

THE SIX COMPONENTS OF A CERTIFICATE

All are required, and all must be present, clearly associated, on the same page, and correct every time.

1. **LOCATION** (sometimes referred to as venue). This is the location where the notarization is taking place. Both state and county are required. If the certificate comes with the location on it and it is incorrect, it must be corrected.
2. **DATE OF NOTARIZATION**. This will always be today's date, the date of the notarization. Never pre- or post-date a certificate to 'help out' a customer—you could lose your commission.
3. **NAME OF SIGNER**. Normally a blank will be provided. You enter the name of the signer as it appears on the document.
4. **LANGUAGE INDICATING THE NOTARIAL ACT REQUIRED** ("signed before me," "acknowledged before me," "this is a true and correct copy," etc.).
5. **NOTARY STAMP**. Be sure when you get it that your stamp is correct: check your name, commission number, and commission expiration date, and that your stamp does not say 'seal' rather than 'stamp' on it. You can review required content and format for the stamp in [OAR 160-100-0100](#).
6. **NOTARY SIGNATURE**. Make sure that the signature you use on certificates matches the signature the Secretary of State has on file for you; if you sign in a different way, you will be sanctioned. Call us if you need to doublecheck the format of your official signature!

OTHER IMPORTANT ADVICE

The format of certificates can vary greatly; don't panic if it looks daunting at first. Read each certificate carefully before notarizing to make sure you understand what notarial act is required and that it is permissible in Oregon, whether there is any information you need to correct, and whether there are any components you need to add.

Be sure that you take the time to cross out irrelevant information in the certificate to make sure that it is an accurate record of the notarization. For example, if the words sworn/affirmed appear, be sure to cross out the option your customer did **not** choose when you have administered the oath. Cross out pronouns that are not relevant to your customer.