Chapter 42.45 RCW
REVISED UNIFORM LAW ON NOTARIAL ACTS

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RCW 42.45.010 Definitions. In this chapter:

(1) "Acknowledgment" means a declaration by an individual in the presence of a notarial officer stating that the individual has signed a record of the individual's free will for the purpose stated in the record and, if the record is signed in a representative capacity, the individual also declares that he or she signed the record with proper authority and signed it as the act of the individual or entity identified in the record.

(2) "Department" means the department of licensing.

(3) "Director" means the director of licensing or the director's designee.

(4) "Electronic" means relating to technology having electrical, digital, magnetic, wireless, optical, electromagnetic, or similar capabilities.

(5) "Electronic records notary public" means an individual commissioned by the director to perform a notarial act with respect to electronic records. Nothing in chapter 281, Laws of 2017 authorizes an electronic records notary public to provide court reporting services.

(6) "Electronic signature" means an electronic symbol, sound, or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by an individual with the intent to sign the record.

(7) "In a representative capacity" means acting as:

(a) An authorized officer, agent, partner, trustee, or other representative for a person other than an individual;

(b) A public officer, personal representative, guardian, or other representative, in the capacity stated in a record;

(c) An agent or attorney-in-fact for a principal; or

(d) An authorized representative of another in any other capacity.

(8) "Notarial act" means an act, whether performed with respect to a tangible or electronic record, that a notarial officer may perform under the law of this state. The term includes taking an acknowledgment, administering an oath or affirmation, taking a verification on oath or affirmation, witnessing or attesting a signature, certifying or attesting a copy, certifying the occurrence of an event or the performance of an act, and noting a protest of a negotiable instrument if the protest was prepared under the authority of an attorney licensed to practice law in this state or another state, or was prepared under the authority of a financial institution that is regulated by this state, another state, or the federal government.

(9) "Notarial officer" means a notary public or other individual authorized to perform a notarial act.

(10) "Notary public" means an individual commissioned to perform a notarial act by the director.

(11) "Official stamp" means a physical image affixed to or embossed on a tangible record or an electronic image attached to or logically associated with an electronic record.

(12) "Person" means an individual, corporation, business trust, statutory trust, estate, trust, partnership, limited liability company, association, joint venture, public corporation, government or governmental subdivision, agency, or instrumentality, or any other legal or commercial entity.

(13) "Record" means information that is inscribed on a tangible medium or that is stored in an electronic or other medium and is retrievable in human perceivable form.

(14) "Sign" means, with present intent to authenticate or adopt a record:

(a) To execute or adopt a tangible symbol; or

(b) To attach to or logically associate with the record an electronic symbol, sound, or process.

(15) "Signature" means a tangible symbol or an electronic signature that evidences the signing of a record.

(16) "Stamping device" means:

(a) A physical device capable of affixing to or embossing on a tangible record an official stamp; or

(b) An electronic device or process capable of attaching to or logically associating with an electronic record an official stamp.

(17) "State" means a state of the United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, or any territory or insular possession subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(18) "Verification on oath or affirmation" means a declaration, made by an individual on oath or affirmation before a notarial officer, that a statement in a record is true. [2017 c 281 s 2.]

RCW 42.45.020 Authority to perform notarial act. (1) A notarial officer may perform a notarial act authorized by this chapter or by law of this state other than this chapter.

(2)(a) A notarial officer may not perform a notarial act with respect to a record to which the officer or the officer's spouse or domestic partner is a party, or in which any of the above have a direct beneficial interest.

(b) A notarial officer may not notarize the notarial officer's own signature.

(c) A notarial act performed in violation of this subsection (2) is voidable.

(3) A notarial officer may certify that a tangible copy of an electronic record is an accurate copy of the electronic record. [2019 c 154 s 2; 2017 c 281 s 4.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: See note following RCW 42.45.280.

