



***Ligamen* Case: Instructions**

1. The *Ligamen* is based on the fact that if a person married a person who had been married before and divorced, the first spouse is non-Catholic and still living, and there has been no declaration of nullity by the Church of that first bond of marriage, that marriage was not valid because a previous bond existed. If the marriage in question ends in divorce, the Petitioner may have that bond declared null because a previous bond existed. Thus he or she is now free to contract a true marriage bond. Example:
 - John marries Ellen;
 - John was previously married to Agnes and they divorced;
 - Agnes was still alive when John married Ellen;
 - John and Agnes's marriage was not declared null by the Church;
 - John and Ellen get a divorce;
 - Ellen wants to marry Edward;
 - Ellen proves that John was not free to marry her because he still had a bond recognized by the Church to Agnes;
 - Ellen is now free to marry and thus marries Edward.

2. The *Ligamen* is a documentary case. The documents needed are:
 - A marriage certificate of that first marriage (John and Agnes)
 - A decree of divorce of the first marriage (John and Agnes)
 - A marriage certificate of the subsequent marriage (John and Ellen)
 - A decree of divorce of that marriage (John and Ellen)

3. Witness statements are needed:
 - Those who knew about the marriage and can testify that:
 - The first spouse was still alive after the divorce and through the marriage (Agnes was still alive when John married Ellen).
 - The John who married Agnes and the John who married Ellen is one and the same person.

4. Regarding the Form – **Petition on Grounds of *Ligamen* (Prior Bond)**
 - The name and address of the former spouse are **required** because the Tribunal must contact the former spouse to request a statement and participation.

5. If the Petition is accepted, only the Tribunal will send out questionnaires to the Petitioner and Respondent, and finally to the witnesses whom the Petitioner will name on his/her form. When the forms are completed they are returned only to the Tribunal.
6. Judgment will be based on the documents, witness statements, and the animadversions of the Defender of the Bond.

Please note:

- ❖ All Documents mentioned are, generally, public documents and available (usually for a fee) from the County in which the marriage and/or divorce took place.
- ❖ It is necessary to have the name and contact information, including an email address, of a Catholic pastoral minister with whom the Petitioner is working on the *Ligamen* petition.

Please submit a non-refundable registration fee of \$100 with this form.

If this is not possible, please contact the Tribunal.



The Tribunal
ARCHDIOCESE FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES, USA

P.O. Box 4469
 Washington, D.C. 20017-0469
 Telephone: 202-719-3604
 Fax: 202-269-9022
 Email: tribunal@milarch.org

PETITION ON GROUNDS OF *LIGAMEN* (PRIOR BOND)

I, the undersigned Petitioner, _____, hereby petition the
LAST NAME OF PETITIONER (USE MAIDEN NAME IF A WOMAN), FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME

Tribunal of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA on the grounds of *Ligamen* (Prior Bond) to declare null my marriage contracted with _____, which took place on
LAST NAME OF FORMER SPOUSE (USE MAIDEN NAME IF A WOMAN), FIRST NAME, MIDDLE NAME

_____ before a _____ in _____.
DATE PRIEST, MINISTER, MAGISTRATE, ETC. CITY AND STATE

The contact information for my **former** spouse is:

Present Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

I hereby maintain that _____ was previously married
FORMER SPOUSE

_____ times; the names of his/her former spouse(s) is/are: _____
NUMBER NAME

_____. Furthermore, I maintain that
NAMES (CONTINUED)

he/she was still alive when _____ contracted marriage with me.
FORMER SPOUSE

In support of my petition, I submit the required documents and contact information of two knowledgeable witnesses.

Witness #1: _____
FULL NAME RELATIONSHIP

MAILING ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS PHONE NUMBER

Witness #2: _____
FULL NAME RELATIONSHIP

MAILING ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS PHONE NUMBER

Contact information of Catholic pastoral minister:

NAME OF CATHOLIC PASTORAL MINISTER

HOME OR CELL PHONE NUMBER WORK PHONE NUMBER

CIVILIAN EMAIL ADDRESS

MILITARY EMAIL ADDRESS

“I reaffirm before God that I have answered truthfully and to the extent of my knowledge.”

SIGNATURE OF PETITIONER

DATE

MAILING ADDRESS

CIVILIAN EMAIL ADDRESS

HOME OR CELL PHONE NUMBER WORK PHONE NUMBER

MILITARY EMAIL ADDRESS