Strange, Bizarre and Unusual Notarizations

January 2013
Topics We Will Address Today

• Strange and unusual notarizations
• How to handle these uncommon requests
• Provide a forum to share your story
During the webinar, please tweet with @NationalNotary notaryedu - we'd love to hear from you!
Can I certify the birth certificate of a horse?
Answer: Yes

- A signer may write a statement and the Notary could perform a jurat or verification
- It may not accomplish what the signer is after, but that’s not your job
Can I notarize a tattoo?

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Answer: No

• You can’t just stamp and sign an image or document — notarization is not copyright protection
• However, the signer may write a statement about the tattoo and you can notarize that
Do I use the death certificate to identify a dead person? Do I write “deceased” after the name?
Answer: No to both

- A vital record is not a proper ID
- You can’t notarize the signature of someone who is dead
- If it’s the executor, you are notarizing representative signature
How do I notarize for someone with no hands?
Signer With No Hands

• Ask how they usually sign
• There are a few options:
  ➢ Signature by Mark
  Consult your state’s primer
  Call NNA® Hotline
  ➢ Power of Attorney
• Note in your journal
I tried to notarize for a bedridden woman, but her ID had expired and there was no witness. What could I have done?
Bedridden Signer

- If they can’t provide you with proper ID, you must refuse
- Talk to your signer before the appointment to let him or her know what counts as ID
I was asked to notarize documents in a foreign language. I required that they be in English as well as two forms of ID.
Foreign Languages

- You could have notarized the first time
- Many states don’t require the documents to be in English
- In most states, don’t need two IDs
A homeless signer requested notarization. Can I use police documents, a birth certificate and a Social Security card as ID?
Answer: No

- These documents are not acceptable IDs
- Best practice is to avoid using them even if your state doesn’t say so
- Using one or two credible witnesses may be an option
Do I need a signature and a thumbprint from a person I personally know when doing a notarization by mail?
Answer: No

- The first challenge is that if this request is made by mail you cannot perform the notarization.
- The person needs to physically appear before the Notary.
- In some situations the signer may need to sign the document in the presence of the Notary.
- Then the Notary must identify the signer and, if your state requires it, the Notary must get the person’s signature and thumbprint in the journal during the time of notarization.

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