

**NOTARIES PUBLIC REVISION**

1998 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

**Sponsor: Katherine Bryson**

AN ACT RELATING TO THE NOTARIES PUBLIC REFORM ACT; PROVIDING  
DEFINITIONS; AMENDING AND RENUMBERING PROVISIONS REGARDING OATHS,  
POWERS, AND LIMITATIONS; PROVIDING PROHIBITED CONDUCT; PROVIDING  
FOR JOURNAL ENTRIES, STORAGE, AND INSPECTION; SETTING REQUIREMENTS  
FOR AN OFFICIAL SIGNATURE AND USE OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE; AND  
PROVIDING FOR NOTARY'S LIABILITY, REVOCATION, AND RESIGNATION.

This act affects sections of Utah Code Annotated 1953 as follows:

**AMENDS:**

**46-1-2**, as last amended by Chapter 106, Laws of Utah 1990

**46-1-3**, as last amended by Chapter 43, Laws of Utah 1995

**46-1-4**, as last amended by Chapters 106 and 286, Laws of Utah 1990

**46-1-5**, as repealed and reenacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

**46-1-12**, as enacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

**ENACTS:**

**46-1-20**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**46-1-21**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**46-1-22**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

**REPEALS AND REENACTS:**

**46-1-6**, as last amended by Chapter 313, Laws of Utah 1994

**46-1-7**, as repealed and reenacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

**46-1-8**, as last amended by Chapter 54, Laws of Utah 1993

**46-1-9**, as repealed and reenacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

**46-1-10**, as last amended by Chapter 54, Laws of Utah 1993

1        **46-1-11**, as enacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

2        **46-1-13**, as last amended by Chapter 54, Laws of Utah 1993

3        **46-1-14**, as enacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

4        **46-1-15**, as enacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

5        **46-1-16**, as enacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

6        **46-1-17**, as enacted by Chapter 222, Laws of Utah 1988

7        **46-1-18**, as enacted by Chapter 106, Laws of Utah 1990

8        **46-1-19**, as enacted by Chapter 54, Laws of Utah 1993

9        *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

10       Section 1. Section **46-1-2** is amended to read:

11        **46-1-2. Definitions.**

12        As used in this chapter:

13        (1) "Acknowledgment" means a notarial act in which a notary certifies that a signer, whose  
14        identity is personally known to the notary or proven on the basis of satisfactory evidence, has  
15        admitted, in the notary's presence, having signed a document voluntarily for its stated purpose.

16        (2) "Commission" means to empower to perform notarial acts and the written authority  
17        to perform those acts.

18        ~~[(2)]~~ (3) "Copy certification" means a notarial act in which a notary certifies that a  
19        photocopy is an accurate copy of a document that is neither a public record nor publicly  
20        recordable.

21        ~~[(3)]~~ (4) "Jurat" means a notarial act in which a notary certifies that a signer, whose  
22        identity is personally known to the notary or proven on the basis of satisfactory evidence, has  
23        made, in the notary's presence, a voluntary signature and taken an oath or affirmation vouching  
24        for the truthfulness of the signed document.

25        (5) "Notarial act" and "notarization" mean any act that a notary is empowered to perform  
26        under this section.

27        ~~[(4)]~~ (6) "Notarial certificate" ~~[and "certificate" mean]~~ means the part of or attachment to  
28        a notarized document for completion by the notary and bearing the notary's signature and seal.

29        (7) "Notary" means any person commissioned to perform notarial acts under this chapter.

30        ~~[(5)]~~ (8) "Oath" ~~[and]~~ or "affirmation" ~~[mean]~~ means a notarial act ~~[or part thereof]~~ in  
31        which a notary certifies that a person made a vow or affirmation in the presence of the notary on

1 penalty of perjury.

2 (9) "Official misconduct" means a notary's performance of any act prohibited or failure  
3 to perform any act mandated by this chapter or by any other law in connection with a notarial act.

