

The Notary news



The North Carolina Department of
The Secretary of State, Elaine F. Marshall

Welcome
NC Notaries

Happy New
Decade

2020



ELAINE F. MARSHALL
NC SECRETARY OF STATE

WELCOME, NC NOTARIES!



Welcome 2020!

Happy New Year, Notaries, and Welcome to 2020 -- a NEW DECADE!

A new year symbolizes a time to start over. Hit the reset button. Get organized. Get things in order in preparation for what's to come over the next 12 months.

As a notary since the 1980s, I ask you to use the month of January to get your "Notary" House in order. What does that mean? If there are areas in your role as a public official that you are not sure or confident about, now is the time to get your questions answered and shore up your skill sets.

As we head into a great new year, we are looking to YOU to help US find ways to make your job as a North Carolina notary more successful. We launched this newsletter in September of last year, and that was just the beginning.

Your NC Notary Facebook group is growing and is extremely active. I love how you are on social media regularly asking one another questions and offering advice. Remember: many of the answers to your questions can be found in your 2016 Notary Public Manual. If you don't have one, click on the link in this newsletter so you won't be missing out on a crucial resource.

I encourage you to go through your manual and highlight key areas and reacquaint yourself with the content inside.

Also, look for educational videos from our office on our social media platforms. They will cover a variety of topics important to your job, like notarizing voter absentee ballot applications and other key topics.

Remember, our office is here to be a resource to you whether you reside in Murphy or Manteo or somewhere in between. So now's the time to lean on us to help sharpen the tools in your toolbox.

Elaine J. Marshall

Please send in your tips, practice ideas, and questions for us
at notarynews@sosnc.gov.



Besides being the start of a new decade, 2020 also kicks off the start of Election Season. In fact, the North Carolina primary election is around the corner: **Tuesday, March 3rd.**

If you don't know already, North Carolina's absentee voter application and certificate are required to be witnessed either by two witnesses or by you -- *one notary.*

We sat down with **Ozie Stallworth, Director of Electronic Notarization and Notary Enforcement** here at the **NC Department of Secretary of State**, to help us walk you through your role as a notary in the voter absentee ballot process.

We'll be sending the video to you in a special newsletter next week, and it will be posted on our NC Notary Facebook Group, so be on the lookout!



Fast Five Q&A

Q: A fellow notary shared with us that a couple getting married out of the country asked her to notarize their birth certificates and passports. Is this something she needs to do for them? And if so, how does she notarize the documents?

The answer is no. You do not need to notarize birth certificates or passports for anyone. In fact, there is no where on either document for you to do so. It is possible that the couple is seeking to have certified copies of their birth certificates, which would need to be obtained from the Vital Records office which can be reached at 919.733.3000. You get certified copy of your marriage certificate at the Register of Deeds at the county of the

Q: Another North Carolina notary asked on Facebook if notaries are allowed to accept a monetary tip. He said he understands the fees that notaries are allowed to charge is for the service. Since a tip is a gift, is it okay for him to accept it?

Again, the answer is no. **Notaries are "public officials" and tips are inappropriate.** It is NOT permissible for notaries to accept tips for notarial acts. NC General Statue 10B-31 says the maximum fees that may be charged by a notary for notarial acts are as follows:

For acknowledgements, jurats, verifications or proofs, \$5 per principal signature. For oaths or affirmations without a signature, \$5 per person, except for an oath or affirmation administered to a credible witness to vouch for the identity of a principal or subscribing witness.

Q: Are North Carolina notaries allowed to place the North Carolina State Seal on their business cards?

Yes.

Q: A notary advised us that she recently paid her renewal fee, but decided not to renew since her employer went out of business. What does she need to do?

The notary application fee is nonrefundable. If the notary does not wish to renew, you are required to turn in your seal to the Secretary of State's office within 45 days of resignation per NC General Statue 10B-55. Please mail the seal by certified mail to the following address:

NC Secretary of State
Notary Public
PO Box 29626
Raleigh, North Carolina 27626-0626
919.814.5400

Side note: NC notaries are instructed to keep their journals for 10 years past the last day of their notary commission after which time they can destroy them.

Q: If I get married, how do I change my name?

After a legal change of name for marriage or court order, all notaries must send a signed notice of change to the Secretary of State's notary division within 45 days. The notice must include both the former name and the notary's new name.

Please continue to notarize in your former name until you receive confirmation from the notary division, take a new oath of office at the Register of Deeds in your county of commission, and get a new notary seal in your new name.

