

Urbandale Notarial Guidelines

Notarization Defined:

Notarization is the 'act of witnessing' by the notary public in accordance with specifications of state law. Notarization involves signing documents requiring a signature or signatures before a disinterested party (the notary) who can attest to the authenticity of the signature(s) and the individual's willingness to sign.

Before coming to the library for a notarization, please:

- Call or email to ensure a notary is available. Notaries will not be available during the last half hour of open hours.
- Bring a current photo ID that includes a signature.
- Complete all documents EXCEPT for the signature and date fields. Signers MUST sign the document in front of the notary.
- Bring disinterested witnesses (people who have no stake in the outcome of the document) if the document requires witness signatures in addition to the notary. Library staff will not be taken off the job to be witnesses.

Important Points For Notarizing Documents:

- The notary will establish the identity of each signer through personal knowledge or with current, signed, I.D. documents.
- All document signers must personally appear before the notary and sign the document in front of the notary.
- If a document requires witness signatures, document owner must bring their own witnesses.
- The notary will assess whether each document signer is competent.
- While not responsible for the content of a document, the notary will alert the signer to any blanks.
- The notarial certificate will be completed. This may include requiring the signer to give a verbal oath or acknowledgment.
- The notary will use their stamp or seal on the document.
- Notary staff have the right to decline any notarization that does not meet state or library guidelines.
- Notary staff will NOT administer thumbprints nor fingerprints.

The notarization of a document WILL:

Detect and deter fraud when the proper steps of notarization are followed.

However, a notarization WILL NOT:

- Prove the truthfulness of statements contained in the document.
- Legalize or validate the document.
- By itself protect a person's rights to his/her artistic creations or inventions.

*Library staff are not attorneys licensed to practice law in this state; are not allowed to draft legal records, give advice on legal matters, including immigration, or charge a fee for those activities. (Disclaimer required by Iowa Code 2018, Section 9B.25)