

**2017 HOUSE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**

**HB 1316**

# 2017 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Political Subdivision Committee  
Prairie Room, State Capitol

HB 1316  
2/2/2017  
Job # 27844

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

*Carmen Hickle*

## Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to notarial acts, notary commissions, and notary public name and address changes

Minutes:

1

**Chairman Klemin:** Opened HB 1316.

**Al Jaeger, Secretary of State:** (Testimony #1) (Time:33 to 14:15) Explains the bill and changes.

**Rep K. Koppelman:** What is the fiscal impact to that?

**Mr. Jaeger:** We didn't make any changes in the fee and it is spread out over 4 years. The processing will be the same but we didn't make any changes to the fee. Since there are no fee changes this would not go into effect until August. If there was a fee change it would go into effect July 1.

**Rep. Ertelt:** The only concern I had was with the change in the length. How much is the fee?

**Mr. Jaeger:** \$36.

**Vice Chairman Hatlestad:** Do you have a company that prints the stamps or can they do anywhere?

**Mr. Jaeger:** The law provides is in the process of the application they are provided an authorization to purchase a notary stamp. The notary suppliers are not to give someone a notary stamp unless they have authorization from my office. So they have a choice to go to any vendor they want. They take an imprint of the notary stamp and send it back to use, once they send it back to us is when we issue the commission. If the image does not come back, we do not issue the commission.

**Rep K. Koppelman:** If people wanted to fraudulently create a stamp, have you had any issues like that?

**Mr. Jaeger:** Not that I am aware of. It is easy to do. If you are a notary it says the commission is to be in a prominent place.

**Rep. Ertelt:** Is there any auditing, is there any cross checking?

**Mr. Jaeger:** No there isn't. ND law does not require a notary to maintain a journal. We encourage notaries to maintain a journal because of some legal thing that might come up. We do have situations that come to our attention from the outside and we do pursue those. Particularly in divorce proceedings and we do follow through. We have only done this rarely but I can revoke a notary commission.

**Chairman Klemin:** Closed the hearing on HB 1316.

**Rep. Beadle:** Made a do pass motion.

**Rep. Longmuir:** Second the motion.

Sec. Jaeger: (Inaudible)

**Rep. R. S. Becker:** Some banks charge, some banks don't, are there any pros and cons to distinguish between charging act of a notary and one that is to help someone out.

**Chairman Klemin:** There is nothing in the notarial act sets out to charge a fee.

Bill carried 13 yes, 0 no, 2 absent

Carrier Rep. Toman

Date: 2-2-17  
Roll Call Vote: 1

2017 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. HB 1316

House Political Subdivisions Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation:  Adopt Amendment  
 Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Without Committee Recommendation  
 As Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions:  Reconsider  \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Rep. Beadle Seconded By Rep. Longmuir

Representatives	Yes	No	Representatives	Yes	No
Chairman Klemin	/		Rep. Guggisberg	/	
Vice Chairman Hatlestad	/		Rep. Hanson	/	
Rep. Beadle	/				
Rep. Becker	/				
Rep. Ertelt	/				
Rep. Johnson	/				
Rep. Koppelman	/				
Rep. Longmuir	/				
Rep. Maragos	/				
Rep. Pyle	/				
Rep. Simons	/				
Rep. Toman	/				
Rep. Zubke	/				

Total (Yes) 13 No 0

Absent 2

Floor Assignment Rep. Toman

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1316: Political Subdivisions Committee (Rep. Klemin, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (13 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 2 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1316 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.

**2017 SENATE POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS**

**HB 1316**

# 2017 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

## Political Subdivisions Committee Red River Room, State Capitol

HB 1316  
3/9/2017  
Job # 28941

- Subcommittee  
 Conference Committee

Committee Clerk Signature



### Explanation or reason for introduction of bill/resolution:

Relating to notarial acts, notary commissions, and notary public name and address changes.

### Minutes:

Written testimony #1 Mr. Al Jaeger

**Chairman Burckhard** opened the hearing on HB1316. All senators are present.

**(1:34-18:33) Al Jaeger, Secretary of State**, introduced and explained the bill. Written testimony #1. He introduced two of his staff, Ms. Beth Herzog, and Ms. Charlotte Zander who work on notaries. Char is particularly the first front line person, where most of the notary calls are.

