

Item	Domestic Partnership Act	Matrimonial Causes Act	Recommendation
Age of marriage/partnership	18+ years old	18+ years old but children between 16 and 18 can marry with parental consent	The HRC believes the DPA should be amended to allow Domestic Partnerships to be formed by couples between sixteen and eighteen with parental consent to ensure equality between the Acts.
Adultery as a grounds for dissolution	No ability to dissolve union based on adultery of partner	Adultery is a grounds for divorce.	Adultery is currently defined as extra marital sexual relations between a man and a woman which is part of the reason for the exclusion. To avoid discrimination, Domestic Partnerships should have the ability to dissolve their union based on infidelity of their partner.
Marriage Officer	Partnership ceremony legally presided over by a Celebrant in functionally equivalent ways to Marriage Officer.	Marriage ceremony legally presided over by a Marriage Officer.	It is important to protect the rights of people to practice their religion freely including protecting religious leaders from allegations of discrimination if they do not feel comfortable performing Domestic Partnership ceremonies and the HRC feels this is a fair way to achieve this. We recommend keeping the separate categories, especially given that Marriage Officers can choose to register as Celebrants.
Quasi-Religious Services	N/A	N/A	We would argue that perhaps the Act does not do enough to protect the rights of clergy and other religious leaders who often offer related but ancillary services such as marriage counselling. In this context, such counselling is rooted in the religious beliefs of the counselor and counselling same sex (or unmarried traditional) couples may offend their religious beliefs. We would ask the Minister to review such services and consider whether they merit similar protections under the DPA.