



Secretary of State
Elaine F. Marshall

North Carolina Secretary of State

IT

KB Website Manual

Authentications

February 20, 2024

Version 1.0

About the Authentications Manual

This manual gives an overview of all of the web pages and features of the new KB website's **Authentications** section.

The screenshot shows the official website of the State of North Carolina. At the top, it identifies the site as the "Official website of the State of North Carolina" with a link to "Here's how you know". The header features the Secretary of State's logo and name, **Secretary of State Elaine F. Marshall**. A navigation menu includes links for About, Contact, Fees, FAQs, News & Events, Topics A-Z, Search, and Sign In. A secondary menu lists Home, Divisions, Programs, Agency Information, Online Services, Forms, and Authentications. The breadcrumb trail shows "Home > Authentications". The main heading is "Authentications". A large banner image depicts a man in a suit standing in a room filled with papers and books, with a dark blue text box overlaid on the left. The text box contains the heading "Make An Appointment" and the text: "The office is accepting limited morning appointments for same-day pick-up and appointments can be made up to 30 days ahead. [Make An Appointment](#) online." Below the banner are four blue buttons: "Make an Appointment", "Apostille", "Authentication & Authority", and "Adoption".

Official website of the State of North Carolina [Here's how you know](#) ▾

Secretary of State
Elaine F. Marshall

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[Home](#) > Authentications

Authentications

Make An Appointment
The office is accepting limited morning appointments for same-day pick-up and appointments can be made up to 30 days ahead. [Make An Appointment](#) online.

[Make an Appointment](#) [Apostille](#) [Authentication & Authority](#) [Adoption](#)

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Authentications

Overview

Authentications Division

The Authentication Office of the NC Department of the Secretary of State is responsible for providing authentication services on North Carolina documents that will be used in foreign countries.

What laws authorize the authentication of documents in North Carolina?

See [Article 34 Certificates of Authentication of NC General Statutes §66-270 to §66-279](#).

Authority of Secretary of State to authenticate documents.

- 2015 North Carolina General Statutes
- Chapter 66 - Commerce and Business.
- Article 34 - Certificates of Authentication.

What is authentication?

Authentication certifies the authenticity or genuineness of an official's signature or seal on a document so that it can be recognized in foreign jurisdictions. The Department authorizes these documents for foreign use.

Other terms you may come across in authentications

A "**foreign jurisdiction**" is one that is outside of North Carolina.

A signature or seal is called a "**specimen**."

An **affidavit** is a written statement made under oath. This is similar to a witness's testimony in court.

Authentication document must-haves

- All seals and signatures must be originals.
- Dates must follow in chronological order on certifications.
- Acknowledgements must be in English.
- All documents in a foreign language must be translated into English by a certified translator and notarized as a true translation. (See [N.C.G.S. §66-274\(a\)](#))

What are the three types of authorizations?

The three authorization types are:

- **Apostille** –NC documents used for countries who signed the international agreement called "Hague Convention." See [Hague Member List](#).

- **Authentication**—NC Government issued documents used for countries who did NOT sign the Hague Convention agreement.
- **Authority**—NC documents notarized in NC for countries that have NOT signed the Hague Convention agreement.

What can the Secretary of State not authenticate?

The Secretary of State cannot authorize the following:

- Cannot authenticate documents from another state or country.
- Cannot authenticate non-English documents that lack a certified and notarized copy of the document in English. All documents in a foreign language must be translated into English by a certified translator and notarized as a true translation.
- Cannot authenticate a document with an official signature older than April 2000. All official signatures must be from April 1, 2000 or later.
- Cannot authenticate online. You must mail in or hand-deliver (also courier) your authorization packet.
- Cannot authenticate a facsimile, photostat, photographic, or other reproduction of a signature or seal.

Authentications Page

Authentication services can be found under the **Divisions** section of the NC Secretary of State (SOS) website.

Go to the SOS website <https://test.sosnc.gov/>.

Select **Divisions**.

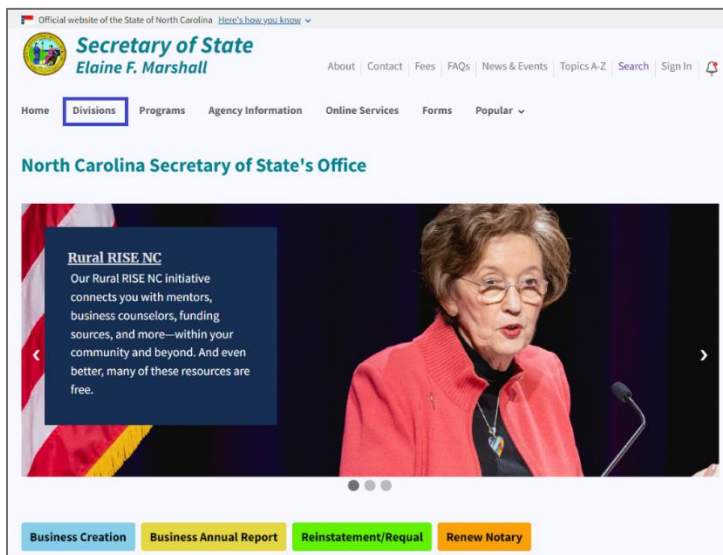


Figure 1. Select Divisions

Select **Authentications**.

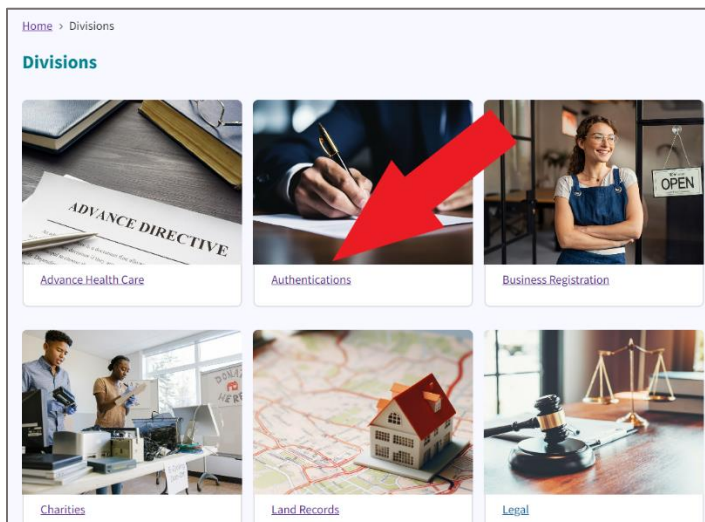


Figure 2. Authentications link

This link takes you to the **Authentications** page.

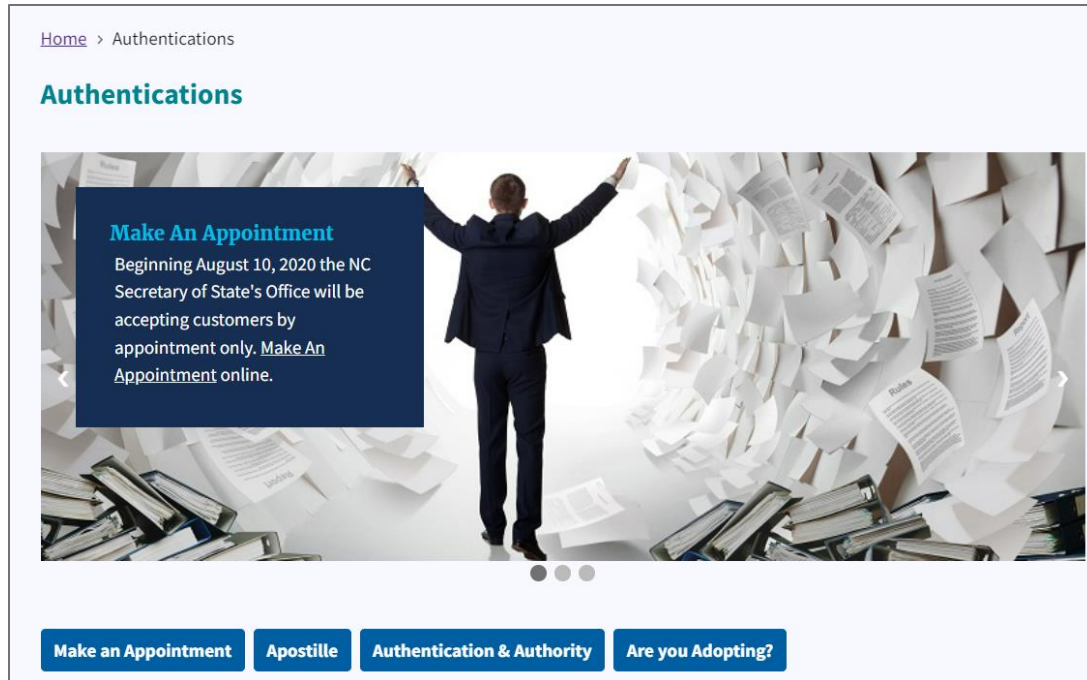


Figure 3. Authentications page

Under the image, there are four action buttons:

- [Make an Appointment](#)
- [Apostille](#)
- [Authentication & Authority](#)
- [Are You Adopting?](#)

The **Browse Authentications** section has 13 box links:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Apostille](#)
- [Authentication and Authority](#)
- [Are you adopting?](#)
- [Cover Letter and Templates](#)
- [Fees](#)
- [Turnaround Times](#)
- [Getting Documents To and From Us](#)
- [Courier Policies](#)
- [Statutes](#)
- [Hague Member List](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [U.S. State Department Authentications Office](#)

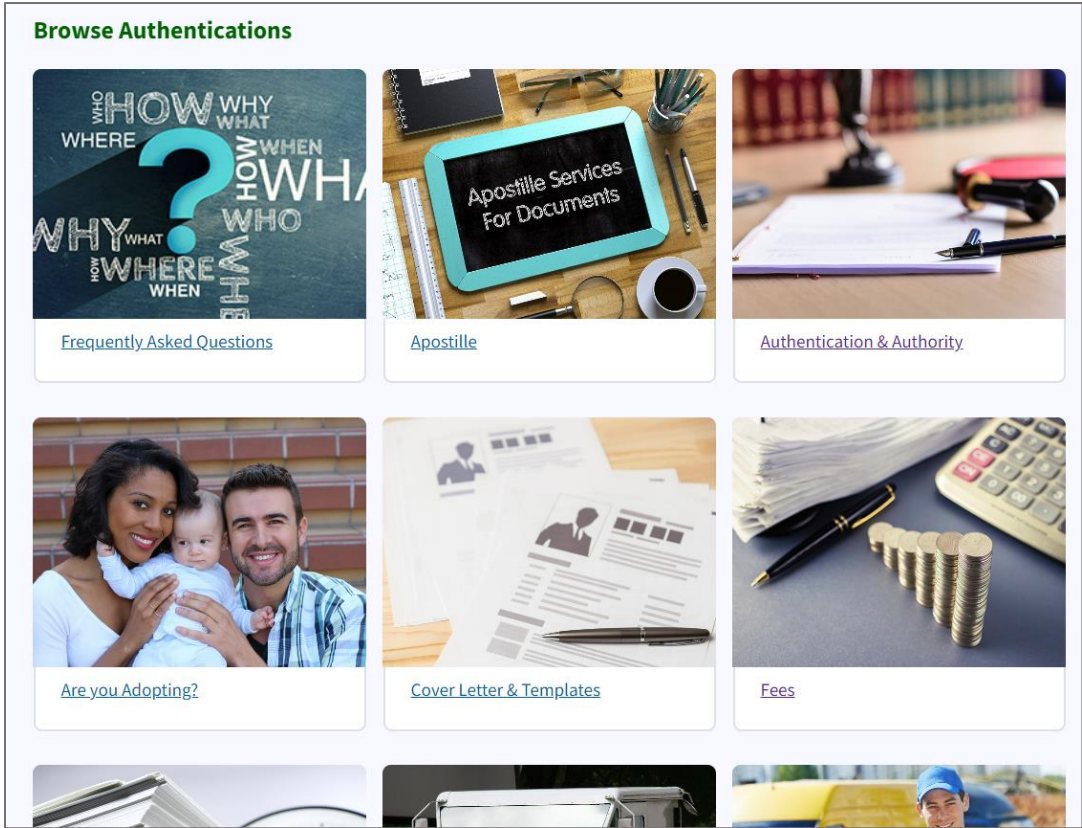


Figure 4. Authentications box links

Each of these will be explained in greater detail in the [Browse Authentications](#) section of this manual.

