

## **Introduction**

The Premarital Counseling (PMC) Department of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community USA is happy for your engagement and for all the blessings you will receive as you move toward marriage, and beyond, Insha'Allah.

The PMC team members are grateful for the privilege of assisting you as you seek out premarital counseling according to the instructions of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (may Allah be his Helper), who has made PMC a pre-requisite of the Nikah.

## **Premarital Counseling Process**

- Submit PMC request through the Rishta Nata website at <https://www.rishtanata.us> under Marital Counseling tab or by sending email to [pmc@Rishtanata.us](mailto:pmc@Rishtanata.us)
- Please provide as much detail as possible for both bride and groom including email, phone and name of the Jamaat.
- Please try to submit the request for a counseling session to be held at least two weeks before the date of the Nikah, earlier if possible.
- Once the PMC request is received, the PMC coordinator requests further information as needed, provides the PMC document to each party and arranges a mutually convenient counseling session.
- Counselors are dedicated Jama'at members who have undergone training with an experienced counselor; usually one male and one female member conduct the PMC session.
- It is expected that the candidates and their parents will have read the PMC document before the counseling session.
- The PMC is usually conducted via Skype video-conferencing, so parties can join from anywhere in the US or abroad. All the parties need to share their Skype IDs with the PMC coordinator. It is recommended to use a PC or a laptop as Skype video-conferencing does not work well with smart phones.
- Each PMC session usually lasts approximately two hours
- The bride, the groom and their parents are expected to join the PMC session (parents attend only the first 30 minutes to 1 hour)
- Candidates are encouraged to follow up with counselors as/if needed after the session should further questions or any concerns arise.

## **Why Premarital Counseling?**

You may be asking yourself: "Why do I need premarital counseling?" Here's a brief overview:

- We want to help you keep in mind the need to build a solid, Islamic foundation as you start your marriage. Premarital counseling seeks to enable the bride-to-be and groom-to-be to have a strong, healthy relationship, assisting them to think about and prepare the foundation for a stable and mutually satisfying marriage.
- No relationship is perfect; it is likely you are going to encounter challenges in your relationship as you adjust to married life. We want to help you understand how to address these difficulties sooner rather than later. So, the more honest you are about any of your

concerns, the more you will facilitate our ability to help you in preparation for marriage. **There is no judgement passed by counselors and be assured that everything shared by you is in complete confidence.**

- The important thing is to be honest when you answer and talk about each question. There are no “right” answers, nor “wrong” ones. They are just your answers, hopefully based upon truth. Use the questions and the advice / guidance as a launching board to know each other on a level that will be important before you marry.
- It is good to do some of your emotional work now before you marry rather than dumping a lot of unvoiced expectations on your partner after the marriage. You do not want to set your marriage up for future problems and maybe even possible failure (God Forbid) because expectations were never given a voice.
- We want to prepare you for the marriage, and not just the wedding day, although there are guidelines provided for that too by Huzoor (may Allah be his Helper). Sometimes couples and their families get caught up in the frantic details of preparing for the wedding day, and do not spend much time getting ready for the marriage itself. Premarital counseling is meant to slow you down and help you think about the relationship. The wedding day marks the beginning of your life together, but the marriage will last for the rest of your life, insha'Allah. It is good for you to take time to prepare in every way possible for this lifelong journey together.

Topics addressed in premarital counseling are intended to highlight ways to handle the relationship according to Islamic teachings, in order to enhance the marriage. Commonly addressed topics will include, but are not limited to, those provided to you in the PMC document. Please read it through carefully prior to your counseling session!