



# Norwalk Easter Public Library Notarial Guidelines

## Notarization Defined:

Notarization is the “act of witnessing” by the notary public in accordance with specifications of state law. Notarization involves signing documents requiring a signature or signatures before a disinterested party (the notary) who can attest to the authenticity of the signature(s) and the individual’s willingness to sign.

***Before*** coming to the library for a notarization, please:

- Call or email to ensure a notary is available.
- Bring a current photo ID that includes a signature for all document signers, including witnesses.
- Complete all documents EXCEPT for the signature and date fields. Signers MUST sign the document in front of the notary.
- Bring disinterested witnesses (people who have no stake in the outcome of the document) if the document requires witness signatures in addition to the notary. Library staff will not be taken off the job to be witnesses.

The notarization of a document **WILL** detect and deter fraud when the proper steps of notarization are followed:

- The notary will establish the identity of each signer through personal knowledge or with current, signed ID documents.
- All document signers (including witnesses) must personally appear before the notary and sign the document in front of the notary.
- The notary will assess whether each document signer is competent.
- While not responsible for the content of a document, the notary will alert the signer to any blanks.
- Notary staff will NOT administer thumbprint or fingerprints.
- The notarial certificate will be completed. This may include requiring the signer to give a verbal oath or acknowledgement.
- The notary will use their stamp or seal on the document.
- The notary will record the notary act in the notary’s log.
- Notary staff have the right to decline any notarization that does not meet state or library guidelines.
- Notary staff have the right to decline service if the customer, the document, or any circumstances of the request for notary service raise any issue of authenticity, ambiguity, doubt, or uncertainty.

However, a notarization **WILL NOT**:

- Prove the truthfulness of statements contained in the document.
- Legalize or validate the document.
- By itself protect a person’s rights to his/her artistic creations or inventions.

\*Library Staff are not attorneys licensed to practice law in this state; are not allowed to draft legal records, give advice on legal matters, including immigration, or charge a fee for those activities. (Disclaimer required by Iowa Code 2018, Section 9B.25).

Please contact us by phone at 515-981-0217 or by email at [library@norwalk.iowa.gov](mailto:library@norwalk.iowa.gov) with questions.