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Illinois Signature Witnessing: Notary Instructions

Signature Witnessing — Illinois short-form certificate (5 ILCS 312/6-102.5)

NOTARY REFERENCE — DO NOT ATTACH THIS PAGE TO THE DOCUMENT.

Signature witnessing

- Use this certificate when the signer signs the document in your presence and the document does not require an oath or an acknowledgment. Identify the signer, watch them sign, and complete the certificate.

1. Never choose the notarization for the signer

- Use the certificate wording already on the document. If there is none, ask which notarial act the document or receiving agency requires. You may explain the difference, but the signer decides. Choosing for them, preparing documents, or giving legal advice is unauthorized practice of law.
- **Acknowledgment:** the signer declares they signed willingly. **Jurat (verification on oath or affirmation):** the signer swears or affirms the contents are true and signs in your presence. **Signature witnessing:** you witness the signing.

2. Personal appearance and identity

- The signer must appear before you in person, or by remote or electronic notarization only if you hold an Illinois electronic notary commission. Check the box on the certificate that shows how the signer appeared.
- Identify the signer by personal knowledge or satisfactory evidence: a current government-issued identification with photograph and signature, or the oath of a credible witness who personally knows the signer.

3. Completing the certificate and seal

- **County** is where the notarization takes place. Complete every blank, print your name, and include your commission expiration date. For a loose certificate, fill in the attached-document box, staple it to the document it belongs to, and never move it.
- Your seal must be clear and legible and show your name, “Official Seal,” “Notary Public, State of Illinois,” and your commission expiration date. Do not let it cover text or signatures.

4. Journal

- A journal is required for electronic and remote notarizations and strongly recommended for every notarization: date, type of act, document, signer’s name and address, how the signer was identified, and the fee charged.

5. Limits

- Do not notarize your own signature or a document in which you have an interest. Illinois notaries may not certify copies of public records; for other copies, use a copy certification by the document custodian, sworn before you as a jurat. Charge no more than the fees allowed by Illinois law, and agree on any travel fee in advance. A notary who is not an attorney may not give legal advice.

These notes are a general reference for Illinois-commissioned notaries and are not legal advice. Follow the Illinois Notary Public Act (5 ILCS 312) and current Illinois Secretary of State notary rules. © 2027 First Choice Mobile Notary & Apostille.

SIGNATURE WITNESSING

State of Illinois

ATTACHED RECORD (recommended for a loose certificate)

Title or type of record | Record date | Number of pages

Signer(s) other than those named below (if any)

SIGNATURE WITNESSING

STATE OF ILLINOIS)
COUNTY OF) SS.
)

Signed (or attested) before me on

(date) by (name(s) of individual(s))

The signer appeared before me:

in person

by remote notarization, as authorized under Illinois law

X _____

Notary Public

Notary's printed name

My commission expires

(Notary seal)