

Notarization of Documents

Notarization of a document serves to verify that the person whose signature is notarized actually signed the document. This verification is typically accomplished by the notary completing a statement certifying that the individual signed the document and, in some cases, that the individual swore to the truthfulness of the content of the document *in the presence of the notary*. The nature of the verification makes it important that the document *not* be signed until the person whose signature is being notarized is present before the notary. Additionally, the notary must verify the identity of the party whose signature is being notarized by requiring appropriate proof of identity, such as a driver's license or University identification card.

A notary public performs notarial duties under a commission from a probate judge and must give a bond with sureties to guarantee that he/she faithfully discharges the duties of the office. Faithful discharge of those duties precludes the notary from notarizing a signature of an absent party even though (1) the absent party can provide a telephone assurance that he indeed signed the document; (2) the notary knows and recognizes the signature of the absent party; or (3) the party presenting the document saw the absent party sign the document and can attest to that fact.

The Office of Counsel (Room 235, Madison Hall) provides the services of a notary public without charge for members of the campus community signing documents incident to performance of their official duties with the University. A notary will ordinarily be available at any time during normal campus work hours. However, to insure that a notary is available, it may be helpful to call 824-6633 to schedule an appointment.