

# Notary Public Top 15 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

## Contents

Online Access and Information  
Becoming a Notary  
Apostilles and Authentications

## Online Access and Information

1. When I try to register for online access, why do I get the response "No match found"?
2. When I try to log on, why do I get an error message that states "invalid user id / password"?
3. How do I reset my password?
4. Why have I not received my Notary ID/password e-mail message?
5. Where can I find my commission expiration date?
6. What is my Notary ID?
7. My application was rejected and the reject letter says that "The signature does not match the application. What does that mean and what do I have to do? What does it mean when the reject letter says "No home/business phone number"?
8. My email address is incorrect. How do I change it?

## Becoming a Notary

9. How do I become a notary public in Colorado?
10. Where can I get a notary application form?
11. How long does it take for my application to be processed?
12. I understand that as of May 1, 2010, I will need to attend mandatory training if I am a new notary or if my commission has expired by more than 30 days. How do I sign up for this training?

## Apostilles and Authentications

13. What is an Apostille?
14. How much does an Apostille cost? Can I get an Apostille expedited?
15. I need an Apostille for a document. What documents can be notarized and what documents need some other signature? Does the secretary of state translate documents?

## Online Access and Information

1. When I try to register for online access, why do I get the response "No match found"?
- The name you enter must match the name on your current or prior record exactly. Do not enter a title (Mr., Ms.) or anything in the suffix field, unless your name on record includes a suffix such as Jr., Sr., or a numeral. Your commission expiration date must be entered in the format required.

2. When I try to log on, why do I get an error message that states "invalid user id / password"?
- The passwords assigned by the program are case-sensitive. The format is one capital letter, followed by a series of lower-case letters, ending in one or two numbers. Once you log on successfully, you may change the password to one that is memorable.

3. How do I reset my password?
- On the Secretary of State's website, go to the Notary Home Page and click on the words "Forgot Password" on the left side of the screen. Enter your Notary ID and e-mail address, click the reset button, and wait to receive an e-mail message providing a temporary password that is valid for 4 hours.

4. Why have I not received my Notary ID/password e-mail message?
- Be sure to provide a current e-mail address when registering for online access. Check your junk or spam inboxes, in case your e-mail provider has received it there. If you entered an incorrect e-mail address, notify our office at [notary@sos.state.co.us](mailto:notary@sos.state.co.us) and our staff will correct it for you.

5. Where can I find my commission expiration date?
- A notary's commission expiration date is provided on the Notary Commission Certificate. If you have lost or misplaced your Notary Commission Certificate, you may obtain a duplicate copy as follows: Register for Online Access and print your own official certificate. You may also send a letter requesting a replacement copy of your Notary Commission Certificate to the Colorado Secretary of State, 1700 Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80290.

You can also search your name under "Verify a Notary" on the Notary Home page of the Secretary of State's website.

6. What is my Notary ID?
- The Notary ID is an 11-digit number printed on the Certificate below the date it was issued.

7. My application was rejected and the reject letter says that "the signature does not match the application. What does that mean and what do I have to do? What does it mean when the reject letter says "No home/business phone number"?
- The signature on the form must be identical to the name typed in at the top of the form. If you don't use a middle initial in your official signature, don't list it on the name line. If you do use a middle initial, make sure that it is included on the name line. Suffixes include, Jr., Sr., 2d, etc. Only put these suffixes in the name line if you use them as part of your official signature. Terms such as Dr., Mrs., Ms., are not suffixes and are generally not used as part of the official signature of most individuals. A notary applicant must also provide his or her residence address (not a post office box only) and a home phone number.

8. My email address is incorrect. How do I change it?
- If the e-mail address you have on record with our office is no longer valid, you can use your Notary ID and password to log on and change it yourself. If you do not have your login information, you should send an e-mail message to [notary@sos.state.co.us](mailto:notary@sos.state.co.us) and we will update your record. Then, you should reset your password. If you are a new applicant and have entered an incorrect e-mail address, the address can be corrected only after your commission has been approved. Please write the correction on the application form you mail to our office.

## Becoming a Notary

9. How do I become a notary public in Colorado?
- Applicants must mail or deliver their completed and notarized application and photocopy of one of the acceptable forms of identification to the Colorado Secretary of State's office, 1700 Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80290. Please note that beginning May 1, 2010, the Notary Program Administrative Rules take effect. Under these new rules, new notaries or notaries who allowed their commission to expire by more than 30 days

must attend approved training and take an online examination administered by the secretary of state's office. Effective May 1, notaries must attach (please use a paper clip) to their application an ID copy, a certificate of completion for an approved notary training course, and a certificate of successful completion of the online notary exam. An application that does not include these attachments will be rejected.