Do you have a question you'd like us to answer for the **Fast Five**? Let us know. We are here to be a resource to you.

Email us your question at notarynews@sosnc.gov.



When A Principal Is Physically Disabled

One of the greatest things we can do as human beings is to help one another. Being a notary public is an honorable profession, but our roles become even more honorable when we are able to help principals who need physical assistance through our notarial acts. This is covered under North Carolina General Statute 10-B-20(e). Also, refer to page 58 in your 2016 North Carolina Notary Public Manual.

If a principal with a physical disability is unable to sign his or her name, cannot

move his or her hands, and cannot hold a pen in his or her mouth or any area of their body, the principal may designate another person to sign for them.

The designee cannot be a signer or party to the document. And this is very important: that person cannot have any financial or beneficial interest in the transaction.

Here are the steps for this act:

- The person with disabilities will direct the designee to sign the document in his/her name while in the presence of two witnesses and you, the notary.
- You as the notary must check the designee's identification.
- You as the notary must write the following statement below the principal's signature: "Signature affixed by (designee) in the presence of (name and address of principal)."
- Finally, you notarize the signature through an acknowledgment, oath or affirmation, jurat, or verification.

Now, there are times when a voter with physical disabilities will request a notary to assist him or her if they cannot mark their voter absentee ballot application. Notaries can only help with this act when they are asked to do so by the voter and a relative or guardian is not able to help.

We have outlined the how-to steps in an upcoming NC Notary Video Vignette that we will be sharing soon.

Reminder: If you don't have a manual, you may purchase one from the UNC School of Government at <https://www.sog.unc.edu/publications/books/north-carolina-notary-public-manual-2016-print-version>.

As always, if you are unsure of anything, please reach out to the Department at notary@sosnc.gov. We are always happy to help.



Find A Notary

As we add more and more notaries to our rolls, we want to make you aware of the FIND A NOTARY database located on the Secretary of State's website. This is a place where you can voluntarily add your own information so members of the public can find you when they are in need of your notarial services.

To help you get added, we put together this step-by-step instructional video *We Hear You* (below) on how to add your name to the Find a Notary Database:

If you have questions, please feel free to send an email to tonotary@sosnc.gov.

We Hear You!



We're happy to help you add your information to the NCSOS

Notary Database.



NC Notary Facebook Group

Have you joined the notary Facebook group *The North Carolina Notary Network* yet? Well, what are you waiting for? More than 1,435 notaries around the state have signed up to join us. If you haven't yet, come join!

The purpose of the group is to connect notaries across the state as well as to share information and answer your questions.

Click [here](#) to join today!



In the November newsletter, we asked "According to a survey conducted by *Inc. Magazine*, what was the number one New Year's Resolution for 2019?" The options were the following:

- A. Exercise more
- B. Quit Smoking
- C. Read More
- D. Diet or eat healthier
- E. Find another job

The correct answer is D. The majority of you said D was the correct answer, so kudos to you!



Organizing Your Sanctuary!

Okay, the Christmas tree is back in the attic (or it's been recycled if it's a real one), all of the lights have been taken off of the roof, and you've eaten the last of your aunt's famous pound cake.

It's time for a New Year, so that means it's time to get organized. Between family duties, housework and kids' homework, the job and everyday life, it's super easy to let clutter pile up in every room of your house.

But the new decade is here, ya'll. No more paper pile ups. No more expired or unwanted foods taking up space in the pantry. Out with the old ways and in with the new. Let's get refreshed and get reorganized. Here are a few quick tips on how to get started:

Dresser Drawers. Go through your sock drawer to make sure each sock has a matching friend. Organize by item or color. If the single sock has been there a long time, just toss it.

Home Office. Start the year off right by cleaning off your home office desk. Organize papers in colored file folders and colored boxes and label them accordingly. Recycle old papers. Organize supplies like pens, computer paper, notebooks, scissors, etc.

Kitchen Drawers. Discard old ketchup, honey mustard and soy sauce packets. Throw away takeout menus from restaurants you never plan to visit again. Get rid of broken eating and serving utensils.

Linen Closet. Old and torn washcloths and towels don't need to remain in the linen closet. Throw them out or use them as cleaning rags. Check to be sure all of the linens will actually fit on your beds.

Pantry. Store foods like cereal, rice, grains, pasta, sugar and flour in clear glass or acrylic jars. Use label makers to easily identify the contents. Check the dates on all items and discard those that have expired.

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