4 [(6)] (10) "Personal knowledge of identity" means familiarity with an individual resulting  
5 from interactions with that individual over a period of time sufficient to eliminate every reasonable  
6 doubt that the individual has the identity claimed.

7 (11) "Satisfactory evidence of identity" means identification of an individual based on:

8 (a) at least two current documents, one issued by a federal or state government with the  
9 individual's photograph, signature, and physical description, and the other by an institution,  
10 business entity, or federal or state government with at least the individual's signature; or

11 (b) the oath or affirmation of a credible person who is personally known to the notary and  
12 who personally knows the individual.

13 Section 2. Section **46-1-3** is amended to read:

14 **46-1-3. Qualifications -- Commissioning -- Jurisdiction and term.**

15 (1) Except as provided in ~~[this section]~~ Subsection (3), the director of the Division of  
16 Corporations and Commercial Code shall commission as a notary any qualified person who  
17 submits an application in accordance with this chapter.

18 (2) ~~[To be]~~ A person qualified for a notarial commission~~[, a person]~~ shall:

19 (a) be 18 years of age or older;

20 (b) ~~[be a resident of]~~ lawfully reside in this state 30 days immediately preceding the filing  
21 for a notarial commission and maintain permanent residency thereafter;

22 (c) be able to read ~~[and]~~, write, and understand English;

23 (d) submit an application to the Division of Corporations and Commercial Code  
24 containing no significant misstatement or omission of fact and include at least:

25 (i) a statement of the applicant's personal qualifications, the applicant's residence address,  
26 a business address in this state, daytime telephone number, and voter precinct number;

27 (ii) the applicant's age and date of birth;

28 (iii) all criminal convictions of the applicant, including any pleas of admission and nolo  
29 contendere;

30 (iv) all issuances, denials, revocations, suspensions, restrictions, and resignations of a  
31 notarial commission or other professional license involving the applicant in this or any other state;

1       (v) an examination written by the applicant;

2       (vi) a declaration by the applicant; and

3       (vii) an application fee determined under Section 63-38-3.2;

4       (e) be a registered voter in Utah or have permanent resident status under Section 245 of  
5 the Immigration and Nationality Act; and

6       (f) be endorsed by two registered voters of the state.

7       (3) ~~[An]~~ The director of the Division of Corporations and Commercial Code may deny an  
8 application [for a notarial commission may be denied] based on:

9       (a) the applicant's conviction for a ~~[criminal offense]~~ crime involving dishonesty or moral  
10 turpitude;

11       (b) any revocation, suspension, or restriction of a notarial commission or professional  
12 license issued to the applicant by this or any other state; or

13       (c) the applicant's official misconduct while acting in the capacity of a notary ~~[public]~~.

14       (4) ~~[Each notary public shall be commissioned]~~ A person commissioned as a notary by the  
15 Division of Corporations and Commercial Code may perform notarial acts in any part of this state  
16 for [the] a term of four years, unless the person resigned or the commission is revoked or  
17 suspended under Section ~~[46-1-16]~~ 46-1-19~~[, or resigned]~~.

18       Section 3. Section **46-1-4** is amended to read:

19       **46-1-4. Bond.**

20       (1) A notarial commission may not become effective until a constitutional oath of office  
21 and a \$5,000 bond has been filed with and approved by the Division of Corporations and  
22 Commercial Code. The bond shall be executed by a licensed surety for a term of four years  
23 commencing on the commission's effective date and terminating on its expiration date, with  
24 payment of bond funds to any person conditioned upon the notary's misconduct while acting in  
25 the scope of his commission.

26       (2) The bond required under Subsection (1) may be executed by the Office of Risk  
27 Management for notaries public employed by a state office or agency.

28       Section 4. Section **46-1-5** is amended to read:

29       **46-1-5. Recommissioning.**

30       An applicant for recommissioning as a notary shall submit a new application and bond and  
31 comply with the provisions of this chapter.