The filing fee must be paid online by credit or debit card or by check made payable to Colorado Secretary of State.

In person, same-day service is available. An applicant must provide official identification with a home address that matches the home address on the application and pay an additional expedite fee if not paying online. See Fee Schedule on the Secretary of State's website.

#### 10. Where can I get a notary application form?

Forms are available from the Licensing Center of the Secretary of State's website, [www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/notary/application.html](http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/notary/application.html).

First-time applicants, see the options under the heading "New Applicants".

Renewing or former Colorado notaries, see the options under the heading "Renewing Notaries and Expired Notaries".

#### 11. How long does it take for my application to be processed?

If you paid online, your application should be processed within 5 to 7 business days from the day your original signed, notarized application form and clear photocopy of an acceptable form of identification have been received in our office.

If you mailed your application with payment by check, your paperwork should be processed within 3 to 5 business weeks.

#### 12. I understand that as of May 1, 2010, I will need to attend mandatory training if I am a new notary or if my commission has expired by more than 30 days. How do I sign up for this training?

Mandatory training is available for free through the secretary of state's office. These classes are held every Thursday at the secretary of state's office. These classes have limited seating. Click here to sign up for a class.

Some private companies have applied for permission from the secretary of state to conduct approved training in Colorado. Those companies will be listed on the Notary Training Page.

## Apostilles and Authentications

#### 13. What is an Apostille?

An Apostille is an official document that accompanies a document that must go to a country that is a member of the Hague Convention on the Legalization of Foreign Public Documents. The secretary of state will authenticate the signature of the notary, or in the case of documents certified by certain public officials, the signature of that official. Other authentications, called Certificates of Magistracy, are issued in the same manner to those countries that have not adopted the Hague Convention. Finally, certain states require that the secretary of state authenticate signatures of notaries or public officials on documents to be used within that state. In these cases, the secretary of state will issue a Certificate of Fact.

#### 14. How much does an Apostille cost? Can I get an Apostille expedited?

The term "authentication" includes apostilles, certificates of magistracy and certificates of fact. The type of authentication issued depends on the country of destination for your document. Apostille certificates and certificates of magistracy are currently free of charge when processed by mail or next business day. Certificates of fact are \$5.00. Expedited service is available only for those documents received at the front counter. The cost for expediting an authentication is \$10.00.

#### 15. I need an Apostille for a document. What documents can be notarized and what documents need some other signature? Does the secretary of state translate documents?

There are certain documents that must have a public official's signature rather than a notary's signature. Some examples are: Colorado birth and death certificates need to be certified by the vital statistics division of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment; marriage certificates must be signed by the clerk and recorder of the county where the marriage certificate was obtained; certified copies of divorce decrees must be obtained from the clerk of the court where the divorce was obtained. Certificates of Citizenship must be obtained from the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services at <http://infopass.uscis.gov/> and authenticated by the U.S. Department of State at <http://www.state.gov/m/a/auth/index.htm>. If you have questions concerning a particular document, please call our office.

The Secretary of State's office does not translate documents.

## Notary Public - Additional FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions)

### Contents

Applying and Renewing  
Powers and Duties  
Notary Seals and Journals  
Account Management  
Online Access and Electronic Filing  
General Questions

### Applying and Renewing

A1. What is a notary public?  
A2. Who can become a notary public?  
A3. How do I become a notary public in Colorado?  
A4. Where can I get a notary application form?  
A5. How long does it take for my application to be processed?  
A6. When may I begin notarizing documents?  
A7. How do I renew my notary commission?  
A8. What do I do if my commission expired and I wish to continue being a notary public?

### Powers and Duties

B1. What are the powers and duties of a notary?  
B2. What is a jurat?  
B3. What is the difference between an oath and an affirmation?  
B4. What is an acknowledgement?  
B5. Must the person sign the document in my presence?  
B6. What is satisfactory evidence that the signer is who s/he says s/he is?  
B7. What is a notarial certificate?  
B8. What must be in a notarial certificate?  
B9. Are notaries restricted to a county?  
B10. May I notarize documents that originate from out-of-state?  
B11. May I notarize documents when I am physically outside the state of Colorado?  
B12. Can a notary certify a copy of a birth, death, marriage, or divorce certificate?  
B13. Can I notarize a document with blank spaces?  
B14. Can I notarize a fax or a photocopy of a document?  
B15. Can I notarize an undated document?  
B16. May I notarize my own document or signature?  
B17. May I notarize the signatures of my spouse, children, parents or other relatives?  
B18. How do I fix incorrect information on the document and on the notarial certificate?

