**Notarization...or Certification?**

**Which do you need?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Notarization</th>
<th>Certification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Legal language is added to a photocopy of an original document, made by the law office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watches/Witnesses this person sign the document, then signs a section of legal language and stamps with official notary &quot;seal&quot;.</td>
<td>An attorney signs after comparing the original to the photocopy. The attorney's signature is then notarized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examples: Letter to a bank closing an account. Letter to/form for credit card company about unauthorized (fraudulent) charges. Lease/sublease or roommate agreement. Power of Attorney document.</td>
<td>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 original document; they can certify a photocopy of the document made in our office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**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.**

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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.
2. As of July, 2019, **Ameren does not accept** certifications of identification. See "Ameren - Instructions Sheet" on the SLS website, 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.**

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