



METROPOLITAN TRIBUNAL  
ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANTONIO  
2718 W. Woodlawn Ave., San Antonio, TX 78228  
[www.archsa.org/tribunal](http://www.archsa.org/tribunal)  
210-734-1661

### **Instructions for the Submitting Minister completing the Collaborative Process**

1. The Petitioner will indicate to you whether the Respondent is willing to participate and/or also wants/believes that the marriage should be declared invalid. If the Respondent is in any way hostile towards this process, *do not use the collaborative process*.
  - a. The Respondent **must be willing** and able to initial all the statements in the Respondent's request for the Collaborative Process. If the Respondent is opposed to the process and/or is unwilling to participate in the process, then the Submitting Minister should not use the Collaborative Process and should only submit the Formal Petition for a Declaration of Nullity and its corresponding documents.
  - b. All documents, questionnaires, and other forms submitted by the Respondent **must be submitted directly to the Submitting Minister** and not by the Petitioner. Also, the Petitioner is not permitted to submit the entire packet for the Collaborative Process to the Tribunal directly, but must be submitted by the Submitting Minister or another member of the parish staff that is not a party or witness for the submitted case. Also, the Submitting Minister is not permitted to grant access to or show to the Petitioner the questionnaire, request, and other documents and forms submitted by the Respondent.
2. The Petitioner will complete the "Request for the Collaborative Process – Petitioner" and submit it to the Submitting Minister. They also at this point should already have spoken with the Respondent and received verbal agreement to participate.
3. The Submitting Minister will send the following documents to the Respondent:
  - a. Letter to the Respondent
  - b. Request for the Collaborative Process – Respondent (which includes the questionnaire)
  - c. Respondent Witness Form
4. The Respondent will return the above forms.
5. The Submitting Minister will then submit the following directly to the Tribunal:
  - a. Formal Petition for a Declaration of Nullity and its supporting documents and deposit (the regular petition must accompany the Collaborative Process forms)
  - b. Request for the Collaborative Process – Petitioner
  - c. Request for the Collaborative Process – Respondent
  - d. Respondent Witness Form (if they decide to provide witnesses)
6. After the Petition is received, the Judicial Vicar will decide if the Petition can be completed as a Collaborative Process case and the parties and submitting minister will be cited/notified. Please note that even if the Judicial Vicar decides not to hear the case using the Collaborative Process, it is very helpful for the Tribunal if the Respondent has already been informed and agreed to participate in the Process.
7. If there are any questions, do not hesitate to contact the Metropolitan Tribunal.



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### **Request for the Collaborative Process – Petitioner**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (full name of the Petitioner, maiden name if a woman), request that the petition that I have presented before the Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of San Antonio, be considered for the Collaborative Process (*De processu matrimoniali brevior coram Episcopo*), as outlined in Canons 1683-1687.

Please initial the following:

My former spouse, \_\_\_\_\_ [full name, maiden name if woman], the Respondent, is not opposed to our marriage being declared invalid.

I have spoken with my former spouse and he/she has agreed to cooperate in the process and complete the request for the Collaborative Process and its corresponding forms and documents.

I understand that participating in the Collaborative Process does not affect or modify the rights and responsibilities afforded to me in the Ordinary Process.

I, as the Petitioner, am responsible for the fee associated with this process, and the Respondent is not required to contribute financially.

I have submitted along with this request the Formal Petition for a Declaration of Nullity and its corresponding forms and documents.

I understand that it is the decision of the Judicial Vicar whether or not my case will be heard using the Collaborative or Ordinary Process.

**WITH GOD AS MY WITNESS, I AFFIRM THAT I AGREE TO THE ABOVE.**

\_\_\_\_\_

[signature]

\_\_\_\_\_

[date]

\_\_\_\_\_

[signature of submitting minister]

\_\_\_\_\_

[name of submitting minister]

Date

Dear Mr./Mrs./Ms. \_\_\_\_\_,

We hope this letter finds you well. As you should already know, your former spouse \_\_\_\_\_ is in the process of submitting a petition for a declaration of nullity of the marriage between you and him/her. In December of 2015, Pope Francis made various reforms to this process. One such reform is what we call the “Collaborative Process.”

