

## San Bernardino County ARC---Deputy Commissioner for a Day Virtual Program

**Overview** – San Bernardino County Assessor-Recorder-Clerk (ARC) expanded marriage services during COVID-19 by offering virtual services including its Deputy Commissioner for a Day program.

**Challenge** –In response to COVID-19 safety measures, ARC limited office visits, including the number of allowed guests for marriage services. This resulted in fewer marriage services performed.

**Solution** – In accordance with *Executive Order N-58-20*, ARC office developed an online portal for couples to complete a marriage license application online rather than in-person. After completing the online application, couples are directed to email ARC to set up their virtual marriage license and ceremony appointment. Couples may then be virtually married within the state of California and have an unlimited number of virtual guests. Additionally, ARC offers virtual Deputy Commissioner for a Day requests. This program offers the opportunity for a friend or family member to become deputized online and can later perform a single marriage ceremony anywhere within the State of California.

**Innovation** – Through the development of the virtual marriage services including the Deputy Commissioner for a Day Program, ARC is able to limit face-to-face contact, keeping both customers and staff safe. Per California Family Code Section 401 (b), ARC is able to deputize others to perform civil marriages. With no specific guidelines on the process, ARC was able to move the program online allowing marriage ceremonies to be performed outside ARC's offices by other individuals not previously ordained within the State of California.

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**Results** – Through the utilization of these virtual online marriage services, ARC has resulted in an increased efficient service. Those that participated in the Deputy Commissioner for a Day program previously encountered a 4-6-week processing time. Our office has seen a substantial increase in Deputy Commissioner for a Day program applicants since the commencement of the virtual program. Constituents are pleased with the responsiveness of the program and are grateful that these services allow a friend or family member to perform their marriage ceremony, giving them a sense of normalcy.

**Replicability** – Through our experience, the utilization of the online Deputy Commissioner for a Day program is beneficial as it increases efficiency within the department. The previous in-person program called for numerous “touchpoints” from our mail courier to interoffice mail sorting and processing. Counties wishing to convert this program online will need to enhance their system by purchasing video and online signature verification software. Through the use of these technologies, the transaction is secure and most importantly safe for all parties involved.

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**Optional Submission** – <https://youtu.be/iBSiRXTkEtY>