnaire which addresses their background, thoughts about marriage and relationship, etc. - I then meet with the couple three-four times to work on planning the ceremony (1 ½ -2 hours each), as well as performing pre-marriage counseling in which we discuss their relationship, how things might change once they are married and what issues of concern might exist. This planning and counseling is an essential and required part of the wedding planning and what allows me to make sure that the ceremony reflects the couple's unique personalities and desires. At least one session should be in person. The others can be via phone or video chat.

How far in advance does the process begin?

- Since the process does include multiple meetings, as well as time for us to create the ceremony, I prefer to begin working with the couple at least 6 – 9 months prior to the ceremony. - I have started working with the couple less than 6 months before the wedding, but this is less than ideal.

What is my professional/personal background?

I was ordained as a rabbi by the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in 1994. I also received a BA in Human Development from Boston College and an M.Ed. in Counseling Psychology from Teacher's College-Columbia University. I have also studied, practiced and taught mindfulness meditation and Jewish storytelling and writing. \ You can see some of these writings at www.mindfultorah.com

In addition, I bake challah (bread) and can make extra large loaves for weddings! Check out my my Facebook page @challahsteve.