With all petitions, you as the former spouse (the respondent) have certain rights and are invited to participate in the process. Not all respondents choose to participate, but many do. Some, for various reasons (such as the respondent agrees with seeking the declaration of nullity, the respondent also is seeking to remarry in the church, etc.), are very willing to participate in the process – and this is where the collaborative process comes into play.

In the collaborative process we ask for your help by filling out some additional forms which are enclosed. If you agree to participate, please complete these forms and return them to **me**.

Your agreement to participate in the collaborative process does **not** add any financial obligations on your part in terms of the case fee, nor is your participation signifying to anyone that you condone any negative behavior or actions on the part of your former spouse. It also does not modify or limit in any way the rights you have as the respondent.

If you have any questions about the collaborative process or the marriage annulment process in general, please do not hesitate to contact me, or you can also contact the Office of the Tribunal at [tribunal@archsa.org](mailto:tribunal@archsa.org) or 210-734-1661. You can also visit [www.archsa.org/tribunal](http://www.archsa.org/tribunal) to find answers to commonly asked questions, such as what an annulment is, how it affects the children, civil effects, etc.

Respectfully,

[Submitting Minister’s name & contact info]



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### Request for the Collaborative Process – Respondent

I, \_\_\_\_\_ [full name, maiden name if woman],  
the Respondent, request along with my former spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
[full name, maiden name if woman], the Petitioner, that our marriage be declared invalid by the  
Metropolitan Tribunal of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

*Please initial the following:*

\_\_\_ I am not opposed to a declaration of nullity.

\_\_\_ I agree to cooperate with this process by submitting testimony through the attached questionnaire. I understand that I may be contacted (usually through phone or mail) throughout the process if the judge or other appointed officials have further questions.

\_\_\_ I understand that being in agreement that our marriage be declared invalid, I do not necessarily agree with or condone the actions of my former spouse, or my own, which contributed to the end of our marriage.

\_\_\_ I understand that participating in the Collaborative Process does not affect or change the rights and responsibilities afforded to me in the Ordinary Process.

\_\_\_ I understand that I am not responsible for the fee associated with this process. However, I am encouraged to contribute to the ministry of the Tribunal.

\_\_\_ I understand that I am to return this form and the attached questionnaire to the priest or parish staff acting as the submitting minister, and not to my former spouse.

WITH GOD AS MY WITNESS, I AFFIRM THAT THE ANSWERS I HAVE GIVEN IN THE ATTACHED QUESTIONNAIRE ARE TRUE, AND THAT I AGREE TO THE ABOVE.

\_\_\_\_\_  
[signature]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[date]

\_\_\_\_\_  
[signature of public notary/Catholic priest or deacon] [name of notary/Catholic priest or deacon]

## **Request for the Collaborative Process – Respondent**

### **USING SEPARATE PAPER, TYPE OR PRINT CLEARLY THE ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

The following points are to be included in the written history of your marriage. Please tell us your story, typing in a narrative form, not in an outline. Please number each page.

#### **I. BACKGROUND**

##### **A. ABOUT YOURSELF (RESPONDENT)**

1. Please describe the home environment in which you grew up. What were your parents like? Include the character of your parents, their relationship with each other and with you and your siblings. Describe any tensions, difficulties or other problems present in the family while you were growing up. How did these problems affect you?
2. Briefly, what was your history of dating before meeting your former spouse? Had you ever been engaged to another person?
3. Was the marriage in question here your first marriage? If not, give details including names, date, places of each prior marriage and what caused its breakdown. What was their religion? If Catholic, how was the marriage resolved?
4. Do you have any history of drug or alcohol abuse, gambling, pornography, or other addictions? If so, when did this behavior first begin? Any history of criminal activity, arrest or imprisonment? If so, give dates, offenses, etc. (exclude minor traffic violations)
5. Have you ever been in individual treatment with a licensed counselor (psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker)? If so, give the name and address of the therapist(s) and the dates of treatment.