Below the **Browse Authentications** section is a Certificate search tool.

Certificate Type:

Apostille
⌵

Certificate #:

Issued Date:

📅

Search

Figure 5. Certificate Search tool

Select the authentication or apostille in the dropdown for **Certificate Type**.

Enter the **Certificate Number**.

Select the **Issued Date**.

Click **Search**.

Below the search section, you find the “**What We Do**” and **Contact Authentications** sections.

Certificate Type:

Apostille

Certificate #:

Issued Date:

Search

What We Do

The North Carolina Authentication Office issues apostilles, authentications and certificates for a variety of NC documents, including: birth certificates, marriage certificates, statements of marital status, articles of incorporation, corporate bylaws, certificates of merger, powers of attorney, patent applications, trademarks, diplomas, school transcripts, deeds, and assignments of interest.

Contact Authentications

Mailing Address	Physical Address	Email
North Carolina Secretary of State Authentication Office	North Carolina Secretary of State Authentication Office	authen@sosnc.gov
North Carolina Secretary of State Post Office Box 29622	North Carolina Secretary of State 2 South Salisbury Street	919-814-5400
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0622	Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2903	

Figure 6. What We Do and Contact sections

Four Action Buttons

In this section, we will focus on the four blue action buttons on the Authentications page.

Make an Appointment

Select **Make an Appointment**.

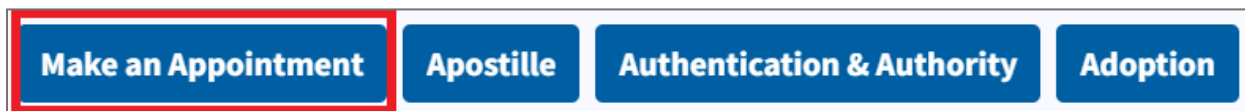


Figure 7. Four blue action buttons with “Make an Appointment” highlighted

The **Authentications Appointments** page has instructions and tips for making an appointment with the North Carolina Secretary of State’s Authentications Office.

[Home](#) > [Authentications](#) > Authentication Appointments

Authentication Appointments

BEFORE MAKING AN APPOINTMENT:

The Secretary of State’s Office is accepting limited morning appointments for same day processing. Appointments are only offered up to 30 days in advance.

If you need help, you may call our customer service desk at 919-814-5400

Thank you for your patience as we continue to consider the health and safety of our customers, staff, and the general public.

- Most filings and transactions can be completed online or by mail. Visit the online services menu at www.sosnc.gov.
- NCSOS cannot offer legal advice. If you need legal advice, seek counsel ahead of your appointment.
- If you have questions about the forms or fees, get them answered ahead of your visit by calling 919-814-5400.
- Customers with in-person appointments are required to wear a mask. Also, bring your own pen to complete your transaction.
- If you have made an appointment previously, make sure to sign-in with your profile, do not create a new profile with each appointment.
- After making an appointment you will receive a confirmation e-mail with instructions when you arrive, including a phone number to call when you arrive. Bring your confirmation e-mail with you to the appointment and an ID. If you do NOT receive a confirmation, check your spam/junk folder. Make sure you set your email to accept communications from the sosnc.gov and mg.appointment-plus.com domains.
- When showing up for your in-person appointment, make sure you have the right date.

Figure 8. Before Making an Appointment page

Before Making an Appointment

The Secretary of State’s Office is accepting limited morning appointments for same-day processing. Appointments are only offered up to 30 days in advance.

If you need help, you may call our customer service desk at 919-814-5400

Thank you for your patience as we continue to consider the health and safety of our customers, staff, and the general public.

- Most filings and transactions can be completed online or by mail. Visit the online services menu at www.sosnc.gov.
- NCSOS cannot offer legal advice. If you need legal advice, seek counsel ahead of your appointment.
- If you have questions about the forms or fees, get them answered ahead of your visit by calling 919-814-5400.
- Customers with in-person appointments are required to wear a mask. Also, bring your own pen to complete your transaction.
- If you have made an appointment previously, make sure to sign-in with your profile, do not create a new profile with each appointment.
- After making an appointment you will receive a confirmation e-mail with instructions when you arrive, including a phone number to call when you arrive. Bring your confirmation e-mail with you to the appointment and an ID. If you do NOT receive a confirmation, check your spam/junk folder. Make sure you set your email to accept communications from the sosnc.gov and mg.appointment-plus.com domains.
- When showing up for your in-person appointment, make sure you have the right date.

WHAT YOU WILL NEED:

Authentications

Authentications are a legal way to prove to someone in another country that a signature is official.

View the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for questions you might have prior to your appointment.

If there are any issues with the document, the Authentications Staff will contact you at the phone number provided on the Cover Letter.

It is your responsibility to be prepared at the time of your appointment.

Bring with you at the time of your appointment:

- Cover Letter: A completed [Cover Letter](#) Make sure the jurisdiction of Use is completed and is not within the United States.
- Original Documents: Original document(s) in English or accompanied by an English translation to be issued an Apostille or Authentication Certificate.

- Certification Fee: A check or money order made out to NCSOS for the certification fee. The certification fee is \$10 per document. The front counter does not accept debit or credit cards.
- Method to Return Documents: If you want the certification mailed back to you, bring a self-addressed, stamped envelope for returning via mail or a pre-paid courier label with your name and address preprinted on it.
- Pick-up: At the time of the appointment, you will be provided a receipt, which you will need at the time of pick-up. Pick-up times are dependent upon the time of the appointment as follows:

Appointment Time

- 10 am or earlier
 - Pick-Up Time: Same day between 4 pm and 5 pm

Special Instructions for Funeral Homes: The North Carolina Department of the Secretary of State is aware of the urgency surrounding official documents used to transport human remains to foreign countries. While the North Carolina Secretary of State’s Office is closed to the public, funeral homes being faced with urgent transport should email authen@sosnc.gov using “Funeral Home – COVID-19” in the Subject Line to set up an appointment and drop off documents to be authenticated.

When you arrive, you will need to have with you:

- Cover Letter: A completed [Cover Letter](#)
- Death Certificate: A Certified Death Certificate from North Carolina Vital Records.
- Three notarized documents:
- Burial Transmittal document;
- Non-Contagious Disease Certification; and the
- Embalming Certification.
- Certificate Fees: A check or money order (no cash) for each document presented for certification. The front counter does not accept debit or credit cards. When the certificates have been processed, the Authentications Staff will call you for pick-up at the number listed on the Cover Letter.

At the bottom of the page is a blue **Make an Appointment** button. See **Figure 9**.

Click **Make an Appointment**.

When you arrive, you will need to have with you:

- Cover Letter: A completed [Cover Letter](#)
- Death Certificate: A Certified Death Certificate from North Carolina Vital Records.
- Three notarized documents:
 - Burial Transmittal document;
 - Non-Contagious Disease Certification; and
 - Embalming Certification.
- Certificate Fees: A check or money order (no cash) for each document presented for certification. The front counter does not accept debit or credit cards. Once your certificates have been processed, the Authentications Staff will call you for pick-up at the number listed on your cover letter.

[Make an Appointment](#)

Figure 9. Make an Appointment button

This button takes you to a log in screen with a **Book Appointment** button.

Enter your NC SOS website Login username and password.

Click **Book Appointment**.

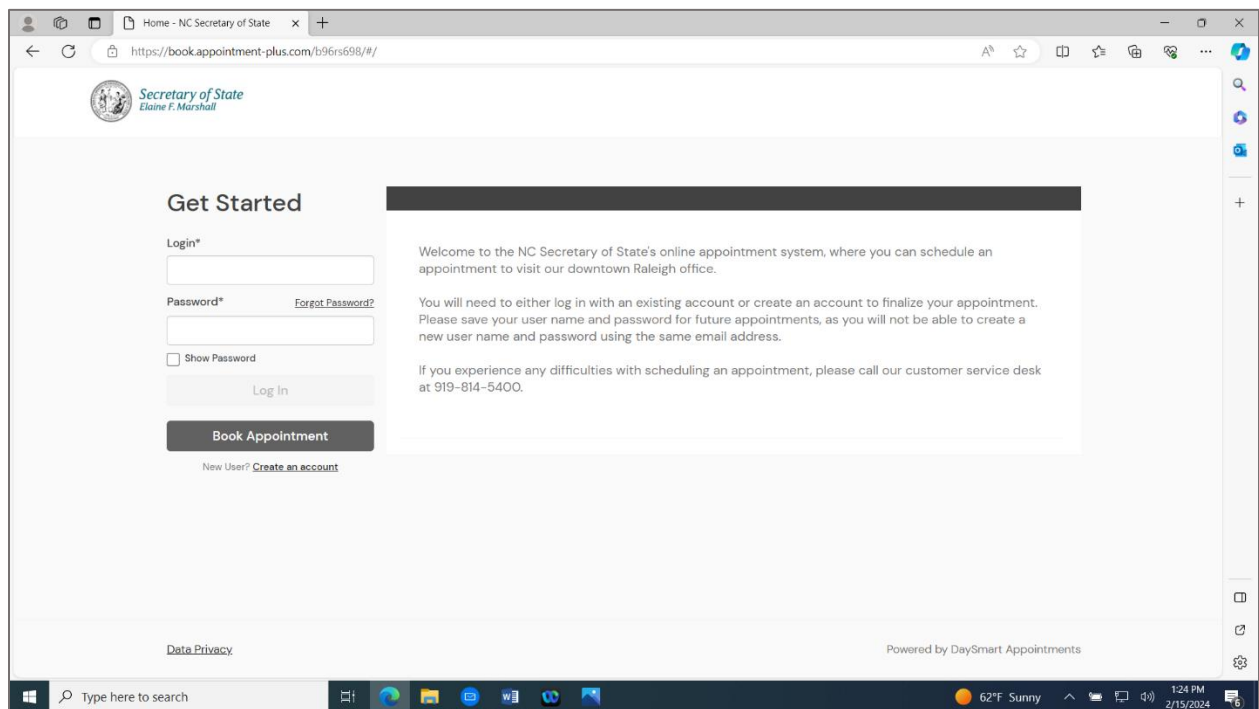


Figure 10. Login screen with Book Appointment button

Your appointment date options appear on the next screen.