**Chairman Burckhard:** So you're changing it from 6 years to 4 years, which is like 31 other states have that, and it is to also help you when people no longer become notaries and then you can purge your records and clean them up. Is that basically what you're asking?

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** Essentially it is, because in reference to his former example, to have a cleansing factor in eliminating those who are not currently notaries due to moving to another state or upon death.

**Sen. Howard Anderson:** The 2011 Uniform law was adopted. So are these same changes part of the uniform law in other states as well? How does that work?

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** They don't need to be because the Uniform Law has a major structure to it and these changes don't deal with any of that. In the Uniform Law we are able to with all uniform laws to match them up with our administrative process. Example cited. None of this impacts our uniformity because there is a variety of other sections that are the uniform parts, this is administrative parts.

**Sen. Judy Lee:** Tell me about destroying the stamps because I've been keeping them as souvenirs and obviously I've been in violation of the law. Tell me what I should do? I have two stamps.

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** You probably have an embosser. Keep it! Don't tell me.

**Sen. Judy Lee:** It isn't that I am using them inappropriately, but I think the embosser was pretty cool.

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** The reason we had to outlaw that, is that embossers they don't photo copy well. What they used to do. Do you remember carbon paper, and you take that and rub it over the top of the embossed part so it shows up so that when they scan it and digitalize it and all of that, that they know that the seal was affixed?

**Sen. Judy Lee:** It obviously is not an official way to do it, but with the emails can you do a "Read" receipt? I get those occasionally, click yes or no if you read it, then you respond back to the person who sent it to you.

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** Would you like to sit at a computer when 15,000 of those notices went out.

**Sen. Judy Lee:** That is a really bad idea.

**Chairman Burckhard** closed the hearing on HB1316 after not hearing anyone in opposition or in neutral testimony.

**Sen. Judy Lee: moved a do pass on HB1316**

**Sen. Howard Anderson moved a 2<sup>nd</sup>.**

#### **Committee discussion followed**

**Sen. Dotzenrod:** Page 3, line 29, notary republic may not make or purport to make a copy of vital record. Why is that?

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** What that is all about is for instance in having experienced this recently, if you get a birth certificate or death certificate or something the Department of Vital Statistics, that's an official record. A notary cannot certify that and so when it refers to make a copy of an official record and say this is an official record, a notary cannot say that is from the Dept. of Vital Statistics. That's why you can't do that. It is not a real certification of the record.

**Sen. Dotzenrod:** If someone has a record and they want to get it certified copy what do they do?

**Mr. Al Jaeger:** The only thing that can possibly can happen is you could personally make a copy and then you could make a statement that you made the copy, and all the notary could do is say that you're the one the affixed your name, their notarizing what you did, they are not notarizing that the copy is official.

**Sen. Judy Lee:** I would just add that if you want a birth certificate or death certificate you go to the source of that, the county where the child was born or where the death occurred. You would get them from the Clerk of Court.

**Sen. Dotzenrod:** When I needed copies of my kids birth certificates, they had to be certified copies. I had to go to the Bureau of Vital Statistics, those were now the legally required copies because they were certified.

**Roll call vote: 6 yea-0 nay-0 absent      Carrier: Senator Lee**

Date: 3.9.2017  
Roll Call Vote #: 1

2015 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE  
ROLL CALL VOTES  
BILL/RESOLUTION NO. H.B. 1316

Senate Political Subdivisions Committee

Subcommittee

Amendment LC# or Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Recommendation:  Adopt Amendment  
 Do Pass  Do Not Pass  Without Committee Recommendation  
 As Amended  Rerefer to Appropriations  
 Place on Consent Calendar  
Other Actions:  Reconsider  \_\_\_\_\_

Motion Made By Sen. Judy Lee Seconded By Sen. H. Anderson

Senators	Yes	No	Senators	Yes	No
Chairman Randy Burckhard	✓		Senator Jim Dotzenrod	✓	
Vice-Chairman Howard Anderson	✓				
Senator Jordan Kannianen	✓				
Senator Diane Larson	✓				
Senator Judy Lee	✓				

Total (Yes) 6 No 0

Absent 0

Floor Assignment Sen. Judy Lee

If the vote is on an amendment, briefly indicate intent:

**REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

**HB 1316: Political Subdivisions Committee (Sen. Burckhard, Chairman)** recommends **DO PASS** (6 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1316 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.