##### **B. ABOUT YOUR FORMER SPOUSE (PETITIONER)**

6. Please describe the home environment in which your former spouse grew up. What were his/her parents like? Include his/her parents' character, their relationship with each other and with siblings. Describe any tensions, difficulties or other problems in the family while your former spouse was growing up. How did these problems affect him/her?
7. Was your former spouse's marriage to you his/her first marriage? If not, give details including names, date, places of each prior marriage and what caused its breakdown. What was their religion? If Catholic, how was the marriage resolved?
8. Does your former spouse have any history of drug or alcohol abuse, gambling, pornography, or other addictions? If so, when did this behavior first begin? When did you become aware of it? Any history of criminal activity, arrest or imprisonment? If so, give dates, offenses, etc. (exclude minor traffic violations)
9. Has your former spouse ever been in individual treatment with a licensed counselor (psychologist, psychiatrist, social worker)? If so, give the name and address of the therapist(s) and the dates of treatment.

## Request for the Collaborative Process – Respondent

### II. COURTSHIP

*If a civil marriage preceded a marriage in the Catholic Church, please be sure to clarify when events happened, either during the civil marriage, after the Catholic marriage, or during both.*

10. Did you and your former spouse have problems during your courtship? If so, describe the problems and how you resolved them.
11. Was a pregnancy involved in your decision to marry? If so, explain circumstances and feelings.
12. Did you or your former spouse experience any internal or external pressure to get married? If so, explain the nature and/or source of the pressure.
13. What were your main reasons for entering the marriage? What were your former spouse's main reasons?
14. If a civil marriage preceded a marriage in the Catholic Church, what was the quality of the relationship during the civil marriage?
  - a. Why did you choose to get married in the Church? Why did you get married civilly first?

### III. MARRIED LIFE

*If a civil marriage preceded a marriage in the Catholic Church, please be sure to clarify when events happened, either during the civil marriage, after the Catholic marriage, or during both.*

15. What issues were a source of conflict between you? When did these issues and/or problems first surface? How did you deal with them?
16. If there were no children born of the marriage, explain why. How did this affect your relationship?
17. Give a detailed explanation of what you believe to be the chief reason or reasons for the breakup of your marriage.

### IV. SEPARATIONS

18. Were there any temporary separations during the marriage? If so, please explain the causes, circumstances, dates, duration and reasons for reconciliation.
19. What specific events, difficulties and/or circumstances led to your final separation?

### V. FINAL QUESTIONS

20. Has your former spouse ever remarried? If so, give the date(s) and place(s) of the marriage(s). If any of these marriages ended in death or divorce, please explain.
21. Have you remarried or do you have plans to remarry (civilly or in the Catholic Church)? If so, give the date(s) and place(s) of the marriage(s). If any of these marriages ended in death or divorce, please explain. (Be sure to make these facts known to the priest, deacon or parish minister assisting you with this process.) Does this current civil spouse or fiancé have any previous marriages that have not been resolved by the Catholic Church, regardless of whether the marriage was in the Catholic Church or not?
22. Is there any other fact or circumstance concerning the marriage to your former spouse that you believe is relevant to the evaluation of your petition for nullity?

# RESPONDENT WITNESS FORM

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*Your Full Name*

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*Your Maiden Name, if female*

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*Name of Former Spouse*

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*Maiden Name of Former Spouse, if female*

**In order to substantiate your testimony, please provide at least two witnesses:**

Appropriate witnesses include parents, relatives or friends, who knew you *and/or* your former spouse during your courtship, wedding and throughout your married life. Be sure to contact your witnesses to ask for their cooperation before you provide us with their information.

**PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT ALL INFORMATION CLEARLY.**

**Witness 1:**

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other \_\_\_\_\_ **Language Preference:** \_\_\_\_\_

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(First) (Middle) (Last) (Relationship)

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\*Complete address: number/street/city/state/zip code

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Contact Telephone Number: home/cell/work \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address

**Witness 2:**

Mr. Mrs. Ms. Other \_\_\_\_\_ **Language Preference:** \_\_\_\_\_

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(First) (Middle) (Last) (Relationship)

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\*Complete address: number/street/city/state/zip code

(\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Contact Telephone Number: home/cell/work \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address

**\* Contact information is required.**

**Note: If you would like to include additional witnesses, please provide on separate pages.**