

3 Tips for Notarizing Travel Documents for Minors

Summer is on the way and many U.S. families are already planning vacations overseas. Don't be surprised if you are asked to notarize permission forms for children traveling abroad (See "May I Notarize a Child's Permission Form to Travel Overseas?").

According to the Department of Homeland Security, if a child is traveling abroad with one parent, the other parent must supply a letter granting permission. If the child is traveling with an adult other than his/her parents, both parents must provide written permission. These travel permission forms for minors often require that both parents' signatures be notarized.

When you are asked to notarize permission forms for travel with children, remember:

1. Follow state laws.

A parent who needs his or her signature notarized must be physically present. Many parents aren't familiar with notarial rules and procedures, and may ask you to notarize an absent spouse's signature on a travel document, not realizing it's against the law. Make sure that you follow all your state's laws when notarizing signatures on a travel permission form.

2. Read the rules.

Requirements for a child's permission letter may vary depending on the destination and the rules of the airline or cruise ship line on which the child is traveling. As a Notary you cannot give unauthorized legal advice regarding the contents of a permission letter or how a document must be completed. If the signer has questions, he or she will need to contact the company or agency requiring the document for further instructions.

3. Be patient.

International travelers often rush and panic at the last minute to make sure the necessary paperwork is in order prior to imminent departure. Parents who need notarized permission for a child to travel at the last minute may get flustered if their signatures cannot be notarized due to lack of acceptable ID or another issue.

When these travel crises crop up, remain calm and courteous and explain that you can't notarize without the signer's personal appearance. Offer to reschedule so that the signer can appear before you with paperwork in order to complete the notarization properly.

May I Notarize a Child's Permission Form to Travel Overseas?

Clients who will be traveling overseas have asked me to notarize a "Parental Letter of Agreement for International Travel with Children." Is this something I am permitted to do as a Delaware Notary?

Yes. Such a permission form is regularly used for the situation you are describing. All normal procedures for notarizing the document apply.

Do I Need To Ask For A Birth Certificate From Parents?

What do you do when the parents of a child ask you to notarize signatures for travel documents verifying that they are the parents of a 3-year-old, but they do not have a birth certificate?

Notaries generally are not responsible for investigating facts related to the documents they notarize. In this case, you would not be responsible for ensuring that the parents hold valid birth certificates before notarizing the parents' signatures on the travel documents.

Your duty is to follow all state rules for notarizing the signatures on the document. If the travel document requires a jurat notarization, the parents' statement that they are parents of the child will be made under oath and subject to penalties for perjury, if untrue.

Related Article.....

May I Notarize A Child Custody Transfer Document For A Parent?

Can I notarize a document transferring custody of a minor from the mother to the father?

Yes, you can notarize signatures on documents for any signer, provided that you have proper notarial wording for the notarization and all other requirements for notarization are met.

Related Article.....

Can I Notarize Signatures On Adoption Documents?

I am a new Notary and work in a hospital. I work closely with our newborn nursery staff, and we often have adoption papers that must be notarized. Am I allowed to notarize these?

Yes, a Notary Public can notarize signatures on adoption papers. They are very sensitive documents and it is extremely important that any specific instructions you are given are followed, as long as the instructions do not conflict with your duties as a Notary Public.

The Delaware Notary Association recommends contacting the State of Delaware Notary Public office for any detailed questions at (302) 739-4111 or email: notary@delaware.gov

NOTE: This article serves as informational 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. Please feel free at any time to send questions, comments, etc. on topics for future articles.