**2017 TESTIMONY**

**HB 1316**

HB 1316

2-2-17

#1

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SECRETARY OF STATE

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SECRETARY OF STATE  
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
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February 2, 2017

TO: Chairman Klemin, and members of House Political Subdivisions Committee

FR: Al Jaeger, Secretary of State

RE: HB 1316 – Notarial Acts and Notary Commissions

As Secretary of State, I commission notaries public. Applicants take an oath of office and when commissioned, they are considered officers of the state. Even if the fees are paid by an employer, the notary's first obligation, by his or her oath, is to always adhere to the notarial laws of North Dakota. Currently, there are 15,348 commissioned notaries.

The existing chapter in the Century Code governing notarial acts was adopted in 2011 by the 62nd Legislative Assembly. It is considered a uniform law as recommended by the Uniform Law Commission (ULC). Rep. Klemin was a member of the ULC notarial acts drafting committee. This legislation makes several administrative changes to the current law.

Section 1, page 1, line 12: Amends the cite to reflect a removal of the text in Section 5 of the bill on page 3, lines 20 through 26, which is being moved to another subsection of the law.

Section 2, page 1, lines 17 thru 24, and page 2, lines 1 thru 3: Eliminates obsolete text related to a process that has not been used for many years. That is, the depositing of the records of a notary public with the Secretary of State.

Section 3, page 2, line 7: Changes the term of a notary commission from six years to four years, which is the standard in thirty-one states. During the course of six years, even though required by state law to notify the Secretary of State when they move, not all notaries comply. As a result, we have approximately 100 notaries (and possibly more) who cannot be located, but are still listed in the agency records as being active. This change will allow for an earlier purging from the record of the inactive notaries and those who no longer meet the residency requirements.

Section 3, page 2, lines 10 thru 14: Eliminates a reference to a late fee when a notary fails to notify the Secretary of State of an address change. It is unnecessary because the administrative function to cover violations is governed by N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-21.

Section 4, page 2, line 22: Changes the period for which a notary whose commission has been revoked may be denied a new commission. This matches the change in Section 3 of the bill regarding the term length.

Section 5, page 3, lines 20 thru 26: Moves the deleted text to have it more accurately placed under subsection 7 of N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23 beginning on page 3, lines 29 thru 31 and page 4, lines 1 thru 6.

Section 5, page 4, lines 7 and 8: Clarifies that a notary's stamp must be affixed with each notarial act.

Section 6, page 4, lines 15 thru 30 and page 5, lines 1 and 2: Clarifies the process when a notary has a name change, obtains a new notary stamp, and the issuing of a replacement commission with the new name.



# Notary Notes

Newsletter of the Accounting/Notary Unit  
North Dakota Office of the Secretary of State  
Alvin A. Jaeger, Secretary of State

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Volume 16, No. 19

October 2016

## Greetings from Secretary of State Al Jaeger



he or she was doing was incorrect.

The number of commissioned notaries public in North Dakota continues to increase each year. As of June 30, 2016, North Dakota had 15,143 commissioned notaries public, which was an increase of approximately 1.9% (288) from last year. It is important to remember that notarial officers are in a position of trust and integrity and they perform an essential service to the public. Therefore, notaries need to perform their duties properly and with integrity. This means that you, as a notary public, need to know the responsibilities of a notary public so that you are able to accurately perform your duties.

174 reprimands were issued. These unlawful acts included: failing to leave an impression or a clear impression of the notary stamping device; notarizing an incomplete document; missing or inconsistent dates (day, month, or year); incomplete, wrong, or missing identity of the jurisdiction (state and county) where the notarial act was performed; no text for the certificate of the notarial act; incorrect commission expiration dates; and unlawful use of an embosser style notary seal (prohibited since 2003). All of these situations could have resulted in a fine, suspension or revocation of commission, and in certain cases, criminal proceedings.

A notary is an officer of the state and a violation of the notary laws cannot be ignored even if it was inadvertent. It is your responsibility, as a notary, to review the document you are notarizing and to accurately follow the notarization procedures. Always remember that you are an important officer of the state and people depend on you to perform your service as a notary truthfully and with integrity.