### Notary Seals and Journals

C1. Is a notary seal necessary?  
C2. What types of notary seals are acceptable in Colorado?  
C3. What does the seal need to look like?  
C4. Where may I obtain a notary seal and a journal?  
C5. Am I required to keep a journal?  
C6. What information should be recorded in the journal?  
C7. Can I list two signers on one notarial certificate?

### Account Management

D1. What is the length of a notary public's commission?  
D2. Where can I find my commission expiration date?  
D3. How do I get a replacement copy of my Notary Commission Certificate?  
D4. What do I do if my name and/or signature change?  
D5. What do I do if my home address and/or business address and/or telephone number change?  
D6. Do I need to be bonded?  
D7. What happens if I move out of state during my term?  
D8. What do I do if I no longer wish to be a notary or if I need to resign my commission?  
D9. What do I do with my seal and journal when I am no longer a commissioned notary?

### Online Access and Electronic Filing

E1. When I try to register for online access, why do I get the response "No match found"?  
E2. Why have I not received my Notary ID/password e-mail message?  
E3. When I try to log on, why do I get an error message that states "invalid user id / password"?  
E4. Why can't I print my application/certificate?  
E5. How do I reset my password?  
E6. How do I obtain my Notary ID?  
E7. I paid the fee online to apply/renew, but did not print the application form. What should I do?  
E8. My application was rejected. How do I proceed?

### General Questions

F1. What fees may a notary legally charge?  
F2. What is an apostille?  
F3. What if the country my notarized document is going to does not abide by the Hague Convention?  
F4. How does a U.S. notary public differ from a notario publico?  
F5. Where can I report illegal, improper, or questionable acts by a notary public?  
F6. What is electronic notarization?

### Applying and Renewing

A1. What is a notary public?  
A notary public is an individual commissioned by the Secretary of State to serve the public as an impartial witness, performing notarial acts as are allowed or required by law.

A notary is a verifier, authenticator, impartial agent for the state, public recorder of acts, unbiased, official witness, and state officer (every bit as much as the Governor or the Secretary of State, though at a much lower level).

A2. Who can become a notary public?  
In Colorado, any person who is a resident of the state, is 18 years of age or older, has never been convicted of a felony, or, in the prior five years, a misdemeanor involving dishonesty, is able to read and write the English language, and has never had his/her notary commission revoked may become a notary public.

### A3. How do I become a notary public in Colorado?

Applicants must mail or deliver their completed and notarized application and photocopy of one of the acceptable forms of identification to the Colorado Secretary of State's office, 1700 Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80290. Please note that beginning May 1, 2010, the Notary Program Administrative Rules take effect. Under these new rules, new notaries or notaries who allowed their commission to expire by more than 30 days must attend approved training and take an online examination administered by the secretary of state's office. Effective May 1, notaries must attach (please use a paper clip) to their application an ID copy, a certificate of completion for an approved notary training course, and a certificate of successful completion of the online notary exam. An application that does not include these attachments will be rejected.

The filing fee must be paid online by credit or debit card or by check made payable to Colorado Secretary of State.

In person, same-day service is available. An applicant must provide official identification with a home address that matches the home address on the application and pay an additional expedite fee if not paying online. See Fee Schedule on the Secretary of State's website.

### A4. Where can I get a notary application form?

Forms are available from the Licensing Center of the Secretary of State's website ([click here](#)).

First-time applicants, see the options under the heading "New Applicants".

Renewing or former Colorado notaries, see the options under the heading "Renewing Notaries and Expired Notaries".

### A5. How long does it take for my application to be processed?

If you paid online, your application should be processed within 5 to 7 business days from the day your original signed, notarized application form and clear photocopy of an acceptable form of identification have been received in our office.

If you mailed your application with payment by check, your paperwork should be processed within 3 to 5 weeks from receipt.

