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Washington Signature Witnessing: Notary Instructions

Signature Witnessing Certificate — Washington notarial certificate (RCW 42.45.150)

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

Signature witnessing

- You witness the individual signing the record in your presence. No oath is given, and you do not vouch for the contents.

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:** the signer swears or affirms the contents are true and signs in your presence. **Signature witnessing:** you witness the signing. **Copy certification:** you certify that a copy matches an original that is not a public record.

2. Personal appearance and identity

- The signer must appear before you in person, or by remote notarization only if you are authorized as a remote notary in Washington. 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 and never pre-sign or pre-seal a certificate. For a loose certificate, fill in the attached-document box, staple it to the document it belongs to, and never move it.
- Your stamp must be clear and legible and show your name as commissioned, the words “Notary Public” and “State of Washington,” and your commission expiration date. Sign the certificate and include your title and commission expiration. Do not let the stamp cover text or signatures.

4. Journal

- Washington requires a journal entry for **every** notarial act: date and time, type of act, description of the record, the signer’s name and address, how the signer was identified, and the fee charged (RCW 42.45.180).

5. Limits

- Do not notarize your own signature or a document in which you have an interest. Do not certify copies of public records, such as birth, death, or marriage certificates or recorded documents; those must come from the issuing agency. Charge no more than the fees allowed by 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 Washington-commissioned notaries and are not legal advice. Follow the Washington Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts (chapter 42.45 RCW) and current Washington Department of Licensing notary rules. © 2027 First Choice Mobile Notary & Apostille.

SIGNATURE WITNESSING

State of Washington

ATTACHED DOCUMENT (recommended for a loose certificate)

Title or type of document | Document date | Number of pages

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

SIGNATURE WITNESSING

STATE OF WASHINGTON)
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 electronic notarization, as authorized under Washington law (chapter 42.45 RCW)

X _____

Notary Public

(Notary seal)

Notary's printed name

Title (Notary Public, State of Washington) | My commission expires

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