Included on page 5 of this newsletter is a list of notarial violations in which notaries executed settlement agreements from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016 with monetary fines or suspensions.

Most of the errors and violations by notaries public are discovered on forms submitted to this office and the Office of the Attorney General. Some of these errors and violations are innocent mistakes that could have been prevented had the notary realized what

During that same time period,

## Importance of Reading Notary Notes

Reading this newsletter will help you, as a notary public, understand the duties and responsibilities you undertook when you became a notary public. This newsletter highlights the most common questions that are received by this office from notaries public and the most common errors made by notaries public.



## Check It Twice!

It is important that a notary public double check each notarial act the notary performs to ensure that the act includes:

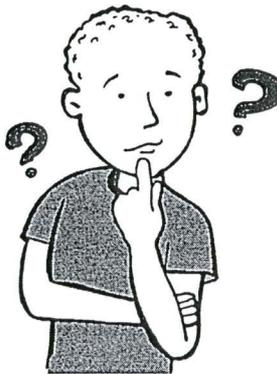
- The jurisdiction (state and county) where notarial act was performed;
- Text for the certificate of the notarial act;
- The person's signature;
- The notary's signature and date; and
- A clear impression of the notary stamp, which includes the commission expiration date.

### When is a Notary Authorized to Perform Notarial Acts?

Whether applying for a new notary commission or renewing a commission, it is very important to read the documents provided both at the time an authorization to purchase a notary stamping device is issued and at the time the notary commission is issued.

After a notary application is approved, an authorization to purchase a notary stamping device is sent to the applicant. The authorization to purchase a notary stamping device allows an applicant to do just that - purchase a notary stamping device. It does not authorize the applicant to perform notarial acts.

Once the notary stamping device is obtained, an impression of it must be affixed to the verification document, which must then be returned to the Secretary of State's office. After the verification is filed, the Secretary of State will issue a notary commission. If a commission is received prior to the effective date of the commission, do not perform notarial acts until the effective date listed on the commission! Doing so could result in a penalty or possible liability issues for the notary. A notary may not perform notarial acts until the notary commission certificate is received **and** only during the six-year period listed on the notary public's commission.



Renewing notaries who have received the new commission certificate may continue to use the first notary stamping device until that commission expires and may begin using the new stamping device once that commission becomes effective.

### Notary Public Signature When Performing Notarial Acts

When performing notarial acts, a notary public must sign his or her name exactly as it appears on the notary public's commission. If a notary public's full middle name or middle initial is included on the commission, the notary public must sign his or her name in that manner. An applicant's name should be printed on the application in the manner in which the notary public will sign when performing notarial acts. Only include a middle name or initial if that is how the name will be signed when performing notarial acts.



**A North Dakota notary public is a notary public for the entire state of North Dakota.**

### Certificates of Notarial Acts

Every document that is notarized must contain a certificate of notarial act, such as an acknowledgment, verification on oath or affirmation, or other notarial certificate that complies with the requirements in law. The person whose signature is being notarized must choose which notarial certificate to include. The notary should not choose the notarial certificate for the customer. However, it is the responsibility of the notary to verify that the notarial certificate contains all of the necessary information for a complete notarial act. Examples of certificates of notarial acts are available in the Notaries Public section of the Secretary of State's website under Certificates of Notarial Acts.

### Notary Laws and Other Important Information on Website

It is important that a notary is knowledgeable about the current notary public laws so that the notary is able to perform his or her duties to the best of the notary's ability.

Therefore, notaries are encouraged to visit the Notaries Public section of the Secretary of State's website at [sos.nd.gov](http://sos.nd.gov), which contains valuable notary information, including the notary laws and past editions of *Notary Notes*.

The website also contains other helpful information for notaries public, including:

- Examples of certificates for notarial acts
- Frequently asked questions
- Notary public responsibilities
- Common terms and definitions
- Requirements for the notary public stamping device
- Forms

## Witnessing/Attesting Signatures vs. Acknowledging Records

N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-19

The notarial acts of witnessing/attesting a signature and acknowledging a record can be a difficult task for some to differentiate. When a notary is asked to witness or attest a signature, the person must personally appear before the notary and sign the document in the presence of the notary prior to completion of the notarial certificate. The notary is merely witnessing the signature of an identified individual.

