

## Common Notarial Acts

Notarial Act	Description/Notary's Role	States where authorized
<b>Acknowledgment</b>	An acknowledgment includes two essential elements. The first is the oral, formal declaration made by a person who signed a document indicating that the signature is genuine and that signing the document was a free will act performed for the purposes indicated by the document. This declaration is made by the signer in the presence of a notary. The second part is the notary's certificate, a written statement that the signer person did appear in person, was satisfactorily identified, and made the oral acknowledgment. This notarial act is authorized in and follows the same or similar process in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.	AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WY, WV
<b>Affidavit/Jurat</b>	Generally, as a notarial act, an affidavit is a voluntary, written, sworn statement signed in the presence of a notary. In some states, <i>jurat</i> refers only to the notary's certificate on a sworn statement. In others, <i>jurat</i> is used instead of or interchangeably with <i>affidavit</i> . In a few others, such as MI and NJ, the definition of jurat includes both affidavits and verifications. The 19 states where affidavits are not expressly authorized, the provision is made through the authorization to administer oaths, witness signatures, and certify the same.	AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, FL, GA, IA, ID, IN, LA, MA, ME, MI, MN, MS, MT, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, PA, RI, SC, TN, UT, VA, VT, WI
<b>Certify/Attest Copy</b>	To certify or attest a copy of a document, a notary photocopies a document, supervises the photocopying of document, or compares a previously photocopied document to its original, and then certifies that the copy is identical to its original. Most states that allow notaries to perform this duty specify the documents eligible for copy certification by a notary. For example, all states prohibit notaries from copy certifying state-issued birth certificates. Several states indicate that notaries may not certify copies of documents that are to be publicly recorded. Many states that do not allow notaries to certify copies make a provision for the individual desiring the certify copy to make the copy, go before a notary, and sign a sworn statement regarding the authenticity of the copy.	AR, AZ, CO, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, KS, LA, MA, ME, MO, NH, NM, NV, OK, OR, PA, SC, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV <b>Special:</b> , -journal only AL, CA, MD, MS, MT, -POA only CA
<b>Witness/Attest/Verify signature/Attest execution/Attest signer identity</b>	Witnessing or attesting signatures is a notarial act in which the notary determines that a signature is that of the person appearing before the notary and the one named in the document, and then certifies the same. This determination is usually accomplished by witnessing the signature as it is made. The certificate for this notarial act differs from an acknowledgment and an affidavit/jurat in that there is no statement that the signer acknowledged his execution of an instrument or swore to or affirmed the truthfulness of statements in or on the document signed. There is only the statement by the notary that signature was made in the presence of the notary. In some states, the notary, in attesting a signature, must also certify the proper identification of the signer.	DC, DE, GA, HI, IL, KS, MA, MD, NC, NH, OK, OR, WA, WI, WY
<b>Proof/Proof by subscribing witness/Proof of execution/Witness proof</b>	Acknowledgments chiefly are used to prove signatures on deeds and other publicly recorded documents. However, in some states, recorders may accept other "proofs," the mainly affidavits of subscribing witnesses who attest to the circumstances under which an instrument was signed by the principal.	AK, AL, CA, CO, LA, MT, ND, NE, NJ, NV, NY, SC, TX
<b>Oath/Affirmation/Swear witness</b>	All notaries have statutory authority to administer oaths and affirmations. Nearly all states have some restrictions on to whom and in what situations an oath may be administered by a notary. For example, generally, a notary may not administer an oath of office to a notary or any oath required in a military setting. Oaths and affirmations normally are administered by notaries to affiants, deponents, and those entering public office. Some states specify that notaries also are authorized to administer oaths and affirmations to witnesses called to give testimony in a court of law.	AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DC, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, ND, NE, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WI, WV, WY

Notarial Act	Description/Notary's Role	States where authorized
<b>Protest</b>	Notaries in most states retain the archaic authorization to issue certificates of protest for banking and other commercial purposes. However, with the possible exception of certain situations near the PA/NY border, this notarial act is rarely utilized for legitimate purposes, though often sought for nefarious purposes by tax-avoiding, anti-government groups.	AL, AR, CA, CO, DC, DE, GA, HI, IA, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, ME, MN, MS, NC, NE, NH, NJ, NV, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VT, WA, WI
<b>Deposition/Subpoena/ Summons</b>	A deposition is a complex notarial act in which the notary, normally by order of a court (or counsel), gives a witness notice of the requirement to appear, administers an oath or affirmation to that person upon appearance, records (or oversees the recording of) the sworn, oral testimony of that person, certifies the entire series of events, and seals and delivers the results to the court who ordered the testimony. In some states, this function of the notary is viewed as judicial rather than ministerial in that the notary in compels the witness to give testimony.	AR, CA, CO, CT, HI, ID, IN, LA, MA, MN, MT, NC, NE, NH, NY, OH, OR, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, VA, VT
<b>Verifications</b>	Verification is a sworn, written declaration—attached to an instrument, a document, or a set of documents—that the contents of the statement or document are true or accurate. Some states do not make a separate authorization for verifications: Some states consider a verification to be a type of affidavit; others, a sworn acknowledgment. Generally, in an affidavit, an individual signs his or her own statement under oath or affirmation. In a verification, a person accepts the responsibility for the truth or accuracy of information contained in an attached document (such as a complaint or an application), information contained in a document (such as a pleading), or information compiled or contained in a collection of documents (such as financial disclosures or annual reports). The swearer may or may not also acknowledge execution of attached document.	CO, DC, DE, GA, IA, ID, IL, KS, LA, NC, NJ, NV, OR, PA, WA, WI
<b>Certificate</b>	In most states, <i>certificate</i> is the general, catchall term for the statement of notarial particulars on a form or the wording associated with a notarial act. However, other states also use <i>certificate</i> more specifically to describe the notarial act of certifying that something is true, an event took place, or an act has been performed. In KY, the authorization to issue a certificate is provided for only on absentee ballots.	AK, AL, CA, KY, MD, MS, MT, NE, OH, OK, SC, SD, TX, VA, WA
<b>Marriage</b>	While notaries in many states are authorized to notarize marriage license applications, in Florida and Maine, notaries are authority to actually perform the ceremony and certify the same.	FL, ME
<b>Certify safe deposit box contents/Witness bank safe, vault, box opening</b>	This official act involves the notary as an impartial witness to an event and certification of the same. In some cases, the notary also inventories the contents of safe/vault/box and certifies the same.	FL, GA, MA, PA, TN
<b>Other:</b>	<p>Definitions and/or statutory specifications for these official acts remain illusive as of this printing.</p> <p>(FL)verify vehicle identification numbers</p> <p>(MS)attesting letters of attorney</p> <p>(MS)notarial procuration</p> <p>(MS)proof of debts</p> <p>(ND)certify documents</p> <p>(SC)renunciation of dower or inheritance</p> <p>(TN)certify the probate or acknowledgement of a deed or other instrument to the county clerk</p> <p>Other acts/services permitted by other state laws (OH, AL, NM, SC, ID, AR, WV, MO, KY, MN, SD, WI)</p> <p>other notarial duties required by commercial usage (MS)</p>	