

Notary Service

Purpose

The Oshkosh Public Library offers free, in-person notary services to meet the needs of the community. The service does not require a library card and those seeking the service need not be residents of Oshkosh.

Authority

Notary service is regulated by the laws of the State of Wisconsin. A Notary Public is defined as follows:

“A notary public is an individual issued an appointment by the Secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions to serve the public as an impartial witness, performing notarial acts as are allowed or required by law.” (Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, *Notary Public Handbook*, 4.)

Fees

Notary service is offered at no cost. However, fees will be charged if copying, printing, or FAX service is required.

Hours of Availability:

The library strives to offer notary service during all open hours. Notary service is occasionally unavailable due to staffing constraints.

Notary service is available by appointment only. Appointments can be made in person, over the phone, or through the library's website.

Confidentiality

Notaries may consult with library colleagues or the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions when faced with scenarios they are uncertain about, but personal information will be kept in strict confidence by the notary.

Guidelines

All forms being notarized must be filled out completely – but not signed – prior to being notarized.

The entire document being notarized must be presented to the notary.

Valid photo identification is required of any patron seeking notary service. Notaries cannot pre-date or post-date any action, prepare a legal document, give advice on legal matters, notarize documents in which they have a personal interest, or notarize pre-signed documents.

Only documents written in the English language will be accepted for notarization. The information must be clearly written. The Notary and the patron requesting Notary service must be able to clearly communicate directly with each other.

Notary service will be declined if the document, the identification, the circumstances or the capacity of the signer to understand the proceedings raises any questions of authenticity, or if the Notary does not understand the language of the document. Library Notaries reserve the right to decline service for any reason.

In cases where a witness is required, the Library will not provide witnesses. Patrons may not solicit for witnesses at the library.

When staff is unable to offer notary service, they will assist the patron in finding an alternative.

Records

Library notaries will keep a record of their notarial acts and include the date of each one; type of notarial act performed; description of the document; the signature, printed name and address of each person for whom a notarial act was performed, and description of the form of identification provided (i.e. driver's license).

Disclaimer

The notarization of document does not verify that the information in the document is true or legal, it only verifies that the notary has witnessed the signature of the person signing and has verified their identification.

A Notary Public is not trained or certified to practice law. Therefore, notaries are unable to provide assistance in prescribing or determining the particular document a customer may need; selecting the type of notarization or certificate for a given document; preparing a document, or giving advice on how to fill out, draft, or complete a document, or providing legal counseling or advice in a legal matter that may or may not involve a notarial act.

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Approved by:	Library Board
Last updated date:	09/25/2025
Amended:	--
Original approval:	09/25/2025