If a notary is requested to acknowledge a record, the person must still personally appear before the notary and satisfy the notary that the individual is who he or she claims to be. However, the person whose signature is being notarized must declare before the notary that the individual has signed the record for the purpose stated in the record and that the signature on the document is his or her signature.

Each of these has its own notarial certificate. Refer to N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-19 for examples of these notarial certificates. Remember, no matter which notarial act is being performed, personal presence is imperative!

## Oath of a Notary Public

***"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States, and the Constitution of the State of North Dakota and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of Notary Public according to the best of my ability, so help me God."***

## Notarizing Petitions

N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23(6)(b)

North Dakota law specifically states that a notary public cannot notarize a petition if the notary or the notary's spouse signed the petition. This includes petitions that are being circulated to place a measure on the election ballot. When notarizing the signature of the petition circulator, the notary should make sure that the notary did not sign that specific copy of the petition in an individual capacity. If the notary wants to sign the petition, he or she should sign a copy of the petition that will be notarized by another notary public.



## Handwriting or Typing Commission Expiration Dates

The expiration date included on a notary public's stamp is sufficient evidence of a notary's commission expiration date. Even if a document has a space to handwrite a notary's commission expiration date, it is not legally required that the commission expiration date be written or typed on a document. If a notary writes the incorrect commission expiration date on the document, the discrepancy between the handwritten expiration date and the actual expiration date could expose the notary to a potential violation.

## Certified Copies

A notary public may not make or purport to make a certified copy of the following types of documents:

- Vital records
- Recordable instruments
- Public records containing an official seal



This includes birth certificates, death certificates, college transcripts, and anything that bears a government seal. These documents may only be certified by the office that issues them.

## Original Signature Required

When performing a verification on oath or affirmation, a notary public must ensure that the document is signed or resigned by the person whose signature is being notarized in the presence of the notary public. If performing an acknowledgment, the person whose signature is being notarized must acknowledge that the person signed the document for the purpose stated on the document. In either situation, the notary must be sure that the signature on the document is an original signature, except as otherwise provided by law.

## Helpful Tips for Performing Notarial Acts

- Personal presence is required. The person whose signature you are notarizing must sign the document in your presence in the case of a verification on oath or affirmation, or acknowledge the document in your presence in the case of an acknowledgment, before you complete the notarization. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23(6)(a)
- Confirm the identification of the person whose signature you are notarizing either by personal knowledge of the person or by proper identification provided by the person. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-06
- Make sure the document is complete and contains no blanks. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23(6)(h)
- An acknowledgment, verification on oath or affirmation, or other approved notarial certificate must be included on the document. Examples can be found in the Notaries Public section on the Secretary of State's website under Certificates of Notarial Acts. Do not choose for the customer. See *Certificates of Notarial Acts*, page 2. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-14
- Make sure you sign the document. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-14(1)(b)
- Make sure you place an impression of your notary stamp on the document. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23(8)
- There is no need to handwrite your notary commission expiration date on the document. The expiration date on your stamping device is sufficient. See *Handwriting or Typing Commission Expiration Dates*, page 3.
- If the document is in a foreign language, an English translation must be attached to the document prior to notarization and both documents must be signed and notarized. N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23(6)(i)



*"Notaries do not simply perform meaningless clerical functions. They perform an essential service to the public."*

### Notary Name Change N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-27

According to state law, a notary public must notify the Secretary of State's office within 60 days of a name change. This may be accomplished by filing a Notary Name Change/Notary Seal/Stamp Change (SFN 51261) with the Secretary of State's office along with a rider to the notary's surety bond stating both the previous name and the new name. A \$10 filing fee is also required.

Upon receipt of the name change notification, the Secretary of State's office will issue a new authorization to purchase a notary public stamping device. Once the verification of the notary public stamping device is returned to the Secretary of State's office, a new notary commission certificate with the notary's new name will be issued. After the notary notifies the Secretary of State's office of the name change, but before the notary receives the new commission certificate, the notary may sign his or her name as follows:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Notary Public North Dakota  
Formerly known and commissioned as

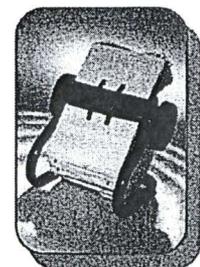
\_\_\_\_\_  
My commission expires  
Notary Seal

### Date of Notarial Act N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23(6)(e)

A notary must ensure that the date placed on the verification on oath or affirmation or acknowledgment is the actual date the document is being notarized. Neither the notary nor the person whose signature is being notarized may predate or postdate the document.

