

# Notarization...or Certification?

## Which do you need?

Notarization	Certification
Notary needs to see ID of person who is going to sign a document and record the ID in a log, and needs to see the UNSIGNED document.	Legal language is added to a photocopy of an original document, made by the law office.
Watches/Witnesses this person sign the document, then signs a section of legal language and stamps with official notary "seal".	An attorney signs after comparing the original to the photocopy. The attorney's signature is then notarized.
Examples: Letter to a bank closing an account. Letter to/form for credit card company about unauthorized (fraudulent) charges. Lease/sub-lease or roommate agreement. Power of Attorney document.	Examples: Passport ID Page or U.S. Visa (or other Visa) in passport. I-20/DS-2019. Photocopy of lease, utility bill, marriage certificate, birth certificate, diploma, etc. Attorneys cannot certify the <u>original</u> document; they can certify a photocopy of the document made in our office.

**In the State of Illinois, a notary public CANNOT authenticate original documents or photocopies of them. An attorney must do this; it is called "Certification."**

**In the state of Illinois, ONLY AN ATTORNEY can authenticate/certify a photocopy of an original document.**

1. The **IRS does not accept** certifications of identification papers for ITIN application. See "IRS Certified Acceptance Agents" on the SLS website, [odos.illinois.edu/sls](http://odos.illinois.edu/sls).

2. As of July, 2019, **Ameren does not accept** certifications of identification. See "Ameren - Instructions Sheet" on the SLS website, [odos.illinois.edu/sls](http://odos.illinois.edu/sls).

3. **I-9 form for employment CANNOT be notarized.**

Federal law requires the employer to complete the form when you present your identification documents.

Student Legal service will not accept "authorization" to act in place of the employer under ANY circumstances.

We cannot sign this form for you.

We can provide you with certified photocopies of your IDs to send to the employer so THEY can complete the I-9 form. Contact them to find out if they will accept these.

*\*\*Certification Services can take up to a week for up to 8 pages; longer for more pages. You must provide the ORIGINAL document(s), NOT photocopies. SLS will keep the original(s) until certification is done.\*\**



[odos.illinois.edu/sls](http://odos.illinois.edu/sls)

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