



4 illegal things Notaries should NEVER DO



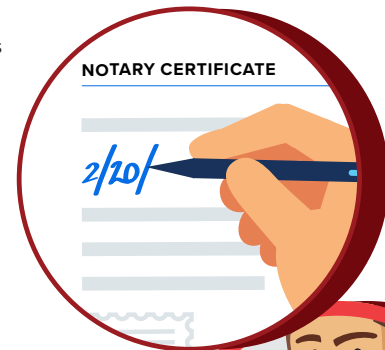
Breaking the law when you're parking, driving, or littering may earn you a ticket or small fine. Breaking the law when notarizing can result in jail time, loss of your Notary commission, or thousands of dollars in costly lawsuits. Here are 4 illegal acts you should never do as a Notary:

1 Entering false information on a Notary certificate

What does this mean? Signers sometimes ask Notaries to write a different date for the notarization (known as "backdating") or alter other information in the certificate (such as listing an absent signer as present during a notarization). **Never do this.**

Why is this illegal? If you falsify information on a certificate, whoever possesses the fraudulently notarized document can use it to commit fraud.

What are the consequences? Knowingly falsifying a Notary certificate is prohibited in every state and can result in you paying a fine of thousands of dollars or going to jail.



2 Failing to require a signer to personally appear during a notarization

What does this mean? When you notarize, the signer must personally appear — either by physically being present for a traditional pen-and-paper notarization, or by appearing and communicating with you using methods approved by your state during a remote notarization. **Never notarize without the signer's personal appearance.**

Why is it illegal? If you notarize a signature without the signer personally appearing, you have no way to know if the person signed the document willingly — or if the signature was falsified by someone else.

What are the consequences? Failing to require personal appearance could cause you to lose your commission, pay a hefty fine, or in some states, be found guilty of a misdemeanor offense.



3 Letting someone else use your seal

What does this mean? Only you — the commissioned Notary — are authorized to use your official seal to perform notarizations. **Never let anyone else use your Notary seal.**

Why is it illegal? Your official seal is used to authenticate every notarization you do. In the wrong hands, a seal could be used to fool authorities into accepting a falsified document as authentic.

What are the consequences? In some states, letting someone else use the seal is a misdemeanor or requires the Notary to pay a fine. Also, if someone uses your seal to commit fraud, you may be potentially liable for a lawsuit from the victims.



4 Charging an improper Notary fee

What does this mean? When charging a signer for your services, you should **never charge a higher Notary fee than your state allows.** You must also avoid charging **fees that are not allowed in your state.**

Why is it illegal? The fees Notaries can charge are regulated by state law. These regulations are in place to protect customers from being unfairly price-gouged by Notaries. While some states do not set maximum fees, they may have other guidelines, such as requiring any Notary fee charged to be "reasonable."

What are the consequences? In some states, charging improper fees may result in your commission being suspended or revoked.



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Learn more at: NationalNotary.org



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