Section 5. Section **46-1-6** is repealed and reenacted to read:

**46-1-6. Powers and limitations.**

A notary may perform the following notarial acts within the state:

(1) acknowledgments;

(2) copy certifications;

(3) jurats; and

(4) oaths or affirmations.

Section 6. Section **46-1-7** is repealed and reenacted to read:

**46-1-7. Disqualifications.**

A notary may not perform a notarial act if the notary:

(1) is a signer of or named in the document that is to be notarized except as provided in

Section 75-2-504;

(2) will receive directly from a transaction connected with a financial transaction in which the notary is named individually as a principal; or

(3) will receive directly from a real property transaction in which the notary is named individually as a grantor, grantee, mortgagor, mortgagee, trustor, trustee, beneficiary, vendor, vendee, lessor, or lessee.

Section 7. Section **46-1-8** is repealed and reenacted to read:

**46-1-8. Impartiality.**

(1) A notary may not influence a person to enter into or to refuse to enter into a lawful transaction involving a notarial act by the notary.

(2) A notary shall perform notarial acts in lawful transactions for any requesting person who tenders the appropriate fee specified in Section 46-1-12.

Section 8. Section **46-1-9** is repealed and reenacted to read:

**46-1-9. False or incomplete certificate.**

A notary may not:

(1) execute a certificate containing a statement known by the notary to be false or materially incomplete; or

(2) perform any official action with intent to deceive or defraud.

Section 9. Section **46-1-10** is repealed and reenacted to read:

**46-1-10. Testimonials prohibited.**

1 A notary may not endorse or promote any product, service, contest, or other offering if the  
2 notary's title or seal is used in the endorsement or promotional statement.

3 Section 10. Section **46-1-11** is repealed and reenacted to read:

4 **46-1-11. Unauthorized practice of law.**

5 (1) A nonattorney notary may complete but may not assist another person in drafting,  
6 completing, or understanding a document or transaction requiring a notarial act.

7 (2) This section does not preclude a notary from giving advice on matters related to a  
8 profession for which the notary is qualified.

9 (3) A notary may not claim to have powers, qualifications, rights, or privileges that the  
10 office of notary does not have, including the power to counsel on immigration matters.

11 (4) (a) A nonattorney notary who advertises notarial services by any means or in any  
12 language shall include in the advertisement a notice that the notary public is not an attorney. The  
13 notice must include the fees that a notary may charge pursuant to Section 46-1-12 and the  
14 following statement:

15 "I AM NOT AN ATTORNEY LICENSED TO PRACTICE LAW IN UTAH AND MAY  
16 NOT GIVE LEGAL ADVICE ABOUT IMMIGRATION OR ANY OTHER LEGAL MATTER  
17 OR ACCEPT FEES FOR LEGAL ADVICE."

18 (b) The notice shall be in English and in the language of the advertisement and in letters  
19 of a conspicuous size. If the advertisement is by radio or television, the statement may be  
20 modified, but must include substantially the same message.

21 (c) Literal translation of the phrase "Notary Public" into any language other than English  
22 is prohibited if the literal translation implies that the notary is a licensed attorney. In this  
23 Subsection (4)(c), "literal translation" means the translation of a word or phrase without regard to  
24 the true meaning of the word or phrase in the language that is being translated.

25 Section 11. Section **46-1-12** is amended to read:

26 **46-1-12. Fees and notice.**

27 (1) The maximum fees that may be charged by a notary [public] for notarial acts are for:

28 [(1)] (a) acknowledgments, \$5 per signature;

29 [(2) oaths or affirmations without a signature, \$5 per person;]

30 (b) certified copies, \$5 per page certified;

31 [(3)] (c) jurats, \$5 per signature; and

1       ~~[(4) certified copies, \$5 per page certified.]~~

2       (d) oaths or affirmations without a signature, \$5 per person.