### Change of Address N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-20(9)

A notary is required by state law to notify the Secretary of State's office within 60 days of any address change. Address changes reported to the Secretary of State's office within this time period are not assessed a fee. An address change filed more than 60 days after the change of address is assessed a \$10 late fee.



## Notary Violations from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016

**Note:** Some of the following abbreviated summaries may appear to be similar in nature. However, the circumstances surrounding each violation are often different and result in varying penalties. All violations are a matter of public record under the state's open record laws.

**July 23, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**August 13, 2015** – Notary violated §§ 44-06.1-14(2) and 44-06.1-23(8) by failing to affix notary stamp to the document: two-month suspension

**August 14, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**September 23, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**September 23, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine

**October 15, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-14(1)(b) by failing to affix signature to the document: \$50.00 fine

**October 21, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**November 24, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**November 24, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine

**November 27, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**December 31, 2015** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**January 6, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**January 6, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine

**January 6, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**January 13, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**January 26, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine

**February 16, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: three-month suspension

**February 16, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**February 16, 2016** – Notary violated §§ 44-06.1-14(1)(b) and 44-06.1-14(1)(c) by failing to affix signature to the document, identify the jurisdiction, and include the short form certificate text: \$50.00 fine

**March 16, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**April 11, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**April 19, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-21(4) by notarizing a document without a commission: \$50.00 fine

**April 20, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(e) by notarizing a document with different dates: \$125.00 fine

**May 3, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine

**May 3, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine

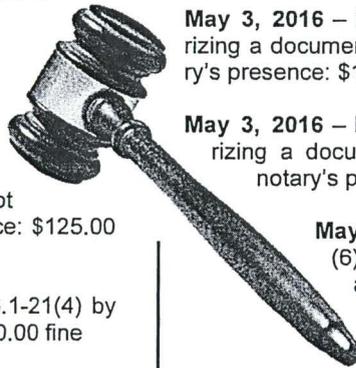
**May 10, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: three-month suspension

**May 10, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-14(1)(b) by failing to affix signature to the document: two-month suspension

**May 13, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$150.00 fine

**May 19, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: four-month suspension

**June 13, 2016** – Notary violated § 44-06.1-23(6)(a) by notarizing a document not signed or acknowledged in the notary's presence: \$125.00 fine



## Secretary of State

State of North Dakota  
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Visit the Secretary  
of State's Website  
[sos.nd.gov](http://sos.nd.gov)

Review the  
Notary Laws  
[sos.nd.gov/notaries-  
public](http://sos.nd.gov/notaries-public)

Notary Notes is a  
newsletter of the  
Accounting/Notary  
Unit in the Secretary of  
State's Office.

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*Commissioning Specialist*

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*Secretary of State*

Jim Silrum  
*Deputy Secretary of State*

American Society of  
Notaries  
[www.asnnotary.org](http://www.asnnotary.org)

National Notary  
Association  
[www.nationalnotary.org](http://www.nationalnotary.org)

Notary Law Institute  
[www.notarylaw.com](http://www.notarylaw.com)

Notary Rotary  
[www.notaryrotary.com](http://www.notaryrotary.com)

## Notary Commission - Notary's or Employer's?

A notary's commission and stamp are the property of the notary. Even if an employer pays for the commission and/or purchases the stamping device for the notary, the employer is not allowed to retain the commission or stamping device. The notary must always have direct and exclusive control of the stamping device at all times during the notary's commission period. If a notary leaves his or her place of employment, it is important that the notary take his or her notary commission and stamp with the notary.