### A6. When may I begin notarizing documents?

You may begin notarizing documents upon receipt of your Notary Commission Certificate from the Secretary of State and after your purchase of an official seal and a notary journal. Keep in mind that your Notary Commission Certificate is an important document that proves you have been empowered by the State of Colorado to be a notary. Placing it in a safe place will ensure easy retrieval and help prevent it from being used fraudulently.

### A7. How do I renew my notary commission?

Starting 90 days before the expiration of a notary's commission, a notary may submit an application that has been completed in its entirety and notarized, along with a photocopy of one of the acceptable forms of identification to the Colorado Secretary of State's office, 1700 Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80290. Please note that beginning May 1, 2010, the Notary Program Administrative Rules take effect. Under these new rules, new notaries or notaries who allowed their commission to expire by more than 30 days must attend approved training and take an online examination administered by the secretary of state's office. Effective May 1, notaries must attach (please use a paper clip) to their application an ID copy, a certificate of completion for an approved notary training course,

and a certificate of successful completion of the online notary exam. An application that does not include these attachments will be rejected.

The filing fee must be paid online by credit or debit card or by check made payable to Colorado Secretary of State.

In person, same-day service is available. An applicant must provide official identification with a home address that matches the home address on the application and pay an additional expedite fee if not paying online. See Fee Schedule on the Secretary of State's website.

### A8. What do I do if my commission expired and I wish to continue being a notary public?

It will be necessary to submit a completed and notarized application, a photocopy of one of the acceptable forms of identification, and the fee to the Secretary of State, after which you will be issued a new notary commission. See question 7, above. Do not proceed as a first-time applicant, if you have been a notary before in Colorado. Begin by registering for online access.

## Powers and Duties

### B1. What are the powers and duties of a notary?

The notary's duty as an impartial witness is to ensure that the signer(s) of documents are who they say they are and have entered into agreements knowingly and willingly. In Colorado, notaries are empowered to administer oaths and affirmations, certify copies, and take acknowledgements, depositions, affidavits, verifications, and other sworn testimony or statements. For more information, refer to the Notary Handbook available on our website.

### B2. What is a jurat?

Most times, the word jurat is used to refer to the notarization of an oath or affirmation. Jurat is short for the Latin "juratum est," meaning, "It has been sworn."

### B3. What is the difference between an oath and an affirmation?

Oaths and affirmations are pledges sworn to before a notary public attesting to the truth of a given statement. The difference is that an oath calls upon a supreme being as a witness, while an affirmation is made under the penalties of perjury.

### B4. What is an acknowledgement?

It is an unsworn statement, so no oath or affirmation is administered. In an acknowledgment, the notary is guaranteeing that, while the signer was in the notary's presence, the notary identified him or her, and that the signer appeared to be willing and able to execute the document. The notary also guarantees that s/he witnessed the "execution" of the document, which is its completion by signing. Technically, most acknowledgments don't have to be signed in the notary's presence. However, the best practice would be to have the client sign the acknowledgment in front of the notary. (See the Notary Handbook for more information on this subject.)

### B5. Must the person sign the document in my presence?

Yes. Notaries are not allowed to notarize a document unless the signer of the document is in the physical presence of the notary and has presented satisfactory evidence that the signer is who s/he says s/he is.

**B6. What is satisfactory evidence that the signer is who s/he says s/he is?**

Acceptable identification includes a current identification card or document issued by a federal or state governmental entity containing a photograph and signature of the signer. The notary may also accept a sworn statement of a credible witness who is personally known to the notary and who states that he or she knows the signer.

**B7. What is a notarial certificate?**

A notarial certificate must be used in every notarial transaction. Often called notarizations, they are the written statements of a notary's acts. They are the notary's testimony about what he/she has done and witnessed in his/her official capacity. For example, the statement "subscribed and sworn to before me in the county of Denver, state of Colorado, by John Jones this 10th day of July, 2009" along with the official signature and seal of the notary and the statement "Notary Public, my commission expires: January 31, 2012", is a notarial certificate.

**B8. What must be in a notarial certificate?**

Where the notarization took place or the venue of the notarial act. This consists of the county – or city and county in the case of Broomfield and Denver – and the state.

When the notarization took place or the date of the notarial act. A notary may not pre- or post-date any notarial certificate no matter how a client may plead or bully for an exception and no matter what date is on the document itself.

What the notarial act was, whether oath or affirmation, acknowledgement, or preparation of a certified copy.