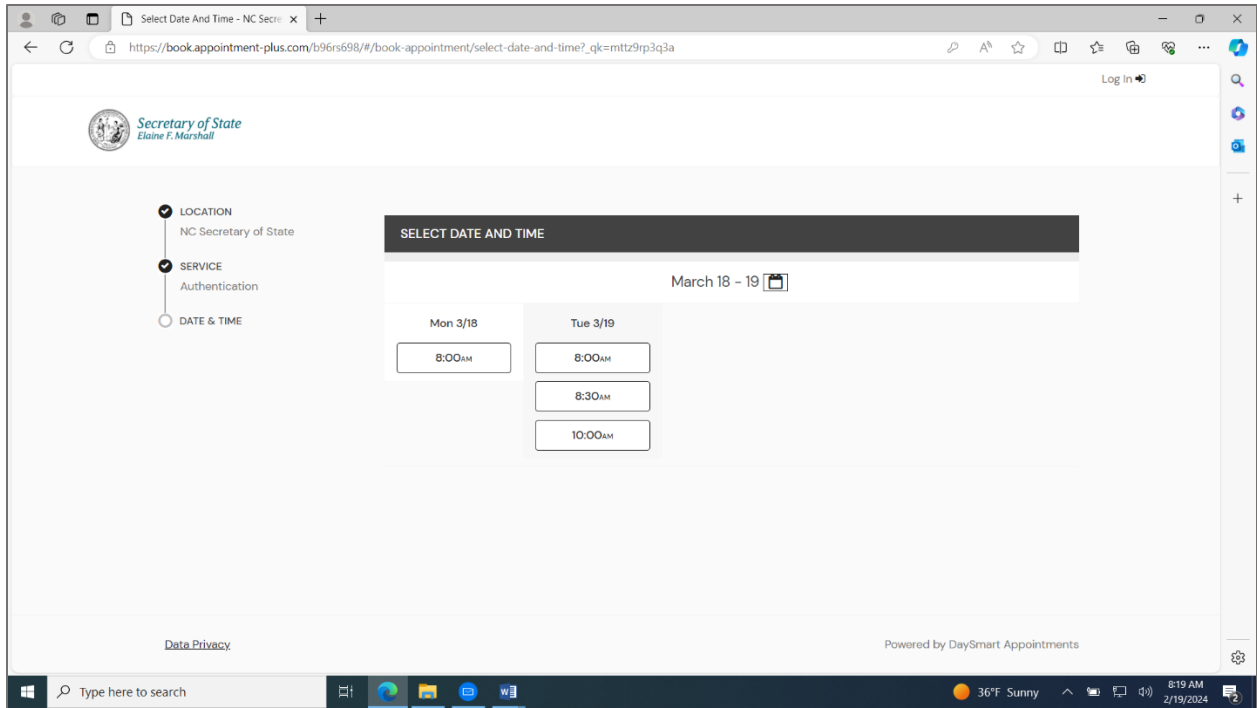


Figure 11. Appointment date and time options

Select the **date** and **time**.

After doing so, the next screen displays entry fields for your name, email, and phone number.

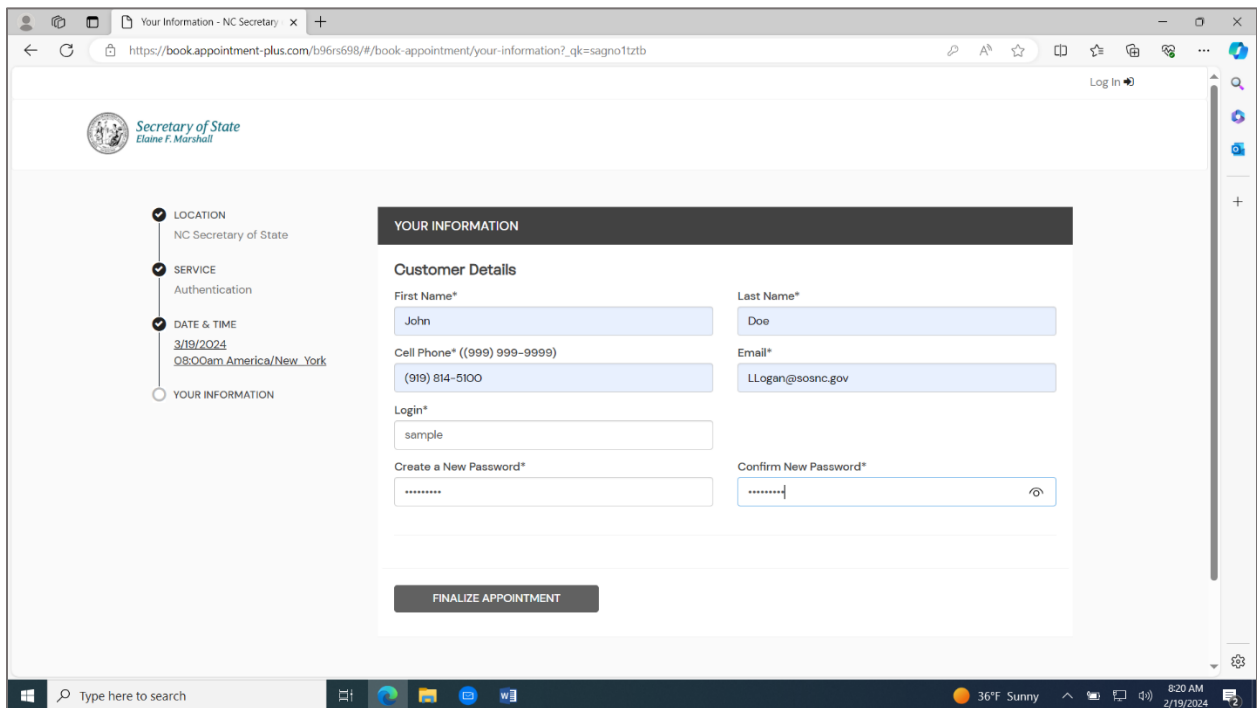


Figure 12. Customer Details entry fields

Click **Finalize Appointment**.

The next screen displays a confirmation of the appointment.

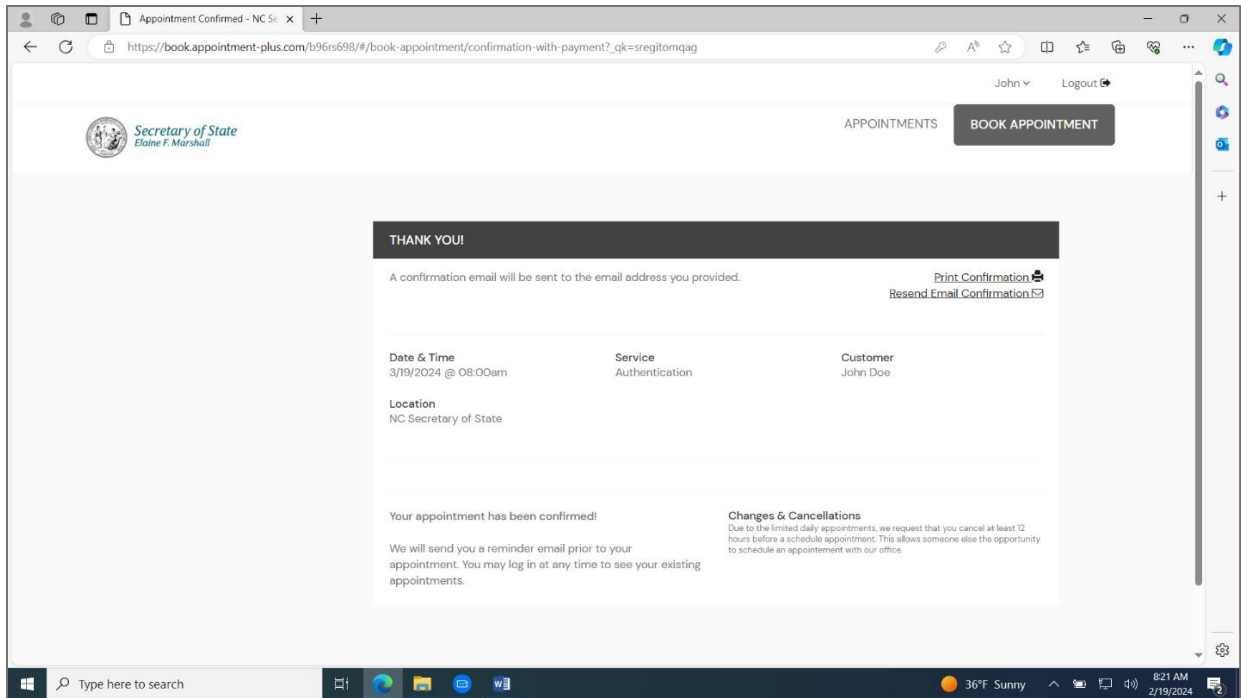


Figure 13. Appointment confirmation screen

You should receive an email confirmation. See **Figure 14**.

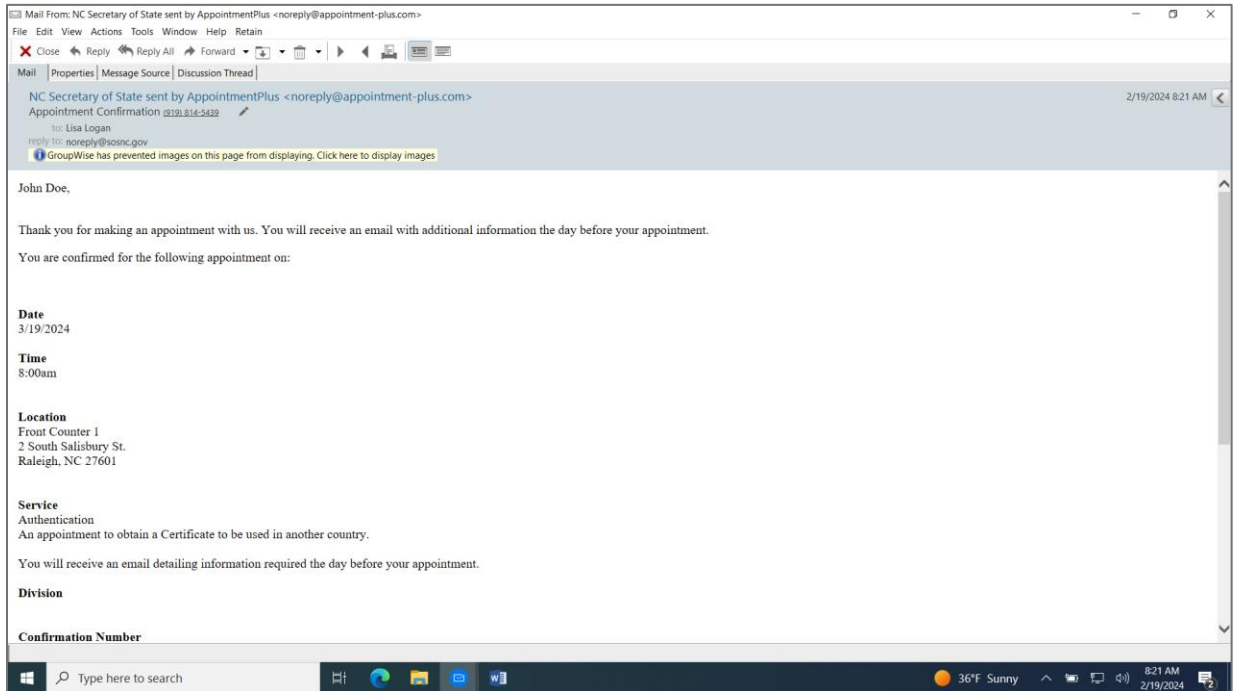


Figure 14. Email confirmation

You can print the confirmation by selecting the “Print Confirmation” link inside the **Thank You** window. See **Figure 15**.