## Test Your Knowledge (True or False)

1. The customer should choose which notarial certificate to include when notarizing a document.
2. If a notary legally changes his or her name, the notary cannot notarize documents until the notary receives a new notary commission certificate.
3. A notary is allowed to make a certified copy of a birth certificate.
4. A clear impression of the notary's stamping device must be included on each notarial act.
5. The Secretary of State's website contains examples of certificates for notarial acts.
6. Even if a notary's commission includes a notary's middle name, the notary does not need to include it in the notary's signature when notarizing documents.
7. A notary should not notarize a petition that was also signed by the notary in an individual capacity.
8. A notary does not need to notify the Secretary of State's office if his or her address changes.
9. If a notary leaves his or her place of employment, the notary should take his or her notary commission and stamp with the notary.
10. Personal presence is only required if the notary is performing a verification on oath or affirmation.
11. A notary may postdate a notarial act if requested by the customer.
12. A notary's stamp impression is sufficient evidence of a notary's commission expiration date.
13. A notary may begin notarizing documents as soon as the notary receives a notary stamping device.
14. The date included in the notarial certificate must be the date the notarial act was actually performed.
15. A North Dakota notary public may notarize documents anywhere in North Dakota.

Q.   
A. 

Answers: 1. True (page 2); 2. False (page 4); 3. False (page 3); 4. True (page 1); 5. True (page 2); 6. False (page 2); 7. True (page 3); 8. False (page 4); 9. True (page 6); 10. False (page 4); 11. False (page 4); 12. True (page 3); 13. False (page 2); 14. True (page 4); 15. True (page 2)

ALVIN A. JAEGER  
SECRETARY OF STATE

HOME PAGE [www.nd.gov/sos](http://www.nd.gov/sos)



SECRETARY OF STATE  
STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA  
600 EAST BOULEVARD AVENUE DEPT 108  
BISMARCK ND 58505-0500

March 9, 2017

HB 1316  
3.9.17  
#1 p.1

PHONE (701) 328-2900

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E-MAIL [sos@nd.gov](mailto:sos@nd.gov)

TO: Chairman Burckhard and Members of Senate Political Subdivisions Committee

FR: Al Jaeger, Secretary of State

RE: HB 1316 – Notarial Acts and Notary Commissions

As Secretary of State, I commission notaries public. Applicants take an oath of office and when commissioned, they are considered officers of the state. Even if the fees are paid by an employer, the notary's first obligation, by his or her oath of office, is to always adhere to the notarial laws of North Dakota. Currently, there are 15,373 commissioned notaries.

The existing chapter in the Century Code governing notarial acts was adopted in 2011 by the 62nd Legislative Assembly. It is considered a uniform law as recommended by the Uniform Law Commission (ULC). Rep. Klemin, prime sponsor of this bill, was a member of the ULC notarial acts drafting committee. This legislation makes several administrative changes to the current law.

Section 1, page 1, line 12: Amends the cite to reflect a removal of the text in Section 5 of the bill on page 3, lines 20 through 26, which is being moved to another subsection of the law.

Section 2, page 1, lines 17 thru 24, and page 2, lines 1 thru 3: Eliminates obsolete text related to a process that has not been used for many years. That is, the depositing of the records of a notary public with the Secretary of State.

Section 3, page 2, line 7: Changes the term of a notary commission from six years to four years, which is the standard in thirty-one states. During the course of six years, even though required by state law to notify the Secretary of State when they move, not all notaries comply. As a result, we have approximately 100 notaries (and possibly more) who cannot be located, but are still listed in the agency records as being active. This change will allow for an earlier purging from the record of the inactive notaries and those who no longer meet the residency requirements.

Section 3, page 2, lines 10 thru 14: Eliminates a reference to a late fee when a notary fails to notify the Secretary of State of an address change. It is unnecessary because the administrative function to cover violations is governed by N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-21.

Section 4, page 2, line 22: Changes the period for which a notary whose commission has been revoked may be denied a new commission. This matches the change in Section 3 of the bill regarding the length of the commission.

Section 5, page 3, lines 20 thru 26: Moves the deleted text to have it more accurately placed under subsection 7 of N.D.C.C. § 44-06.1-23 beginning on page 3, lines 29 thru 31 and page 4, lines 1 thru 6.

Section 5, page 4, lines 7 and 8: Clarifies that a notary's stamp must be affixed with each notarial act.

Section 6, page 4, lines 15 thru 30 and page 5, lines 1 and 2: Clarifies the process when a notary has a name change, obtains a new notary stamp, and the issuing of a replacement commission with the new name.