3       (2) A notary may charge a travel fee when traveling to perform a notarial act if:

4       (a) the notary explains to the person requesting the notarial act that the travel fee is  
5 separate from the notarial fee in Subsection (1) and is neither specified nor mandated by law; and

6       (b) the notary and the person requesting the notarial act agree upon the travel fee in  
7 advance.

8       (3) A notary shall display an English-language schedule of fees for notarial acts and may  
9 display a nonEnglish-language schedule of fees.

10       (4) (a) The fee of a notary shall not exceed \$10 per individual for each set of forms relating  
11 to a change of that individual's immigration status.

12       (b) The fee limitation in Subsection (4)(a) shall apply whether or not the notary is acting  
13 as a notary but does not apply to a licensed attorney, who is also a notary rendering professional  
14 services regarding immigration matters.

15       Section 12. Section **46-1-13** is repealed and reenacted to read:

16       **46-1-13. Journal may be kept.**

17       A notary may keep, maintain, and protect as a public record, and provide for lawful  
18 inspection a chronological, permanently bound official journal of notarial acts, containing  
19 numbered pages.

20       Section 13. Section **46-1-14** is repealed and reenacted to read:

21       **46-1-14. Entries in journal.**

22       (1) For every notarial act, the notary may record in the journal at the time of notarization  
23 the following information including:

24       (a) the date and time of day of the notarial act;

25       (b) the type of notarial act;

26       (c) a description of the document or proceeding;

27       (d) the signature and printed name and address of each person for whom a notarial act is  
28 performed;

29       (e) the evidence of identity of each person for whom a notarial act is performed, in the  
30 form of either:

31       (i) a statement that the person is "personally known" to the notary; or

1       (ii) a description of the identification document, its issuing agency, its serial or  
2 identification number, and its date of issuance or expiration; and

3       (iii) the signature and printed name and address of a credible witness swearing or affirming  
4 to the person's identity; and

5       (f) the fee, if any charged for the notarial act.

6       (2) A notary may record in the journal the circumstances in refusing to perform or  
7 complete a notarial act.

8       Section 14. Section **46-1-15** is repealed and reenacted to read:

9       **46-1-15. Inspection of journal -- Safekeeping and custody of journal.**

10       If a notary maintains a journal, the notary shall:

11       (1) safeguard the journal and all other notarial records as valuable public documents and  
12 may not destroy the documents; and

13       (2) keep the journal in the exclusive custody of the notary, not to be used by any other  
14 notary or surrendered to an employer upon termination of employment.

15       Section 15. Section **46-1-16** is repealed and reenacted to read:

16       **46-1-16. Official signature -- Official seal -- Seal impression.**

17       (1) In completing a notarial act, a notary shall sign on the notarial certificate exactly and  
18 only the name indicated on the notary's commission.

19       (2) A notary shall keep an official notarial seal that is the exclusive property of the notary  
20 and that may not be used by any other person. Upon the resignation, revocation, or expiration of  
21 a notarial commission, the seal shall be destroyed.

22       (3) A new seal shall be obtained for any new commission or recommission. A new seal  
23 shall be obtained if the notary changes the notary's name or address of record at any time during  
24 the notary's four-year commission. The seal impression shall be affixed near the notary's official  
25 signature on a notarial certificate and shall include a sharp, legible, and photographically  
26 reproducible ink impression of the notarial seal that consists of:

27       (a) the notary public's name exactly as indicated on the commission;

28       (b) the words "notary public," "state of Utah," and "my commission expires (commission  
29 expiration date)";

30       (c) the address of the notary's business or residence;

31       (d) a facsimile of the great seal of the state of Utah; and



1 (e) a rectangular border no larger than one inch by two and one-half inches surrounding  
2 the required words and seal.

3 (4) An embossed seal impression that is not photographically reproducible may be used  
4 in addition to, but not in place of, the photographically reproducible seal required in this section.