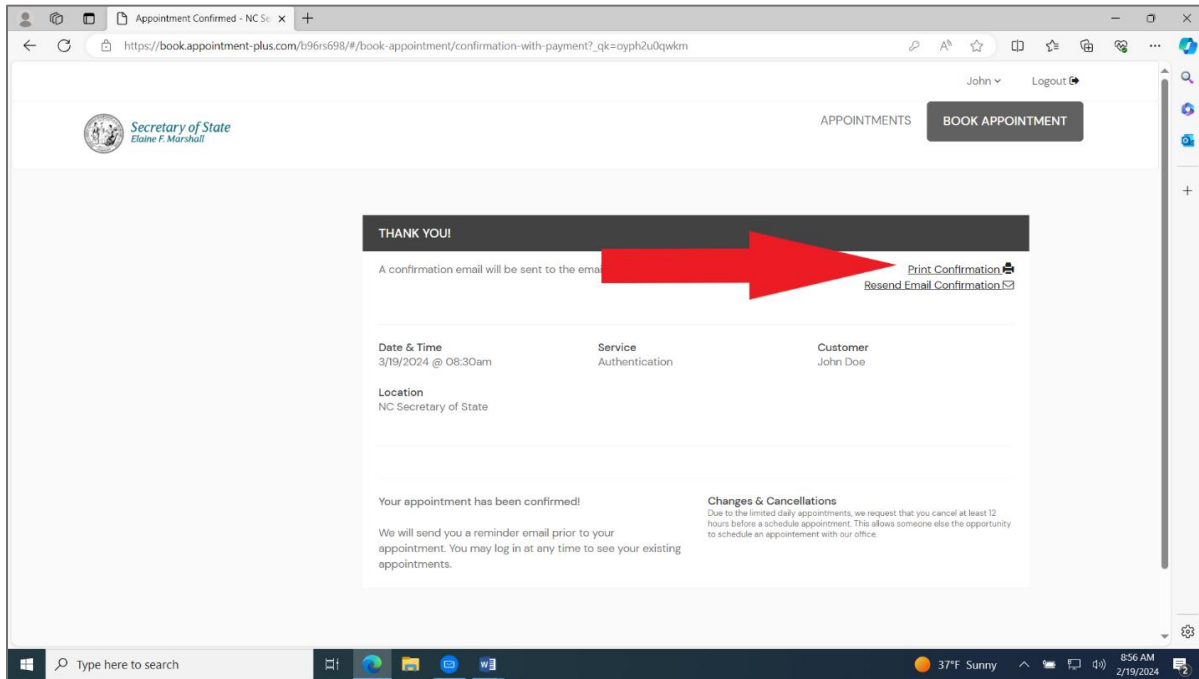


Figure 15. Print Confirmation link

To see the appointments you have scheduled, select **Appointments** at the top right hand corner of the screen. See **Figure 16**.

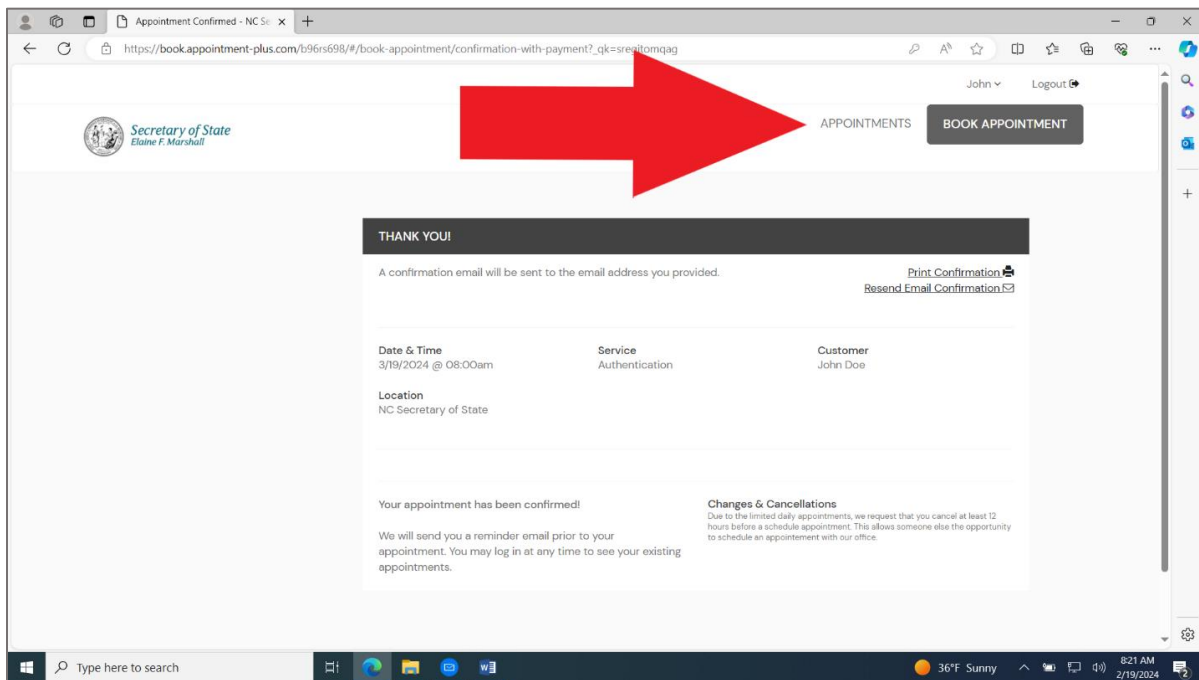


Figure 16. Appointments link

Your appointment shows the date and time.

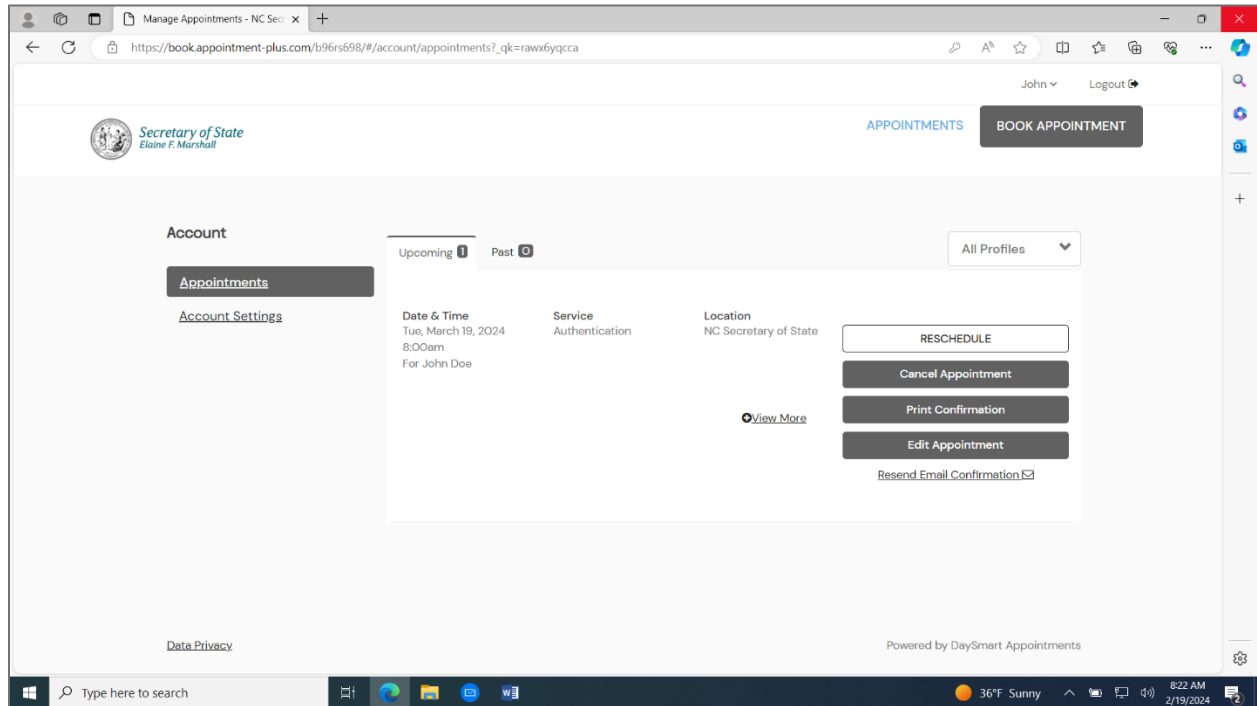


Figure 17. Appointments list with date and time

On this screen, you have the following options:

- Reschedule
- Cancel Appointment
- Print Confirmation
- Edit Appointment

You can also resend an email confirmation by selecting the link at the bottom of the buttons list.

If you select Reschedule, Cancel Appointment, or Edit Appointment, you're taken back to the date and time screen. See **Figure 18**.

From there, you can change your appointment settings.

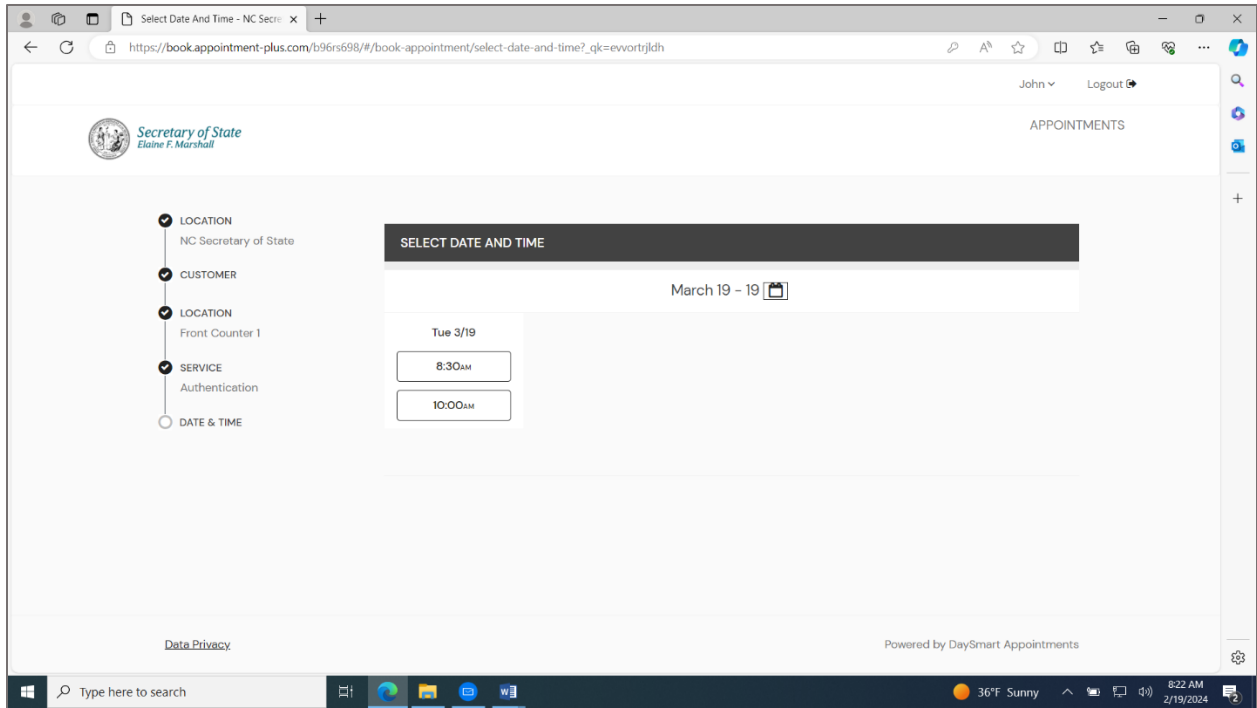


Figure 18. Select Date and Time screen

Apostille

An **Apostille** is a certificate of authentication issued by the Secretary of State or another governmental body that makes a document from one country valid in another country as long as they are both member states of the 1961 Hague Convention.

