

Space too Small for your Notary Stamp?

Most of us have been in this predicament--a client hands over a document and it is filled to its edges with text. You visually scan the document and see it includes a pre-printed notarial certificate that is barely the size of a business card. Even worse, you note that the area intended for your notary seal would be the perfect size, but only if you were a Notary Ken or Notary Barbie doll!

When faced with a notarial certificate that provides only a dime-sized space to place your official notary seal, what can you do? You need a solid fallback plan because you certainly can't stamp over any of the text.

The solution:

- Be prepared for this situation; always have a supply of loose notarial certificates handy, both jurat and acknowledgement certificates.
- Describe the problem to your client and tell him or her that you plan to attach an appropriate notarial certificate to the document, one that matches the original certificate's language.
- After receiving the client's approval, mark one line through the tiny certificate, neatly print, "See attached statutory notarial certificate," and, initial your changes.
- Complete the attached certificate, writing on it the title of the document you have attached it to and its number of pages; note in your notary journal that you attached the loose certificate and why you did so.

If the client says you may not replace the certificate, you must decline to notarize the document. Explain that covering document text with a notary seal will almost certainly invalidate an important document, especially one that will be recorded.

The American Society of Notaries supplies rubber stamps containing the standard short form jurat and acknowledgement notarial certificates. They also carry loose paper notary certificates that the Delaware notary can use if the document does not have the pre-printed wording on the document that you are notarizing. They can be reached at (850)671-5164 or online at www.ASNNotary.org.

NOTE: This article serves as information purposes to broaden the knowledge of the notary public. The Delaware Notary Association is dedicated in keeping the Delaware Notary with working information in performing their duties to the best they can and to the fullest.