

## Requirements to function as a sponsor for Baptism or Confirmation

1. Insofar as possible, a person to be baptized is to be given a sponsor who assists an adult in Christian initiation or together with the parents presents an infant for baptism. A sponsor also helps the baptized person to lead a Christian life in keeping with baptism and to fulfill faithfully the obligations inherent in it (canon 872)
2. The sponsor for Confirmation is to take care that the confirmed person behaves as a true witness of Christ and faithfully fulfills the obligations inherent in this sacrament (canon 892); it is desirable to choose as sponsor the one who undertook the same function in baptism (canon 893 §2)
3. There is to be only one male sponsor or one female sponsor or one of each (canon 873)
4. The person to take on the function of sponsor must be designated by the one to be baptized, by the parents or the person who takes their place, or in their absence by the pastor or minister and have the aptitude and intention of fulfilling this function (canon 874 §1, 1°)
5. The person to take on the function of sponsor must have completed the sixteenth year of age, unless the diocesan bishop has established another age, or the pastor or minister has granted an exception for a just cause (canon 874 §1, 2°)
6. The person to take on the function of sponsor must be a Catholic who has been confirmed and has already received the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist and who leads a life of faith in keeping with the function to be taken on (canon 874 §1, 3°)

Sponsors “do not merely undertake a responsibility for the Christian education of the person being baptized (or confirmed) as a relation or friend; they are also there as representatives of a community of faith, standing as guarantees of the candidate's faith and desire for ecclesial communion” (*Directory for the application of principles and norms on ecumenism*, 98).

“A fully initiated Catholic may be restricted from exercising the office of sponsor if he or she does not live the faith in a manner that is in keeping with the responsibilities of this office. Thus, people who do not participate regularly in the Eucharist or who are living in marriages not recognized by the Church may not be qualified to function as sponsors” (K. Hart, *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, 1062-1063)

7. The person to take on the function of sponsor must not be bound by any canonical penalty legitimately imposed or declared (canon 874 §1, 4°)
8. The person to take on the function of sponsor must not be the father or mother of the one to be baptized (canon 874 §1, 5°)

9. A baptized person who belongs to a non-Catholic ecclesial community is not to participate except together with a Catholic sponsor and then only as a witness of the baptism (canon 874 §2)
10. For a just cause a member of an Eastern Orthodox Church can take on the function of sponsor together with a Catholic sponsor “so long as there is provision for the Catholic education of the person being baptized, and it is clear that the godparent is a suitable one” (*Directory*, 98, b)