The Hague Convention of October 5, 1961 streamlined the full legalization of documents among the member states listed in the [Hague Convention Member List](#).

Apostille Bypasses Further Certification at the Federal Level

An apostille allows you to bypass the process of having to get further certification from the US Department of State's [Office of Authentications](#). In other words, you can get the apostille and take it directly to the receiving country without having to go through the State Department for additional approval. It's one and done.

Authentications and Authorizations are handled differently from Apostilles in that they require additional authentication by the US State Department. Authentications and Authorizations require extra steps and paperwork when the receiving foreign country is **not** on the [Hague Convention Member List](#).

What documents are Apostilles used for?

Apostilles are used for public documents certified or notarized by an official in North Carolina. These documents include: birth, marriage, and death certificates; extracts from commercial registrars and other registers; court rulings; notarial acts; academic diplomas issued by public institutions, etc.

What documents are Apostilles NOT used for?

The Hague Convention doesn't apply to documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents nor to administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations (e.g., certificates of origin or import or export licenses). (Hague Convention)

After you get an Apostille...

When you receive the Apostille, it can be delivered directly to the foreign country of intended use and no other further certification is needed from the US Department of State.

Apostille Certificates make the full legalization of documents an easier process. However, the foreign country for which the document is used must be a [member state](#) of the Hague Convention.

Can you use copies for the Apostille Process?

If you plan to use a copy of a document for an Apostille, you need to get a notarized Affidavit saying that the document is a "true copy" of the original. For a downloadable True Copy

Affidavit, see the [Cover Letters and Templates](#) on the [Forms](#) page. Look for the one listed simply as “[True Copy](#).”

Apostille submission package should include:

- Cover Letter
- Payment in form of money order or check
- The original document(s) with all certifications attached
- A return prepaid envelope or carrier label
- Documents may be directed on to a third party as a convenience. Please include that information on the cover letter and address the prepaid envelope to the third party.

Note: Any documents received without a prepaid return envelope will be delivered by regular mail to a United States address. A prepaid courier label can be obtained online and paid for at the time you print the barcode label.

For more details about the Apostille process, see the [Process for Obtaining an Apostille](#).

Apostille Page

The Apostille page gives a detailed list of items needed for getting an apostille.

Go to the four blue action buttons on the main **Authentications** page.



Figure 19. Apostille button

Select **Apostille**. The Apostille page describes the Hague Convention at the top.



Figure 20. Apostille page

Hague Convention of 5 October 1961

Purpose: Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents

Apostille Certificates

The Hague Convention of October 5, 1961 replaced the time consuming and often costly processes of a full legalization. It only affects those countries that have agreed to standard "Hague Convention" requirements and are considered "member states."

The Convention applies to public documents which are certified or notarized by an authority or official in North Carolina. Examples of public documents for which Apostilles are issued include: birth, marriage and death certificates; extracts from commercial registrars and other registers; court rulings; notarial acts; academic diplomas issued by public institutions, etc.

The Convention does not apply to documents executed by diplomatic or consular agents nor to administrative documents dealing directly with commercial or customs operations (e.g., certificates of origin or import or export licenses). ([Hague Convention.](#))

Once an Apostille is obtained, the document may be delivered directly to the country of intended use and bypass further certification from the US Department of State.

Process for Obtaining Apostille

Document Needs to be in English

Obtain a certified or notarized English translation of the document if the document is in a language other than English.

Notarization of Document

1. Appear before a North Carolina Notary Public to sign the document;
2. Obtain a certified copy which is notarized by the issuing entity (i.e., diploma, etc.);
3. If necessary, you may use a "True Copy" affidavit for North Carolina documents and obtain a notary acknowledgment of your signature;
4. Documents from the following entities will not need to be notarized:
 - Register of Deeds
 - Clerk of Superior Courts
 - North Carolina Department of Agriculture
 - North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
 - North Carolina Vital Records
 - North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles (Raleigh, NC office ONLY)

- North Carolina Attorney General's Office
- North Carolina Legislative Services

School Diploma or Transcripts

Documents (transcripts, report cards, diplomas, etc.) issued by a North Carolina university, college, community college or high school must be notarized by a North Carolina Notary Public. A school seal applied to the document by the school registrar is not acceptable.

True Copy Affidavit

Requesting an apostille using a "copy" of a document will require a notarized Affidavit saying that the document is a "true copy" of the original. A "true copy" affidavit sample can be found on the ["Cover Letters & Templates"](#) page.

Time Requirement

Note: All North Carolina agency documents must be certified since April 1, 2000.

Submission of Documents

- Cover Letter
- Payment in form of money order or check
- The original document(s) with all certifications attached
- A return pre-paid envelope or carrier label (see Delivery Policy on Authentications Home Page).
- Documents may be directed on to a third party as a convenience. Include that information on the cover letter and address the pre-paid envelope to the third party.
- Any documents received without a pre-paid return envelope will be delivered by regular mail to a United States address. Note: A pre-paid courier label is not a handwritten or typed label with account information. A pre-paid courier label is obtained online and paid for at the time you print the bar-coded label.

Processing Fee

- \$10.00 (US currency) per document.
- Adoptions only processing fee for a duplicate original is \$5.00 (US currency) when requested at the same time.
- As an exception to the NC Secretary of State Refund Policy, Authentications in the amount of \$10 may be refunded, if the document is rejected, not processed, and a request is made for a refund.

Payment

Payment is made to the "North Carolina Secretary of State."

Getting Documents To and From Us

Mail or deliver the documents in person to the address at the bottom of the main Authentication webpage. A detailed schedule is available on the ["Getting Documents to and from Us"](#) page.

Emergencies

Emergencies can happen. Review the ["Turn Around Times."](#) page. There is an option for same or next day documents if you can bring them into the office in Raleigh.

Certified North Carolina Statutes

You may obtain a certified copy of a North Carolina General Statute from the Reviser of Statutes. The Reviser does not issue any other type of certification. The Reviser is located in the [Legislative Drafting Division of the North Carolina General Assembly](#).

Vital Records

Contact Vital Records to obtain marriage, birth or death certificates. Vital Records phone number is 919-733-3526. They will accept credit/charge cards. You may also be able to order the document online at North Carolina Vital Records Expedited Online Orders.

Authentication and Authority

Before we click the **Authentication and Authority** link, let's talk about what authentication is and how it differs from authority.

Authentication certifies the authenticity or genuineness of an official's signature or seal on a document so that it can be recognized in foreign jurisdictions. The Department authorizes these documents for foreign use.

What is the difference between Authentication and Authority?

The difference is the document type.

Authentication: If it's a state document by a state agency or vital records, it's a **Certificate of Authentication**.

Authority: If it's a notarized document, it's a **Certificate of Authority**.

Now that you know the definition and differences between Authentication and Authorization, let's continue the overview of the Authorizations web page.

Select **Authentication and Authority**.



Figure 21. Authentication and Authority button

After clicking this button, you are taken to the **Authentication and Authority** page.

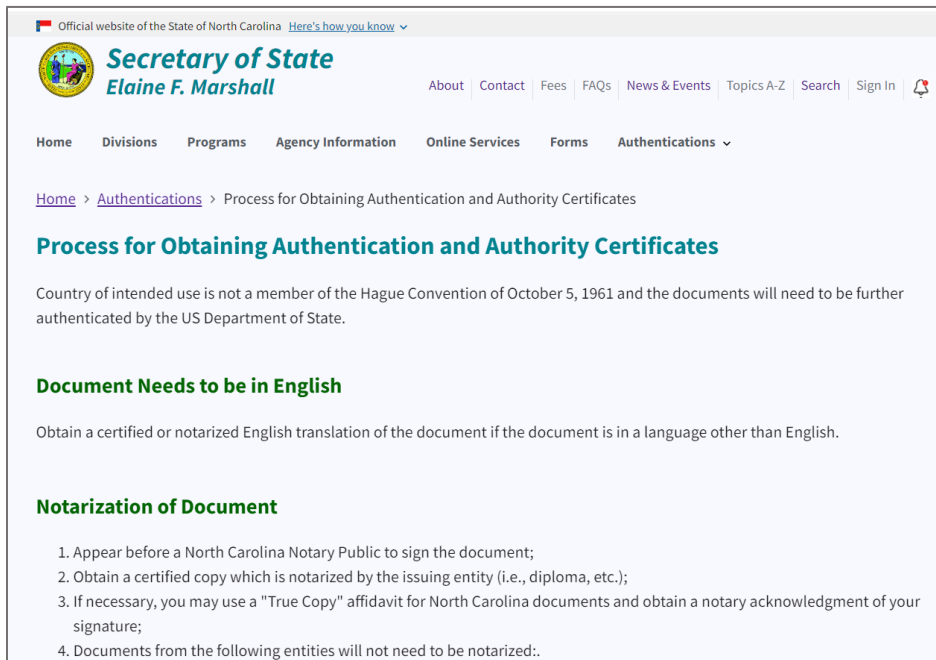


Figure 22. Authentication and Authority page

This page explains how to get authentication and authorization for NC documents that are not covered by the Hague Convention.

Authentication and Authority Certificates are for: NC documents intended for countries that are **NOT** member states of the Hague Convention.

How is this handled differently from an Apostille?

The documents must go through additional authentication by the [US State Department's Office of Authorizations](#). So it's an additional level of paperwork you'll have to go through when doing Authentication and Authority Certificates.

The role of the US State Department's Office of Authorizations is:

"The Department of State, Authentications Office is responsible for signing and issuing certificates under the Seal of the U.S. Department of State (22 CFR, Part 131) providing authentication services to U.S. citizens and foreign nationals on documents that will be used overseas." (Source: [Office of Authentications \(state.gov\)](#))

These NC documents must be in English. If they are not in English, they must be a certified or notarized English translation of the document.

Get the document notarized by doing the following:

These are different types of notarized documents.

- Notarize your document in front of a notary public. For example, a Power of Attorney (POA) must be notarized.
- Get a certified copy which is notarized by the issuing entity. For example, a university diploma needs to be authenticated. The issuing university would supply a notarized copy of the diploma.
- If your notary is commissioned by the state, certify your document with the NC SOS.

All seals and signatures must be originals.

Documents from the following entities will **NOT** need to be notarized:

- Register of Deeds
- Clerk of Superior Courts
- NC Department of Agriculture
- NC Department of Health and Human Services
- NC Vital Records
- NC Department of Motor Vehicles (Raleigh, NC office ONLY)

- NC Attorney General's Office
- NC Legislative Services

School Documents

If your document is a diploma or other school document issued by a NC high school, college, or university, then you need to get it notarized. A school seal applied to the document by the school registrar is not acceptable.

Age of Document

If your document signature is older than April 1, 2000, then the NC SOS cannot certify it. The Secretary of State certifies documents that date only as far back as April 1, 2000; none before that date.

Copies of Documents

If you are using a copy of a document, then you will need to get a notarized true copy affidavit saying that the document is a "true copy" of the original. See the [Cover Letters & Templates](#) page for a downloadable [True Copy](#) affidavit form.

Notarized versus Certified

A **notarized** document is one that the notary has verified the identity and signature of the signer before them. The notary witnesses their signature of the document.

A **certified** document (or certified copy) usually refers to vital records such as birth, marriage, and death certificates. The original vital record stays on file with the jurisdictional agency (county). Only the agency that issued the vital record, can certify the copy of it. For example, your birth certificate is not an original document. It's a certified copy of the vital record on file with the county.

Submissions for Apostille

First, get your document notarized and make sure the document is in English. If the document is not in English, get a certified and notarized translation for the document.

