



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-0029
www.dos.pa.gov

OFFICE OF THE
SECRETARY OF THE COMMONWEALTH
717-787-6458

BUREAU OF COMMISSIONS,
ELECTIONS & LEGISLATION
717-787-5280

Re: Notarized documents submitted for certification/apostille

To Whom it May Concern:

Please be advised that all notarized documents presented to the Secretary of the Commonwealth for authentication MUST contain:

- **Rectangular notary seal/stamp of Pennsylvania notary public**
(embosser is no longer required, but may be used in addition to the seal/stamp)
- **Proper notary statement**
(must contain one of these: certification, affidavit or acknowledgment wording – sample statements are provided below)
- **Signature of notary public**
- **Date of notarial act**

On a notarized document submitted for certification/apostille, there are three different notary statements that may be used, which indicate the type of notarial act being performed: certification, affidavit or acknowledgment.

1. Certification wording – A notary public may certify or attest that a document is a true and correct copy of the original. The notary shall determine that the copy is a complete and accurate transcription or reproduction of the record or item.

Sample certification short form certificate

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
County of _____

I certify that this is a true and correct copy of a _____
in the possession of _____.

(notary seal)

Notary Public signature

Date

2. Verification on oath or affirmation (affidavit) wording – A verification on oath or affirmation is a declaration, made by an individual on oath or affirmation before a notarial officer, that a statement in a record is true. The term includes an affidavit. The notary shall determine, from personal knowledge or satisfactory evidence of the identity of the individual, all of the following:

(1) The individual appearing before the notarial officer and making the verification has the identity claimed.

(2) The signature on the statement verified is the signature of the individual.

The name of the affiant (the person giving the statement) must be mentioned in the affidavit and the affiant is required to sign the affidavit in the notary's presence.

Sample short form affidavit

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
County of _____

Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on _____ (date)

by _____ (name(s) of individual(s) making statement).

(Affiant's Statement)

(Signature of Affiant)

(notary seal)

Notary Public signature

3. Acknowledgment wording – An acknowledgment is a declaration by an individual before a notarial officer that: (1) the individual has signed a record for the purpose stated in the record; and (2) if the record is signed in a representative capacity, the individual signed the record with proper authority and signed it as the act of the individual or entity identified in the record.

A notarial officer who takes an acknowledgment of a record shall determine, from personal knowledge or satisfactory evidence of the identity of the individual, all of the following:

(1) The individual appearing before the notarial officer and making the acknowledgment has the identity claimed.

(2) The signature on the record is the signature of the individual.

The person acknowledging the record must personally appear before the notary. In addition, the person may sign the document in the notary's presence or acknowledge that the signature on the document is his or her own. There are three forms of acknowledgment specified in the Revised Uniform Law on Notarial Acts, but the most common (for an individual) follows.

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
County of _____

This record was acknowledged before me on _____ (date)

by _____ (name(s) of individual(s)).

(notary seal)

Notary Public signature