

Notary Public

Authentication of Notarizations

Generally

One of the Notary Public section's main tasks is to certify to the status of a notary using either a certificate or an apostille. These papers are attached to documents that require some official acknowledgment that the notarization was performed by a notary, commissioned in Oregon, in good standing. Foreign jurisdictions often require them before they will accept the notarized document. Even though the counties can, by statute, issue certificates, it saves much time and trouble to go directly to our office, because we hold the notary records and the county cannot issue state level certificates required by some foreign governments. They sometimes require a "chain of certification" so that every signature authenticating another is itself authenticated. In other words, the notary certifies the document signer's signature. The Secretary of State certifies the Notary's signature; the Federal Government certifies the State's signature and authority.

The Oregon Secretary of State can also certify to the State Registrar for vital records (Oregon Center for Health Statistics), that is, certified copies from the State Registrar's office of birth and death certificates, and marriage and divorce records can be authenticated by our office.

If you need an apostille or authentication certificate for a county document, please call us at (503) 986-2593 before sending it in. Most county records cannot be authenticated.

Often, authentications are required for school transcripts and diplomas that need to go to foreign countries because an exchange student has studied here. These can sometimes be achieved by notarization of the registrar's signature on the transcript and then the Secretary of State's authentication/apostille of the notarization.

Authentication Certificates

It is important to note which country the document is going to when requesting authentication from the Secretary of State.

Authenticating an Oregon Notarization/Vital Record/Transcript or Diploma

Oregon Notarization:

The procedure is simple. Send the original, notarized document to us, or bring it in to our office in Salem.

Vital Record:

When you need a vital record (birth/death certificate, marriage or dissolution of marriage certificate, etc.) authenticated, you should first get a certified copy of the record from the [Oregon Center for Health Statistics](#). A certified copy of a county record is not appropriate and should not be sent to us. Only the Oregon Center for Health Statistics can issue a true, current vital record.

Send the original, notarized document to us, or bring it in to our office in Salem.

Transcript or Diploma:

When you need an Oregon high school or college transcript or diploma authenticated, you must have the person in charge of the records (normally the Registrar) [sign on the record a statement certifying to its authenticity](#).

Send the original, notarized document to us, or bring it in to our office in Salem.

Fees & Requirements

We will charge \$10 for each apostille; you will need a different apostille or authentication for each notarized document. If you bring it in, we will do the apostille/authentication while you wait (normally less than 20 minutes). If you mail or express mail it, you should include:

1. A brief cover letter stating the country the document is going to, your name, phone number, and other contact information (if you are paying by Visa/MasterCard we will need the credit card number and expiration date);
2. Each notarized document which we need to authenticate;
3. A personal or business check or money order made payable to the State of Oregon, if you are not paying by credit card; and
4. A return self-addressed stamped envelope so that we can mail the documents precisely to the place you desire.

Our contact information is:

**Corporation Division
Notary Public Section
255 Capitol St. NE Suite 151
Salem, OR 97310**

Phone: (503) 986-2593

e-mail: oregon.notary@state.or.us

<http://www.filinginoregon.com/notary>

Apostilles

If the country belongs to the 1961 Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents, the apostille is used. The Convention provides for the simplified certification of notarized documents by use of a special form called an “apostille” in certifying the document. The apostille does not need to be ribboned onto the document being certified. With the certification by the Hague Convention apostille, the document is entitled to recognition in the country of intended use, and no additional authentication or legalization is required.

Note: The “Apostille” attests to the validity of the signature of the notary public, county official or Oregon state official, but not of the underlying signature nor of the contents of the document.

The Hague Convention applies “to public documents which have been executed in the territory of one Contracting State and which have to be produced in the territory of another Contracting State.” The Convention does not apply to domestic filing of documents.

“Apostilles” will not be issued for documents intended for use within the United States.

A NOTARY PUBLIC IN OREGON IS NOT A “NOTARIO PUBLICO.”

In most of the world, Notaries Public are lawyers, often with training in immigration, estate and contract law. In Latin America, such notaries are called “Notario Publico”. That is NOT true in Oregon. An Oregon Notary Public may **not** advertise as a “notario publico.” In Oregon, notaries are basically witnesses, and unless they are also licensed attorneys, are not allowed to give immigration or legal advice, or accept legal fees.



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Oregon Secretary of State Corporation Division

How to Get an Apostille or Authentication for:

Oregon Notarization

Vital Records

&

Diploma/Transcripts

When a document is to go to a foreign country, it is often necessary to have the notarization or official certification authenticated. Some countries call this an apostille. The Oregon Secretary of State can certify to Oregon notaries public and the State Registrar for vital records (Oregon Center for Health Statistics). The procedures are outlined inside this brochure.