Copies

If the document is a copy of the original, you can use a [True Copy](#) Affidavit saying that the document is a "true copy" of the original. Affidavits can be downloaded on the [Forms](#) page.

Document Age

Your document's official signature must not date back further than April 1, 2000.

Submission Package

Send the following to the NC Secretary of State:

- Cover letter
- Payment by money order or check, payable to “NC Secretary of State” for \$10/document
- Original documents with all certifications attached
- Return prepaid envelope or carrier label

You can mail or deliver your document in person to:

Mail the whole package to:

Authentication Office
 NC Secretary of State
 PO Box 29622
 Raleigh NC 27626-0622

Hand-delivery to:

Authentication Office
 NC Secretary of State
 2 South Salisbury St
 Raleigh NC 27601-2903

In-Person Appointments

We do take appointments scheduled online. See [Make an Appointment](#) for the step-by-step process.

These are appointments for the dropping off of documents only. If submitted by 10 a.m., the documents can be picked up same-day after 4 p.m. If submitted after, the pickup is at 4 p.m. the next day. Usually these appointments are for emergency situations such as funeral home requests and adoptions. Please read the [Getting Documents to and from Us](#) and the [Courier Policies](#) pages before scheduling an in-person appointment with Authentications. These pages contain valuable information about properly delivering your documents to the Department.

Submissions for Authentication and Authority Certificates

The submission guidelines for Authentication and Authority Certificates are identical except for the last part when you receive the certificate(s). When you receive an Authentication or Authority Certificate from the NC Secretary of State, you will need to take an additional step at the federal level. Once you receive the certificate, send it to the [U.S. State Department](#) at the address listed at the bottom of this section.

Make sure your document is notarized and it is in English. If the document is not in English, get a certified and notarized translation for the document.

Copies

If the document is a copy of the original, you can use a [True Copy](#) Affidavit saying that the document is a “true copy” of the original. Affidavits can be downloaded on the [Forms](#) page.

Document Age

Your document’s official signature must not date back further than April 1, 2000.

Submission Package

Send the following to the NC Secretary of State:

- Cover letter
- Payment by money order or check, payable to “NC Secretary of State” \$10/document
- Original documents with all certifications attached
- Return prepaid envelope or carrier label

You can mail or deliver your document in person to:

Mail the whole package to:

Authentication Office
NC Secretary of State
PO Box 29622
Raleigh NC 27626-0622

Hand-delivery to:

Authentication Office
NC Secretary of State
2 South Salisbury St
Raleigh NC 27601-2903

Once you receive your certificate, send it to:

United States Department of State Authentication
518 23rd Street N.W.
Sa-1 Columbia Plaza
Washington, DC 20520
800-333-4636 (202) 647-5002
Fax: (202) 663-3636 TDD: (202) 663-3468

In-Person Appointments

We do take appointments scheduled online. See [Make an Appointment](#) for the step-by-step process. These are appointments for the dropping off of documents only. If submitted by 10 a.m., the documents can be picked up same-day after 4 p.m. If submitted after, the pickup is at 4 p.m. the next day. For details about scheduling an appointment with the Authentications Section, see [How do I make an in-person appointment?](#)

Adoption

Go to the blue action buttons on the main Authentications page.



Figure 23. Adoption button

Click **Adoption**.

After clicking this button, you are taken to the “Are you adopting?” page.

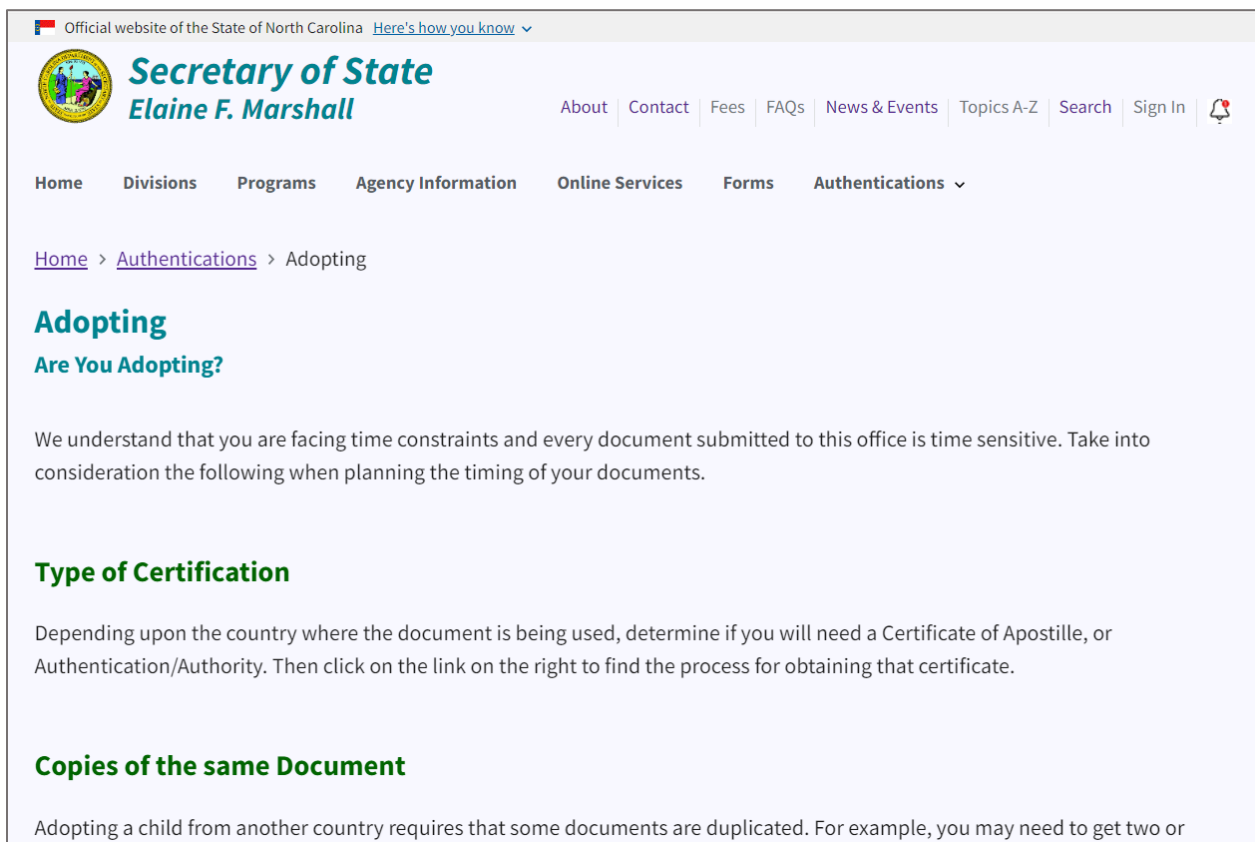


Figure 24. "Are you adopting?" page

This page explains the type of certification you need and the documents needed for international adoptions.

The content for this page is as follows:

We understand that you are facing time constraints and every document submitted to this office is time sensitive. Take into consideration the following when planning the timing of your documents.

Type of Certification

Depending upon the country where the document is being used, determine if you will need a Certificate of Apostille, or Authentication/Authority. Then click on the link on the right to find the process for obtaining that certificate.

Copies of the Same Document

Adopting a child from another country requires that some documents are duplicated. For example, you may need to get two or three birth certificates for each of the adopting parents and all need to be authenticated.

The authentication fee on original duplicate documents for adoptions is \$5. For example, you need three copies of the father's birth certificate. The first original is \$10 and the other two originals are \$5 each. The documents must be submitted at the same time to qualify for the reduced duplicate fee.

Emergencies

Emergencies can happen. Review the link on the left for "Turn Around Times." There is an option for same or next day documents if you can bring them into the office in Raleigh.

Browse Authentications

In this section, we will focus on the series of box image links under the Browse Authentications section of the main Authentications page. You can find an overview of this section in [Authentications](#).

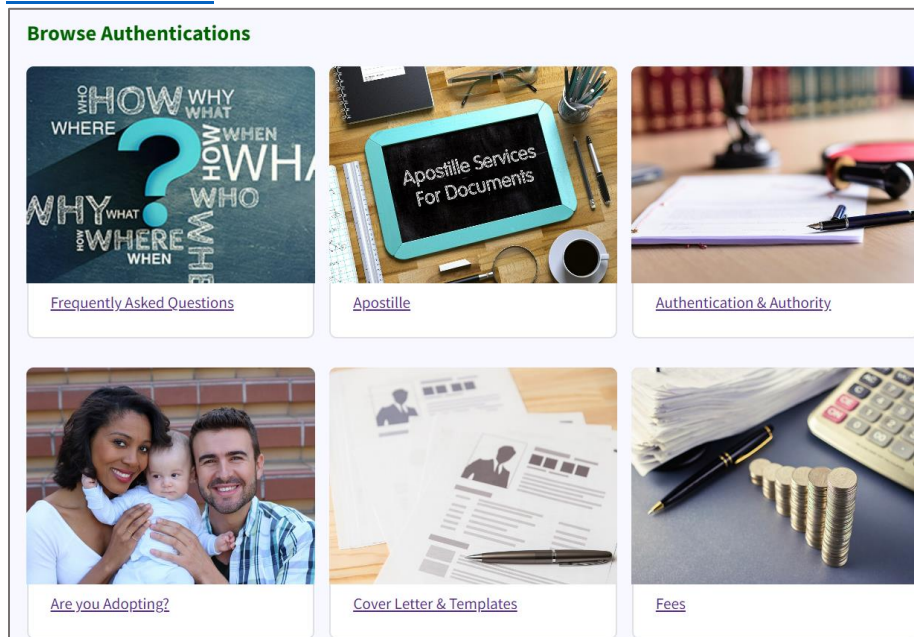


Figure 25. Browse Authentications section

In this section of the manual, we will discuss each topic represented in the links.

The thirteen image links in the Browse Authentications section are:

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Apostille](#)
- [Authentication and Authority](#)
- [Are you adopting?](#)
- [Cover Letter and Templates](#)
- [Fees](#)
- [Turnaround Times](#)
- [Getting Documents To and From Us](#)
- [Courier Policies](#)
- [Statutes](#)
- [Hague Member List](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [U.S. State Department Authentications Office](#)

Frequently Asked Question

From the Browse Authentications section, select **Frequently Asked Questions**.

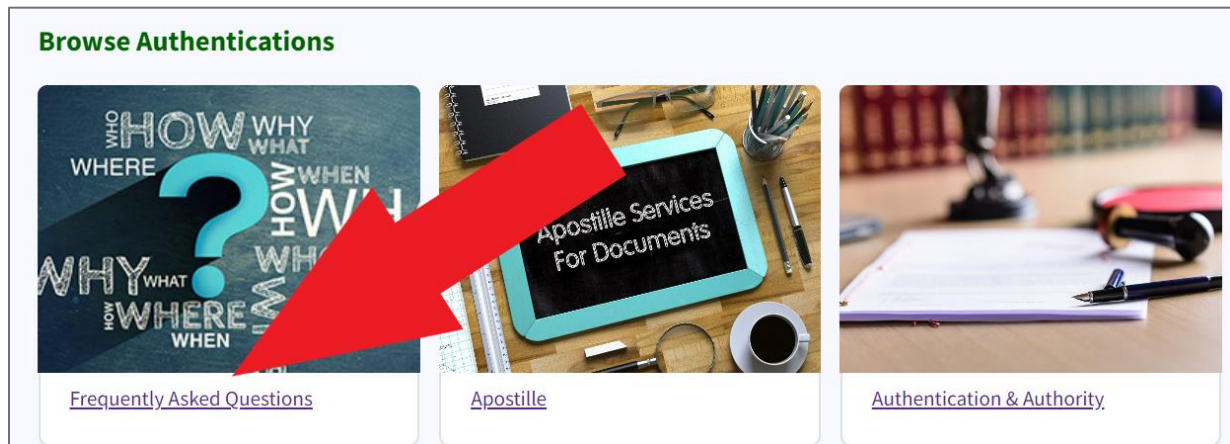


Figure 26. Frequently Asked Questions link

The **Authentications Frequently Asked Questions** page has 24 questions and answers listed in an accordion panel.