Who the notary is. This requires the notary's seal, either embossed or rubber stamped, the notary's commission expiration date, which should be the exact month, day and year of expiration of the notary's commission, and the notary's official signature exactly as it appears on the notary's application.

**B9. Are notaries restricted to a county?**

No. A Colorado notary public has authority to act throughout the state. However, the county in which the notarial act took place must appear in the notarization.

**B10. May I notarize documents that originate from out-of-state?**

Yes. Documents originating from another state may be notarized as long as you perform the notarial act in Colorado, the signer of the document appears before you to acknowledge or sign the document, and the notarial certificate contains all required elements.

**B11. May I notarize documents when I am physically outside the state of Colorado?**

No. A notary public only has jurisdiction to perform notarial acts while the notary public is physically in the state of Colorado.

**B12. Can a notary certify a copy of a birth, death, marriage, or divorce certificate?**

No. The Clerk and Recorder of the county in which the documents were originally recorded must certify recorded documents regarding real property, marriages or divorces. In the case of divorce, the Clerk of the Court that issued the Decree of Dissolution of Marriage can provide a certified copy of the Order. The Vital Records section of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment is the only place to get official copies of birth or death certificates.

**B13. Can I notarize a document with blank spaces?**

A notary should skim the document for blanks and ask the document signer to fill them in. If they are intended to be left blank, then the signer can line through them or write N/A.

**B14. Can I notarize a fax or a photocopy of a document?**

Yes, a photocopy or fax may be notarized, but only if it bears an original signature. That is, the copy must have been signed with pen and ink. A photocopied or faxed signature may be notarized as an acknowledgment if the original signer of the document appears personally before the notary. For example, the signer may have previously signed an original document and now only has a copy. The notary may take an acknowledgment from the signer that the signature on the fax copy is that of the signer.

**B15. Can I notarize an undated document?**

Yes; however, if there is a space for a date it should be filled in with the correct date or lined through by the document signer. If the document simply doesn't have a date, it is acceptable to notarize it and record in your journal that the document has no date.

**B16. May I notarize my own document or signature?**

No. A notary public who has a disqualifying interest in a transaction may not legally perform any notarial act in connection with such transaction. A notary public has a disqualifying interest in a transaction in connection with which notarial services are requested if he/she: (a) May receive directly, and as a proximate result of the notarization, any advantage, right, title, interest, cash, or property exceeding in value the sum of any fee properly received or (b) Is named, individually, as a party to the transaction.

**B17. May I notarize the signatures of my spouse, children, parents or other relatives?**

A notary is not specifically prohibited from witnessing and notarizing the signatures of a spouse or relatives; however, a notary public who has a disqualifying interest in a transaction may not legally perform any notarial act in connection with such transaction. If the document were to be questioned for any cause, the notarial act may be scrutinized more closely than if the notary was not a spouse or relative. Also, if the witnessed document is one from which you may derive a benefit, your right to receive that benefit may be jeopardized. To avoid later questioning of the notary's impartiality, as well as accusations of undue influence, it is always safest for a signer to find a Notary who is not related to the signer of the document.

**B18. How do I fix incorrect information on the document and on the notarial certificate?**

Only the document signer has authority to make any changes on the document; likewise, only the notary can correct the certificate. When you are correcting a notarial certificate simply line through the mistake with ink, write the correction above or beside, initial and date the correction.

## Notary Seals and Journals

**C1. Is a notary seal necessary?**

Yes. According to Colorado law, under or near the notary's official signature on every notary certificate, a notary public shall rubber stamp or emboss clearly and legibly such notary's official seal. Do not stamp or emboss the seal over signatures and avoid stamping or embossing over text.

C2. What types of notary seals are acceptable in Colorado?

The notary public's seal shall either be an embosser or a rubber stamp. The indentations made by the seal embosser shall not be applied on the document where the notary certificate appears in a manner that will render illegible or incapable of photographic reproduction any of the printed marks or writing.

C3. What does the seal need to look like?

The official notary seal must contain an outline or border, within which may appear only the following information: the name of the notary, exactly as such notary writes his or her official signature, the words "STATE OF COLORADO", and the words "NOTARY PUBLIC". The notary's commission expiration date, if included on the seal, must be placed outside the outline.

C4. Where may I obtain a notary seal and a journal?

A notary may purchase his/her notary stamp and journal from almost any office supply store. Keep in mind that some stores may require notaries to show their Notary Commission Certificate. It is important that the name on the stamp match the signature of the notary EXACTLY.

C5. Am I required to keep a journal?

Colorado law requires notaries public to keep a journal entry for every notarial act. There is an exception, if the notarized document is retained by the notary's firm or employer in the regular course of business. However, if documents are misfiled, lost, destroyed, or are otherwise unrecoverable, the notary may be exposed to considerable liability. Therefore, every notary is strongly encouraged to keep a well-maintained journal.

C6. What information should be recorded in the journal?

The date and type of the notarial act.

The title or type of document or proceeding that was notarized and the date of such document or proceeding if different than the date of the notarization.

The name of each person whose oath, affirmation, acknowledgement, affidavit, declaration, deposition, protest, verification, or other statement is taken.

The signature and address of each person whose oath, affirmation, acknowledgement, affidavit, declaration, deposition, protest, verification, or other statement is taken.

A certificate of authentication of each notarized electronic signature by the provider of the electronic signature or each person whose oath, affirmation, acknowledgement, affidavit, declaration, deposition, protest, verification, or other statement is taken.

Any other information the notary considers appropriate to record that concerns the notarial act.

C7. Can I list two signers on one notarial certificate?

If two signers appear before the notary at the same time, the names may appear on the same certificate. Because it is two separate notarizations, two entries must be made in the journal.

## Account Management

D1. What is the length of a notary public's commission?

A notary public's term of office is four years.

D2. Where can I find my commission expiration date?

A notary's commission expiration date is provided on the Notary Commission Certificate. If you have lost or misplaced your Notary

Commission Certificate, you may obtain a duplicate copy as described in question 36, below. You can also search your name under "Verify a Notary" on the Notary Home page of the Secretary of State's website.

D3. How do I get a replacement copy of my Notary Commission Certificate?

Register for Online Access and print your own official certificate. You may also send a letter requesting a replacement copy of your Notary Commission Certificate to the Colorado Secretary of State, 1700 Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80290.

D4. What do I do if my name and/or signature change?

Colorado law states that a notary must send a letter and a sample of his/her handwritten official signature to the Secretary of State within 30 days after any changes to the notary's name are made. A copy of an acceptable identification document in your new name is required. To file a change of name electronically, register for online access then log in on the Secretary of State's website. The online program will provide a form for you to sign with your old and new signatures then mail to the address on top of the form. You may also use the change form available on the "Forms" link on the Notary Home Page (<http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/notary/notaryForms.html>).

D5. What do I do if my home address and/or business address and/or telephone number change?

Colorado law states that a notary must notify the Secretary of State within 30 days after any changes to the notary's business or residence address are made. In the case of a home address change, a new Notary Commission Certificate reflecting the change will be sent to the notary or made available for printing if filed electronically. A notary's work or business address does not appear on the certificate.

To file a change of address electronically, register for online access then log in on the Secretary of State's website. A notary change form to mail in is also available on the "Forms" link on the Notary Home page (<http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/notary/notaryForms.html>).

D6. Do I need to be bonded?

No, there are no statutory requirements for a notary to be bonded in Colorado.

D7. What happens if I move out of state during my term?

If a notary public has ceased to have a business or residence address in Colorado, the notary shall send or have delivered to the Secretary of State a signed letter of resignation, the notary's journal of notarial acts, and all other papers and copies relating to the notary's notarial acts, including the notary's seal. The notary's commission shall thereafter cease to be in effect.

D8. What do I do if I no longer wish to be a notary or if I need to resign my commission?

If a notary no longer wishes to be a notary or if he/she needs to resign their commission, the notary shall send or have delivered to the Secretary of State a letter of resignation, his/her journal, and all other papers and copies relating to the notary's notarial acts, including the notary's seal. The notary's commission shall thereafter cease to be in effect.

D9. What do I do with my seal and journal when I am no longer a commissioned notary?

If a notary public no longer desires to be a notary public, the notary shall send or have delivered to the Secretary of State a signed letter of

resignation, his/her notary journal and notary seal, and all other papers and copies relating to the notary's notarial acts.

## Online Access and Electronic Filing

E1. When I try to register for online access, why do I get the response "No match found"?

The name you enter must match the name on your current or prior record exactly. Do not enter a title (Mr., Ms.) or anything in the suffix field, unless your name on record includes a suffix such as Jr., Sr., or a numeral. Your commission expiration date must be entered in the format required.

E2. Why have I not received my Notary ID/password e-mail message?

Be sure to provide a current e-mail address when registering for online access. Check your junk or spam inboxes, in case your e-mail provider has received it there. If you entered an incorrect e-mail address, notify our office at [notary@sos.state.co.us](mailto:notary@sos.state.co.us) and our staff will correct it for you.

E3. When I try to log on, why do I get an error message that states "invalid user id / password"?

The passwords assigned by the program are case-sensitive. The format is one capital letter, followed by a series of lower-case letters, ending in one or two numbers. Once you log on successfully, you may change the password to one that is memorable.

E4. Why can't I print my application/certificate?

Be sure that you are clicking on the printer icon in the PDF window. If you don't have Adobe Reader, you can download it from [www.adobe.com/downloads](http://www.adobe.com/downloads).

If you can't see the PDF in the browser window, there is a sentence just above where the embedded PDF would be with the link "click here" ("If the PDF image of the document is not displayed, your browser does not support this operation. Click here to open it in a separate window.") which will open just the PDF without trying to embed it in the browser window.

E5. How do I reset my password?

On the Secretary of State's website, go to the Notary Home Page and click on the words "Forgot Password" on the left side of the screen. Enter your Notary ID and e-mail address, click the reset button, and wait to receive an e-mail message providing a temporary password, valid for 4 hours.

E6. How do I obtain my Notary ID?

If you are a current or former Colorado notary, your Notary ID is provided to you when you register for online access. The Notary ID is printed on official certificates issued in 2005 or later. If you have registered but lost your Notary ID, you should contact our office by e-mail [notary@sos.state.co.us](mailto:notary@sos.state.co.us).

E7. I paid the fee online to apply/renew, but did not print the application form. What should I do?

Log on to your personal home page using your Notary ID and password. You will see a link to "Reprint a previously filed application". Print the form, sign and have it notarized, and mail it to the address on top of the form with a photocopy of an acceptable form of ID.

E8. My application was rejected. How do I proceed?

Log on, using your Notary ID and password. Reprint your application form and, if necessary, make corrections by hand. Draw a line through

any information to be deleted, write in the correction, and initial your changes. Sign the form in front of a notary to have it notarized, and mail it in with a copy of an acceptable form of ID. You do not need to start over or pay the fee more than once.

## Other General Questions

F1. What fees may a notary legally charge?

Colorado law states the maximum fee allowed for a notarization is \$5 and shall include:

Receiving evidence of the signer's identity

Administering an oath or affirmation (if applicable)

The application of the signature, notarial certificate, and seal of the notary

The maximum fee a notary may charge for an electronic notarization is \$10.

F2. What is an Apostille?

An Apostille is a certificate issued by the Secretary of State that proves the authenticity of a notary's signature and seal. An Apostille alone is sufficient proof of authentication for notarized documents exchanged between countries that abide by the Hague Convention.

F3. What if the country my notarized document is going to does not abide by the Hague Convention?

The Secretary of State will then issue a certificate of magistracy in place of an Apostille.

F4. How does a U.S. notary public differ from a notario publico?

A U.S. notary is not the same as a Latin notario publico. In Latin America, a notario publico is a high-ranking official and must be an attorney. Unlike a notario publico, a U.S. notary is forbidden from preparing legal documents or giving advice on immigration or other matters, unless he/she is also an attorney.

F5. Where can I report illegal, improper, or questionable acts by a notary public?

Any illegal, improper, or questionable acts by a notary public should be reported in writing to the Colorado Secretary of State, 1700 Broadway, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80290 or via email to [notary@sos.state.co.us](mailto:notary@sos.state.co.us). A form to file a complaint against a notary is available on the Secretary of State's website,

<http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/notary/notaryHome.html>.

F6. What is electronic notarization?

An e-notarization involves a document in electronic format that is signed and notarized electronically, then filed or transmitted electronically to its intended destination. Electronic notarization does not mean remote notarization. As with all notarizations, the signer must appear in the physical presence of the notary. Several states, including Colorado, allow for this procedure. A Colorado notary must apply for approval by submitting the form "Notification of Intent to Notarize Electronically" to the Secretary of State. Upon approval, 50 Document Authentication Numbers (DANs) will be e-mailed to the notary, who should insert one DAN in each document notarized electronically. For additional information please see our website.

<http://www.sos.state.co.us/pubs/notary/eNotary.html>.