

What Can a Notary Public Notarize?

An Oregon notary public is limited to witnessing certain acts – and **only** those acts – authorized by Oregon law. These acts are:

- Witnessing a person's *acknowledgment* of his or her signature.
- Witnessing a person's *acknowledgment* of his or her signature when he or she is representing someone else, for example, on behalf of a person or corporation, or as attorney-in-fact.
- Witnessing someone's *oath or affirmation* that something is true;
- Witnessing that a document is a *true copy* of a document in the possession of someone else.
- Witnessing that someone has *signed* a document.
- Witnessing, in a *commercial protest*, that a negotiable instrument has been dishonored (for example, a check has been returned for insufficient funds).

An Oregon notary public may not testify, as a notary public, to any other acts.

Many countries outside the United States allow notaries to do much more. These notaries are generally attorneys, in addition to being notaries public, and have more responsibility and training. Other countries often ask for U.S. notaries to testify to certain facts, including that a person is living, resides at a certain address, or makes a certain income, because notaries in every country but the U.S. have that power. **Oregon notaries do not.**

Sometimes, a country will accept an affidavit as an alternative: the person (for example, someone who is trying to keep a pension from a country outside the U.S.) swears to the facts the country wants to know, and the Oregon notary public witnesses the oath. We recommend that the signer consult with the receiving country before trying any alternative procedure.

For more information on documents that are intended for sending to another country, see information on apostilles and authentications.

If you have questions about allowable notarizations or any other notarial matters, please contact the Notary Team at the Secretary of State's Corporation Division:

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