The accordion panel is divided into three sections: **About**, **Getting Documents**, and **Not Authenticated**.

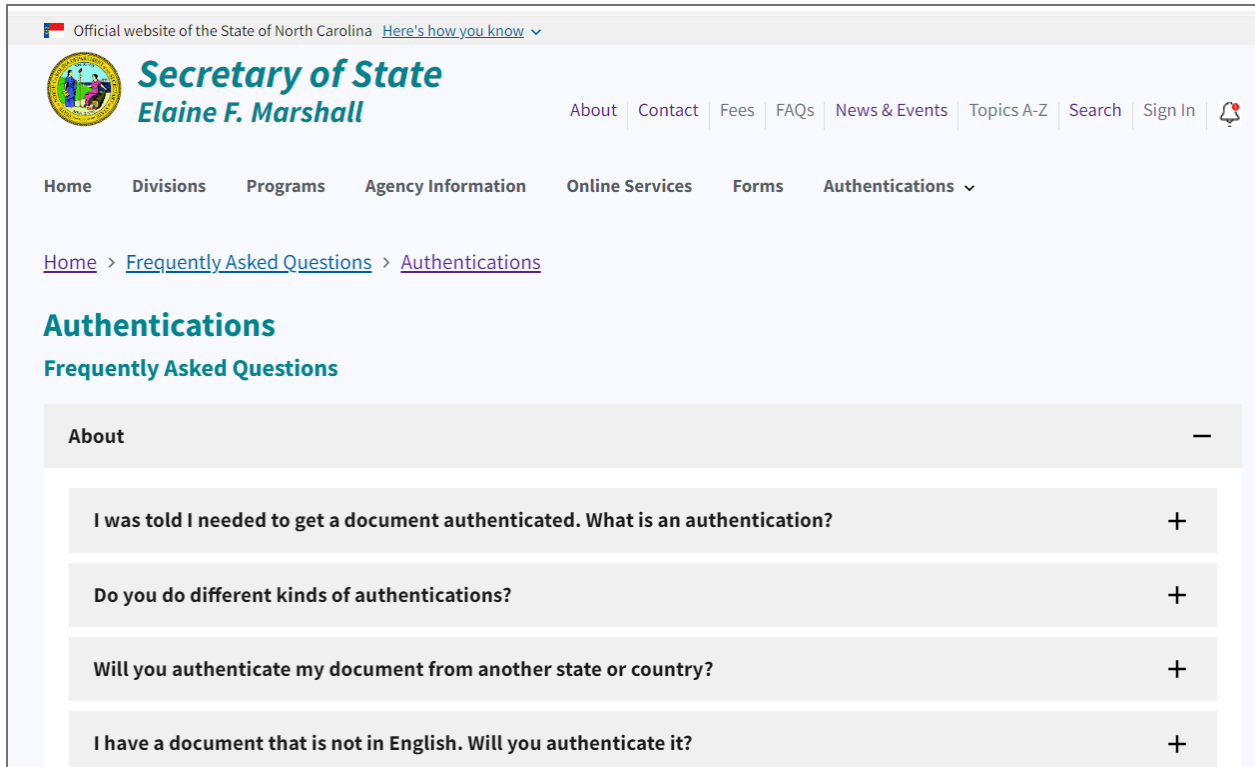


Figure 27. Accordion panel of questions and answers

Apostille

The content for this was explained previously in this section: [Apostille](#).

Authentication and Authority

The content for this was explained previously in this section: [Authentication and Authority](#).

Are You Adopting?

The content for this was explained previously in this section: [Adoption](#).

Cover Letter and Templates

The [Cover Letter and Templates](#) page is a search tool for downloadable cover letters and templates. These include cover letters in several foreign languages; affidavits; true copy affidavits; oaths and affirmations; and witness statements.

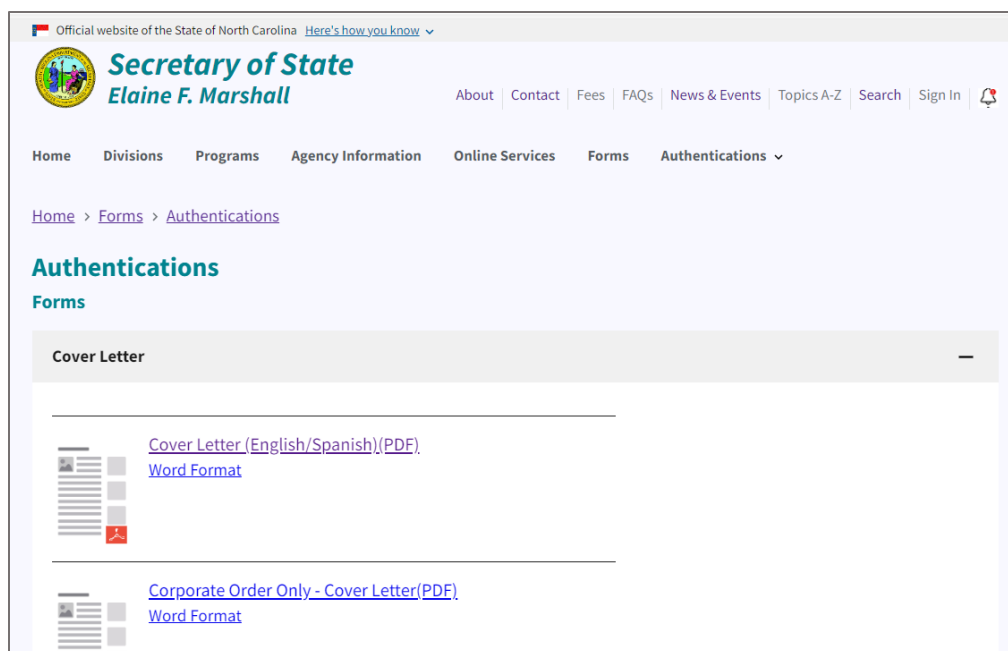


Figure 28. Forms page

Fees

The **Authentication Fees** page lists the fees for adoption, apostille, authentication and authority.

Adoption related Apostille, Authentication or Authority

- Fee for Original - \$10.00 (U.S.)
- \$5.00 (U.S.) for each original duplicate original ordered at the same time as the 1st original.
- \$10.00 for each duplicate original ordered at a different time than the 1st original.
- If you are requesting duplicate original authentications, you need to include all original documents for processing, we don't authenticate copies of an original for duplicate purposes.
- Makes checks payable to "North Carolina Secretary of State."

Non-Adoption related Apostille, Authentication or Authority

- Fee for Original - \$10.00 (U.S.)
- \$10.00 (U.S.) for each original duplicate
- Makes checks payable to "North Carolina Secretary of State."

[Home](#) > [Fees](#) > [Authentications](#)

Authentications

Fees

Adoption related Apostille, Authentication or Authority

- Fee for Original - \$10.00 (U.S.)
- \$5.00 (U.S.) for each original duplicate original ordered at the same time as the 1st original.
- \$10.00 for each duplicate original ordered at a different time than the 1st original.
- If you are requesting duplicate original authentications, you need to include all original documents for processing, we don't authenticate copies of an original for duplicate purposes.
- Makes checks payable to "North Carolina Secretary of State".

Non-Adoption related Apostille, Authentication or Authority

- Fee for Original - \$10.00 (U.S.)
- \$10.00 (U.S.) for each original duplicate
- Makes checks payable to "North Carolina Secretary of State".

Figure 29. Authentication Fees page

Turnaround Times

The **Turnaround Times** page gives turnaround information for mailed-in and hand-delivered documents. There is a Schedule an Appointment button that takes you to an online scheduling portal by DaySmart Appointments. For steps to schedule online, see [Make an Appointment](#).

[Home](#) > [Authentications](#) > Turn Around Times

Turn Around Times

Mailed-In Documents

Due to resource issues we are currently on a 3 week turn-around on mailed-in and hand-delivered documents without an appointment. Plan your document needs accordingly.

Review [Getting Documents To and From Us](#) and [Courier Policies](#) before mailing in documents.

Hand-Delivered Documents – By Appointment Only

You may make a morning appointment to receive same day service. However, these appoints are limited to the times 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. and can only be made up to 30 days in advance. You may hand-deliver your documents at any time, but the turn-around is longer.

Due to resource issues we are currently on a 3 week turn-around on mailed-in and hand-delivered documents without an appointment. Plan your document needs accordingly.

[Schedule an Appointment](#)

[Return to top](#)

Figure 30. Turnaround Times page

Mailed-In Documents

Due to resource issues we are currently on a 3 week turn-around on mailed-in and hand-delivered documents without an appointment. Plan your document needs accordingly.

Review [Getting Documents To and From Us](#) and [Courier Policies](#) before mailing in documents.

Hand-Delivered Documents – By Appointment Only

You may make a morning appointment to receive same-day service. However, these appointments are limited to the times 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. and can only be made up to 30 days in advance. You may hand-deliver your documents at any time, but the turn-around is longer.

Due to resource issues we are currently on a 3 week turn-around on mailed-in and hand-delivered documents without an appointment. Plan your document needs accordingly.

The Schedule an Appointment button takes you to an online scheduling portal. The online scheduling process is described in detail at [Make an Appointment](#).

Getting Documents To and From Us

This page lists nine questions and answers that pertain to mailing, courier, and hand-delivery of documents to the North Carolina Secretary of State’s Office.

Home > [Frequently Asked Questions](#) > [Authentications](#)

Authentications

Frequently Asked Questions

I have a document I want to get authenticated. Where do I send it or can I bring it in?	+
I need to get a document authenticated. Can I make an appointment to get it done?	+
I want to bring documents to your office to be authenticated. How soon can I get them back from you if I hand deliver them?	+
If I send my documents to you in the mail or with a delivery service, how soon can I get them back from you?	+
Your charts say the request must be “complete”. What do you mean by “complete”?	+
My document needs to go to another country after you authenticate it. Will you send it for me?	+
How can I arrange to use a courier delivery service to send and receive my documents?	+
What is a pre-paid return shipping label from a courier service?	+
How can I get a pre-paid return label (shipping label)?	+

[Return to top](#)

Figure 31. Authentications Frequently Asked Questions page

Courier Policies

The **Courier Policies** page lists the policies for using courier services for delivery of documents to the North Carolina Secretary of State's Office.

[Home](#) > [Authentications](#) > Courier Policies

Courier Policies

Mailing to Foreign Jurisdictions

- Due to missing, incorrect or false account numbers presented on shipping labels and the fact that third party couriers do not actually charge the credit or debit card at the time the labels are printed, but when they arrive at their first destination, we can no longer use third party courier (i.e., UPS, FedEx, DHL) service for mailing to foreign jurisdictions.
- We will mail a USPS prepaid envelope and label to foreign jurisdictions as long as the sender's address on the label is not the North Carolina Secretary of State's address.

Shipping Documents

- A pre-paid shipping label is required with the documents for processing. This shipping document is computer generated and can be obtained online from the courier service of your choice.
- If you do not supply a pre-paid shipping label or self-addressed stamp envelope, the document(s) will be returned via regular mail.

