

are false, and if no basis exists for refusing the notarial service in accordance with § 92.9, he may consider the advisability of informing the applicant that he will perform the service only with a specific waiver of responsibility included in the notarial certificate. Furthermore, a notarizing officer may, in his discretion, add to the specific waiver in the notarial certificate a statement of verifiable facts known to him, which will reveal the falsity of material in the document. However, normally a notarizing officer shall exercise great caution not to limit the general privilege of a United States citizen while abroad to execute under oath any statement he sees fit to make, including mistaken, unnecessary, and even frivolous statements: *Provided*, That substantial and compelling reasons do not exist which impel restraining action on the part of the notarizing officer. On the other hand, experience has shown the desirability of including, as standard practice, a specific waiver of responsibility in all authentications (§ 92.38) executed in connection with divorce proceedings.

[22 FR 10858, Dec. 27, 1957, as amended at 60 FR 51723, Oct. 3, 1995]

**§ 92.11 Preparation of legal documents.**

(a) *By attorneys.* When a document has been prepared by an attorney for signature, a notarizing officer should not question the form of document unless it is obviously incorrect.

(b) *By notarizing officers.* A notarizing officer should not usually prepare for private persons legal documents for signature and notarization. (However, see the provisions in § 92.24 regarding the preparation of affidavits.) When asked to perform such a service, the notarizing officer should explain that the preparation of legal forms is normally the task of an attorney, that the forms used and the purposes for which they are used vary widely from jurisdiction to jurisdiction and that he could not guarantee the legal effectiveness of any document which he might prepare. The person desiring the preparation of a legal document should be referred to such publications as Jones Legal Forms and The Lawyers Directory with the suggestion that he select

or adapt the form which appears best suited to his needs. The notarizing officer may, in his discretion, arrange to have a member of his office staff type the document. If the document is typed in the Foreign Service office, the fee for copying shall be collected as prescribed under the caption "Copying and Recording" of the Tariff of Fees, Foreign Service of the United States of America (§ 22.1 of this chapter).

[22 FR 10858, Dec. 27, 1957, as amended at 60 FR 51723, Oct. 3, 1995]

**§ 92.12 Necessity for certification of notarial acts.**

A notarizing officer must execute a written certificate attesting to the performance of a notarial act. This certificate may be inserted on or appended to the notarized document (see § 92.17 regarding the fastening of sheets). The certificate evidences the performance of the notarial act. Failure to execute this certificate renders the notarial act legally ineffective. Each notarial act should be evidenced by a separate certificate; two or more distinct notarial acts should not be attested to by one certificate.

[22 FR 10858, Dec. 27, 1957, as amended at 60 FR 51721, Oct. 3, 1995]

**§ 92.13 Form of notarial certificate.**

The form of a notarial certificate depends on the nature of the notarial act it attests. (See §§ 92.18 to 92.48 for discussions of the various forms of notarial certificates.) Rules pertaining to venue, and signing and sealing, are common to all notarial certificates.

**§ 92.14 Venue on notarial certificates.**

(a) The term *venue* means the place where the certificate is executed. The venue must be shown on all notarial certificates to establish the qualifications and sphere of authority of the notarizing officer to perform the notarial act. The items characteristic of a typical venue, in the order of their appearance in the certificate, are as follows:

(1) Name of the country (or dominion, Territory, colony, island, as appropriate);

(2) Name of province or major administrative region (if none, this may be omitted);

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(3) Name of local community (city, town, or village);

(4) Name of the Foreign Service post.

(b) When a notarial act is performed, and the notarial certificate executed, at a locality in a consular district other than the locality in which the Foreign Service office is situated, the venue should mention only the name of the country (or dominion, territory, colony, island, as appropriate), and the name of the consular district.

(c) The venue used at a Foreign Service post which has not been officially designated as an embassy, legation, consulate general, consulate, or consular agency should bear the notation "American Consular Service" in place of the post name.

### § 92.15 Signing notarial certificate.

The notarizing officer should sign a notarial certificate on the lower right-hand side. The name and full official title of the notarizing officer should be typed, stamped with a rubber stamp, or printed in ink on two separate lines immediately below his signature. When the notarizing officer is assigned to a Foreign Service post in both a diplomatic and consular capacity, he should use his consular title in the notarial certificate. (See § 92.7.)

[22 FR 10858, Dec. 27, 1957, as amended at 60 FR 51723, Oct. 3, 1995]

### § 92.16 Sealing the notarial certificate.

The notarizing officer should seal a notarial certificate with the impression seal of the post on the lower left-hand side of the certificate. A notarial certificate executed at a Foreign Service post which has not been officially designated as an embassy, legation, consulate general, consulate, or consular agency should be sealed with an impression seal bearing the legend "American Consular Service" and the name of the locality.

### § 92.17 Fastening of pages.

When the instrument or document to which a notarial act relates consists of more than one sheet, or when the notarial certificate will be attached and not written on the document itself, the notarizing officer should bring all the

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sheets comprising the document together under his official seal.

[22 FR 10858, Dec. 27, 1957, as amended at 60 FR 51723, Oct. 3, 1995]

### SPECIFIC NOTARIAL ACTS

### § 92.18 Oaths and affirmations defined.

(a) *Oath*. An oath is an outward pledge given by the person taking it that his attestation or promise is made under an immediate sense of his responsibility to God. In a broad sense the word "oath" includes all forms of attestation by which a person signifies that he is bound in conscience to perform an act faithfully and truly, and in this sense it includes "affirmation".

(b) *Affirmation*. An affirmation is a solemn and formal declaration or asseveration in the nature of an oath that a statement, or series of statements, is true. When an oath is required or authorized by law, an affirmation in lieu thereof may be taken by any person having conscientious scruples against taking an oath. As a general rule, an affirmation has the same legal force and effect as an oath.

### § 92.19 Administering an oath.

The usual formula for administering an oath is as follows: The officer administering the oath requests the person taking the oath to raise his right hand while the officer repeats the following words: "You do solemnly swear that the statements set forth in this paper which you have here signed before me are true. So help you God." Whereupon the person taking the oath answers, "I do."

### § 92.20 Administering an affirmation.

In administering an affirmation the procedure followed is generally the same as in the case of an oath, but the formula is varied by the use of the following words: "You do solemnly, sincerely, and truly affirm and declare that . . . , and this you do under the pains and penalties of perjury."

### § 92.21 Notarial certificate to oath or affirmation.

The written statement attesting to the administration of an oath or affirmation is known as a jurat. The jurat