

BELIZE:

MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2024

ARRANGEMENT OF CLAUSES

1. Short title.
2. Repeal and replacement of section 4.
3. Repeal of section 5.
4. Repeal of section 6.
5. Amendment of section 30.
6. Repeal of section 34.
7. Amendment of section 36.
8. Amendment of section 40.
9. Amendment of section 44.
10. Amendment of section 47.
11. Amendment of section 49.
12. Repeal of section 55.
13. Amendment of section 60.
14. Amendment of section 64.
15. Amendment of section 65.
16. Amendment of section 66.
17. Amendment of section 67.
18. Amendment of section 69.
19. Amendment of section 73.
20. Repeal of section 75.

21. Amendment of Second Schedule.

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BELIZE:

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for

AN ACT to amend the Marriage Act, Chapter 174 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2020; to increase the age of marriage to eighteen years; to remove provisions for consent to marriage of infants to be given by parents or guardians; and to provide for matters connected therewith or incidental thereto.

(Gazetted, 2024)

BE IT ENACTED, by and with the advice and consent of the House of Representatives and Senate of Belize and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as the

Short title.

MARRIAGE (AMENDMENT) ACT, 2024,

and shall be read and construed as one with the Marriage Act, which is hereinafter referred to as the principal Act.

CAP. 174.

2. The principal Act is amended by repealing section 4 and replacing it with the following–

Repeal and replacement of section 4.

“Age of marriage. **4.–(1)** A marriage solemnised between persons either of whom is under the age of eighteen years shall be void.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall affect any marriage solemnised or contracted before the passing of this Act, and any such marriage shall be or become valid in any case where, if this Act had not been passed, it would have been or have become valid.”.

3. The principal Act is amended by repealing section 5.

Repeal of section 5.

4. The principal Act is amended by repealing section 6.

Repeal of section 6.

5. The principal Act is amended in section 30 by repealing sub-section(1).

Amendment of section 30.

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- Repeal of section 34. **6.** The principal Act is amended by repealing section 34.
- Amendment of section 36. **7.** The principal Act is amended in section 36(2)—
- (a) in paragraph (d), by inserting the word “and” after the semi-colon;
 - (b) in paragraph (e), by deleting the semi-colon and substituting a full stop; and
 - (c) by deleting paragraph (f).
- Amendment of section 40. **8.** The principal Act is amended in section 40(3)—
- (a) in paragraph (a), by inserting the word “and” after the semi-colon;
 - (b) in paragraph (b), by deleting the phrase “; and” and substituting a full stop; and
 - (c) by deleting paragraph (c).
- Amendment of section 44. **9.** The principal Act is amended in section 44(1) by deleting the words “or of consent on the part of anyone whose sent is required to the marriage not having been obtained”.
- Amendment of section 47. **10.** The principal Act is amended in section 47(2)—
- (a) in paragraph (c), by inserting the word “and” after the semi-colon; and
 - (b) by deleting paragraph (d).
- Amendment of section 49. **11.** The principal Act is amended in section 49(1) by deleting paragraph (a).
- Repeal of section 55. **12.** The principal Act is amended by repealing section 55.
- Amendment of section 60. **13.** The principal Act is amended in section 60 by repealing sub-section (3).
- Amendment of section 64. **14.** The principal Act is amended in section 64(2) by deleting paragraph (b).
- Amendment of section 65. **15.** The principal Act is amended in section 65(1)—

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- (a) in paragraph (d), by deleting the phrase “, not being a widower or widow, without the written consent of the person required under this Act to give such consent”; and
- (b) in paragraph (e), by deleting the phrase “, not being a widower or widow, under a consent given by a person not required to give it under this Act”.
- 16.** The principal Act is amended in section 66(1) by deleting the phrase “, not being a widower or widow, whom he or she knows to be an infant, without previously obtaining the consent required to be obtained prior to the celebration of marriage with an infant”. Amendment of section 66.
- 17.** The principal Act is amended in section 67– Amendment of section 67.
- (a) in sub-section (1), by deleting paragraph (a);
- (b) in sub-section (2), by deleting the phrase “consent,”; and
- (c) in sub-section (3), by deleting the phrase “consent,”.
- 18.** The principal Act is amended in section 69(1) by deleting paragraph (b). Amendment of section 69.
- 19.** The principal Act is amended in section 73 by deleting the phrase “the consent of anyone whose consent thereunto is by law required, or”. Amendment of section 73.
- 20.** The principal Act is amended by repealing section 75. Repeal of section 75.
- 21.** The principal Act is amended in the Second Schedule– Amendment of Second Schedule.
- (a) in Form 2, by deleting the phrase “(b) (or in not being a widower (or widow) is (or am) an infant, and the consent of whose consent to this marriage is required by law has been duly given and obtained thereto”;
- (b) in Form 5, by deleting the phrase “(if this is not the case, state the facts as required by section 47 as, for example, “I am an infant, but I am the widow of E.F. who died on the day of “or “I am an infant and the consent of G.H. whose consent is required to my marriage has been given as shown by the writing under his hand now produced to me and marked””);
- (c) in Form 7, by deleting the column headed “Consent by whom given, or Judges order”; and

- (d) in Form 8, by deleting the column headed “Consent by whom given, or Judges order”.

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