Ground Pick-Ups

The Secretary of State's Office is a scheduled Air delivery (not ground delivery) pick-up location for UPS and FedEx. Due to the policies of FedEx and UPS, these couriers will no longer pick up "ground" delivery envelopes with the routine "Air" delivery envelopes. Getting your document may take longer if a "ground" document is picked up with the "air delivery" documents. The couriers are requesting a pick-up call by the person receiving the envelope.

Figure 32. Courier Policies page

Mailing to Foreign Jurisdictions

- Due to missing, incorrect or false account numbers presented on shipping labels and the fact that third party couriers do not actually charge the credit or debit card at the time the labels are printed, but when they arrive at their first destination, we can no longer use third party courier (i.e., UPS, FedEx, DHL) service for mailing to foreign jurisdictions.
- We will mail a USPS prepaid envelope and label to foreign jurisdictions as long as the sender's address on the label is not the North Carolina Secretary of State's address.

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- A pre-paid shipping label is required with the documents for processing. This shipping document is computer generated and can be obtained online from the courier service of your choice.

- If you do not supply a pre-paid shipping label or self-addressed stamp envelope, the document(s) will be returned via regular mail.

Ground Pick-Ups

The Secretary of State's Office is a scheduled Air delivery (not ground delivery) pick-up location for UPS and FedEx. Due to the policies of FedEx and UPS, these couriers will no longer pick up "ground" delivery envelopes with the routine "Air" delivery envelopes. Getting your document may take longer if a "ground" document is picked up with the "air delivery" documents. The couriers are requesting a pick-up call by the person receiving the envelope.

If you wish to use ground delivery for either FedEx or UPS:

1. The Secretary of State's Office will call you (at the number provided on the cover letter) when the documents are ready for pick-up; and
2. You will have to schedule a pick-up of those documents from our location*.

The most commonly used courier services are:

- FedEx: www.fedex.com/us - 1-800-gofedex (1-800-463-3339) [Order FedEx document](#)
- UPS: www.ups.com – 1-800-pickups (1-800-742-5877) [Order UPS document](#)
- DHL: www.dhl.com/en/express/shipping/ship_online.html#overview www.dhl.com/en/express/shipping/ship_online.html#overview DHL does not have a daily pick up at the North Carolina Secretary of State's Office. You will need to call DHL for pick up when we let you know it is ready.

North Carolina Secretary of State Location

2 South Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27601
919-814-5400

Statutes

The **Statutes** link takes you to the Chapter 66, [Article 34 Certificates of Authentication](#) page.

The law you are asking about is the North Carolina Article 34 Certificates of Authentication. It is a law that authorizes the Secretary of State or the Secretary's designee to sign and issue a certificate of authentication for a document that has been executed or issued in this state, so that it can be recognized in a foreign jurisdiction. The law also defines the terms and conditions for authentication, such as the requirements for seals, signatures, dates, acknowledgments, and copies. The law was enacted in 1998 and amended in 2005.

A certificate of authentication is a document that certifies the genuineness of an official’s signature, seal, or position within the state of North Carolina. It is usually needed when a document is to be used in another country, such as for legal, business, or personal purposes. For example, if you want to get married in France, you may need to authenticate your birth certificate from North Carolina.

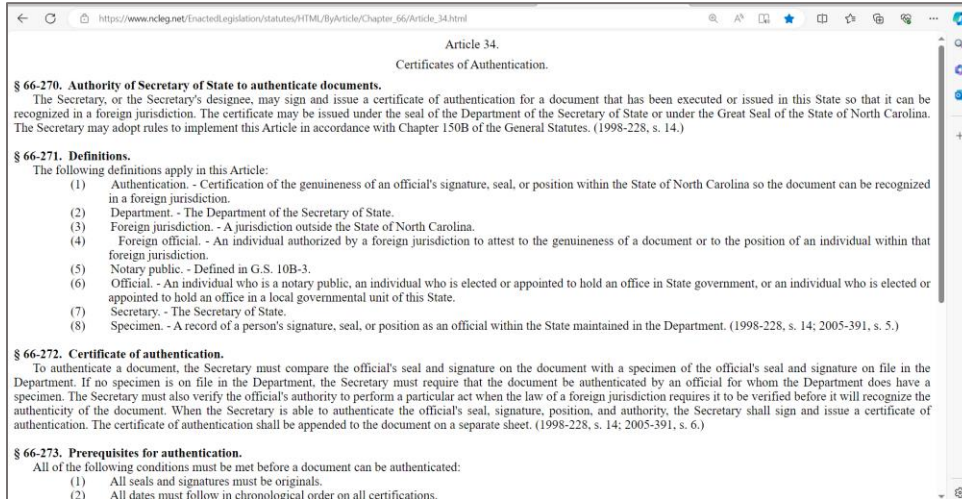


Figure 33. Article 34

Hague Member List

The **Hague Member List** page is the [HCCH | #12 - Authorities](#) website, listing all of the countries who have agreed to the Hague Convention of 1961. The HCCH has currently 91 Members: 90 States and 1 Regional Economic Integration Organization.

Forms

The **Forms** page list downloadable cover letters and forms in PDF and Word formats.

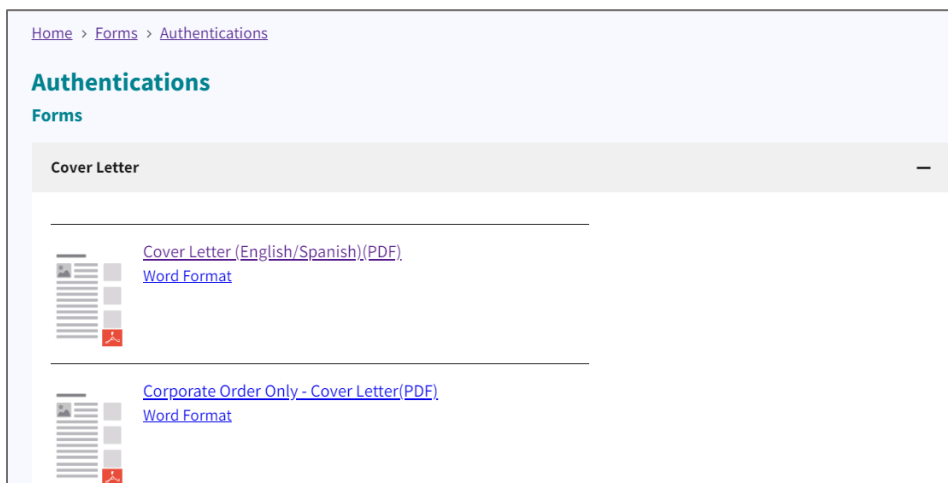


Figure 34. Authentication Forms page

U.S. State Department Authentications Office

The [U.S. Office of Authentications website](https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/records-and-authentications/authenticate-your-document/office-of-authentications.html) describes their duties as:

The U.S. Office of Authentications issues both apostilles and authentication certificates. The Office of Authentications provides signed certificates of authenticity for a variety of documents to individuals, institutions, and government agencies to be used abroad. Apostilles authenticate the seals and signatures of officials on public documents such as birth certificates, court orders, or any other document issued by a federal agency or certified by a U.S. or foreign consul.

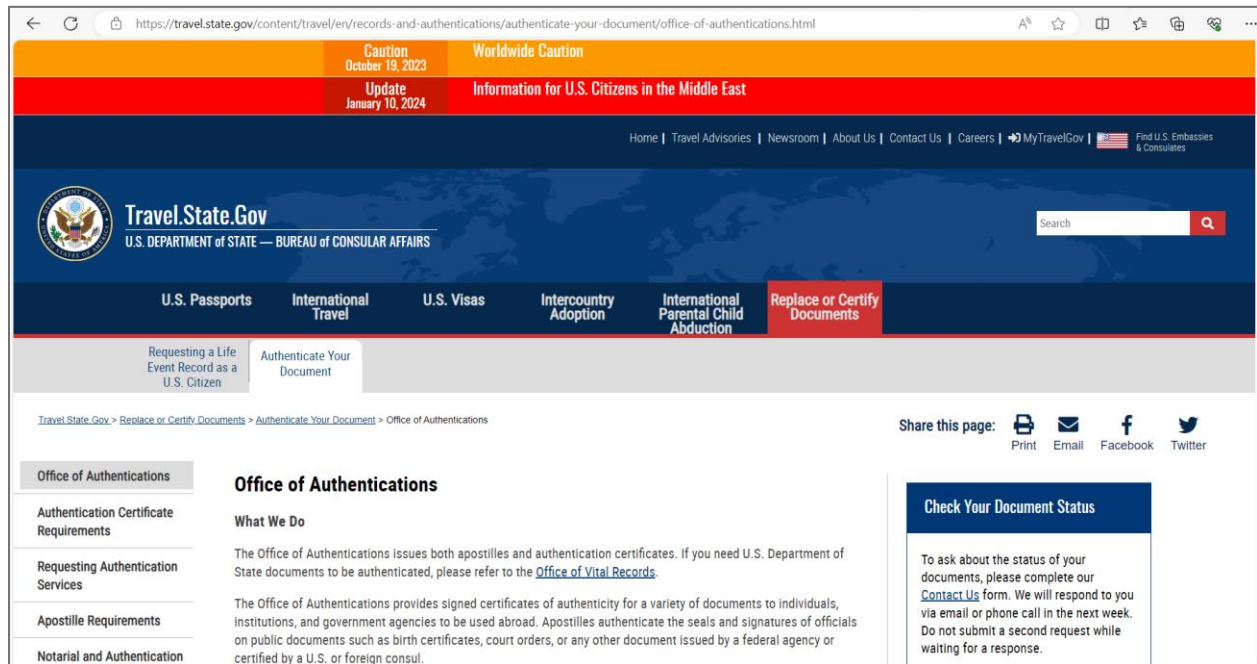


Figure 35. U.S. Office of Authentications website

The country in which the document will be used determines the type of certificate needed:

- An apostille is for documents to be used in countries that participate in the [1961 Hague Convention Treaty](#).
- Authentication certificates are for documents to be used in countries that do not participate in the 1961 Hague Convention Treaty.

How to Request Authentications Service

To request authentications service, you must complete [Form DS-4194](#).

- [Authentications Certificate Requirements](#): How to prepare your document to be authenticated
- [Requesting Authentication Services](#): How to request services by mail
- [Apostille Requirements](#)

Processing Times: We will process your request in 11 weeks from the date we receive it. We are offering mail-in service but we are not currently offering in-person appointment service.

Fees: Authentications fees are \$20 per document for all services, including rejections and requests that are not ready to be processed by our office because they require additional certification.

(Source: [Office of Authentications \(state.gov\)](#))

Contact Information

How do I contact the NC Secretary of State’s Authentications Office?

Select **Divisions** > **Authentications**.

At the bottom of the [Authentications](#) page, you find the **Contact Authentications** section, listing all methods of contact. See **Figure 36**.

Contact Authentications		
Mailing Address	Physical Address	Email
North Carolina Secretary of State Authentication Office North Carolina Secretary of State Post Office Box 29622 Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0622	North Carolina Secretary of State Authentication Office North Carolina Secretary of State 2 South Salisbury Street Raleigh, North Carolina 27601-2903	authen@sosnc.gov Phone 919-814-5400

Figure 36. Contact information

Call (919) 814-5400 **Email** authen@sosnc.gov

Postal mail

North Carolina Secretary of State
Authentication Office
Post Office box 29622
Raleigh, NC 27626-0622

Physical address

North Carolina Secretary of State
Authentication Office
2 South Salisbury Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2903