5 (5) The notarial seal shall be affixed in a manner that does not obscure or render illegible  
6 any information or signatures contained in the document or in the notarial certificate.

7 (6) A notary acknowledgment on an annexation, subdivision, or other transparent map or  
8 plat is considered complete without the imprint of the notary's official seal if:

9 (a) the notary signs the acknowledgment in permanent ink; and

10 (b) the following appear below or immediately adjacent to the notary's signature:

11 (i) the notary's full name;

12 (ii) the words "A notary public commissioned in Utah"; and

13 (iii) the expiration date of the notary's commission.

14 Section 16. Section **46-1-17** is repealed and reenacted to read:

15 **46-1-17. Obtaining a seal.**

16 (1) A vendor may not provide a notarial seal, either inking or embossing, to a person  
17 claiming to be a notary, unless the person presents a photocopy of the person's notarial  
18 commission, attached to a notarized declaration substantially as follows:

19 Application for Notary Seal

20 I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of person requesting seal), declare that I am a notary public  
21 duly commissioned by the state of Utah with a commission starting date of \_\_\_\_\_, a  
22 commission expiration date of \_\_\_\_\_, and a commission number of \_\_\_\_\_.

23 As evidence, I attach to this paper a photocopy of my commission.

24 (2) A vendor who provides a notarial seal in violation of this section is guilty of a class  
25 B misdemeanor, punishable upon conviction by a fine not exceeding \$1,000.

26 Section 17. Section **46-1-18** is repealed and reenacted to read:

27 **46-1-18. Liability.**

28 (1) A notary may be liable to any person for any damage to that person proximately caused  
29 by the notary's misconduct in performing a notarization.

30 (2) A surety for a notary's bond may be liable to any person for damages proximately  
31 caused to that person by the notary's misconduct in performing a notarization, but the surety's

1 liability may not exceed the penalty of the bond or of any remaining bond funds that have not been  
2 expended to other claimants. Regardless of the number of claimants, a surety's total liability may  
3 not exceed the penalty of the bond.

4 (3) It is a class B misdemeanor for the employer of a notary to require the notary to  
5 perform a notarial act in violation of this chapter.

6 Section 18. Section **46-1-19** is repealed and reenacted to read:

7 **46-1-19. Revocation or suspension.**

8 The Division of Corporations and Commercial Code may revoke or suspend a notarial  
9 commission on any ground for which an application for a notarial commission may be denied  
10 under Section 46-1-3.

11 Section 19. Section **46-1-20** is enacted to read:

12 **46-1-20. Change of name or address.**

13 (1) Within 30 days after the change of the notary's name or address, the notary shall  
14 provide to the Division of Corporations and Commercial Code a bond policy rider.

15 (2) To obtain a bond policy rider, the notary shall:

16 (a) notify the surety for the notary's bond;

17 (b) obtain a bond policy rider reflecting both the old and new name of the notary or the  
18 old and new address of the notary;

19 (c) return a bond policy rider, the original "Certificate of Authority of Notary Public";

20 (d) pay a \$5 fee; and

21 (e) destroy the old official seal.

22 Section 20. Section **46-1-21** is enacted to read:

23 **46-1-21. Resignation.**

24 (1) A notary who resigns a notarial commission shall provide to the Division of  
25 Corporations and Commercial Code a notice indicating the effective date of resignation.

26 (2) A notary who ceases to reside in this state or who becomes unable to read and write  
27 as provided in Section 46-1-3 shall resign the commission.

28 (3) A notary who resigns shall destroy the official seal and certificate.

29 Section 21. Section **46-1-22** is enacted to read:

30 **46-1-22. Notice not invalidated.**

31 If a notarial act is performed contrary to or in violation of this chapter, that fact does not

1 of itself invalidate notice to third parties of the contents of the document notarized.

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**Legislative Review Note**  
**as of 1-27-98 1:48 PM**

A limited legal review of this bill raises no obvious constitutional or statutory concerns.

**Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel**