

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL SIGNING

Thank you for allowing me to assist with your notary needs. This information describes important things to consider for your signing appointment. As a Virginia notary public, it is my job to see that the person doing the signing is doing so voluntarily; that their photo ID is current and belongs to them; that they understand the purpose of the document; that they can communicate their wishes; and that the notary block within the document is compliant with Virginia law.

THE SIGNER

The person signing, or the principal, must be coherent at the time of the appointment. They must be alert and aware and show willingness to sign. The signer must be able to communicate directly with the notary in a common language. In Virginia, notaries are not permitted to use translators and family members may not speak on their behalf at the signing. If the signer does not speak English, I'd be happy to assist in locating a notary public who speaks their language.

IDENTIFICATION

The person who is signing must have their unexpired photo ID, such as a current driver's license or passport. Please note that notaries may not accept a screenshot of an ID or the app, Virginia mID. Currently, Virginia law allows the notary to accept an expired ID from the signer **only** if they reside in an assisted living facility and their ID has been expired for no more than five years.

ROLE OF THE WITNESS

Please review your documents to see whether witnesses are required. For the signing of a will, two witnesses be present. Witnesses must be 18 or over, have their unexpired ID, and show competency. The witness must be a disinterested party; they cannot be named in or benefit from the document. If you are signing at a healthcare facility and need staff members to act as witnesses, you should schedule it with them in advance. Some facilities do not allow their staff to act as witnesses.

DOCUMENTS

Please bring the entire document to the appointment, not just the signature page. The notary may not notarize a document that is incomplete or that has blanks. You may fill in the blanks where needed beforehand, but please **do not sign or initial** until the notary is present.

The section containing the notarial certificate wording, or the notary block, needs to be a complete, cohesive unit, with the essential elements required by VA law. The entire text of the notarial block must be on the same page as the notary's seal and signature; it cannot be split across two pages.

If you have any questions about your document, witnesses, or ID, feel free to contact me. I look forward to assisting you.

June Siegel-Hill