RCW 42.45.030 Certain notarial acts—Requirements. (1) A notarial officer who takes an acknowledgment of a record shall determine, from personal knowledge or satisfactory evidence of the identity of the individual, that the individual appearing before the officer and making the acknowledgment has the identity claimed and that the signature on the record is the signature of the individual.

(2) A notarial officer who takes a verification of a statement on oath or affirmation shall determine, from personal knowledge or satisfactory evidence of the identity of the individual, that the individual appearing before the officer and making the verification has the identity claimed and that the signature on the statement verified is the signature of the individual.

(3) A notarial officer who witnesses or attests to a signature shall determine, from personal knowledge or satisfactory evidence of the identity of the individual, that the individual appearing before the officer and signing the record has the identity claimed.

(4) A notarial officer who certifies or attests a copy of a record or an item that was copied shall compare the copy with the original record or item and determine that the copy is a full, true, and accurate transcription or reproduction of the record or item.

(5) A notarial officer may make or note a protest of a negotiable instrument only if the notarial officer is licensed to practice law in this state, acting under the authority of an attorney who is licensed to practice law in this or another state, or acting under the authority of a financial institution regulated by this state, another state, or the federal government. In making or noting a protest of a negotiable instrument the notarial officer or licensed attorney shall

determine the matters set forth in RCW 62A.3-505(b). [2017 c 281 s 5.]

RCW 42.45.040 Personal appearance. Except as provided in RCW 42.45.280, if a notarial act relates to a statement made in or a signature executed on a record, the individual making the statement or executing the signature shall appear personally before the notarial officer. [2019 c 154 s 3; 2017 c 281 s 6.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: See note following RCW 42.45.280.

RCW 42.45.050 Identification of individual. (1) A notarial officer has personal knowledge of the identity of an individual appearing before the officer if the individual is personally known to the officer through dealings sufficient to provide reasonable certainty that the individual has the identity claimed.

(2) A notarial officer has satisfactory evidence of the identity of an individual appearing before the officer if the officer can identify the individual:

(a) By means of:

(i) A passport, driver's license, or government-issued nondriver identification card, which is current or expired not more than three years before performance of the notarial act; or

(ii) Another form of government identification issued to an individual, which is current or expired not more than three years before performance of the notarial act, contains the signature or a photograph of the individual, and is satisfactory to the officer; or

(b) By a verification on oath or affirmation of a credible witness personally appearing before the officer and personally known to the officer and who provides satisfactory evidence of his or her identity as described in (a) of this subsection.

(3) A notarial officer may require an individual to provide additional information or identification credentials necessary to assure the officer of the identity of the individual. [2017 c 281 s 7.]

RCW 42.45.060 Refusal to perform notarial act. (1) A notarial officer has the authority to refuse to perform a notarial act if the officer is not satisfied that:

(a) The individual executing the record is competent or has the capacity to execute the record; or

(b) The individual's signature is knowingly and voluntarily made.

(2) A notarial officer has the authority to refuse to perform a notarial act unless refusal is prohibited by law other than this chapter. [2017 c 281 s 8.]

RCW 42.45.070 Individual unable to sign—Signature. Except as otherwise provided in RCW 64.08.100, if an individual is physically unable to sign a record, the individual may direct an individual other than the notarial officer to sign the individual's name on the record. The notarial officer shall insert "signature affixed by (name of other

individual) at the direction of (name of individual)" or words of similar import. [2017 c 281 s 9.]

RCW 42.45.080 Notarial act in this state. (1) A notarial act may be performed in this state by:

(a) A notary public of this state;

(b) A judge, clerk, or deputy clerk of a court of this state; or

(c) Any other individual authorized to perform the specific act by the law of this state.

(2) The signature and title of an individual authorized by chapter 281, Laws of 2017 to perform a notarial act in this state are prima facie evidence that the signature is genuine and that the individual holds the designated title.

(3) The signature and title of a notarial officer described in subsection (1)(a) or (b) of this section conclusively establishes the authority of the officer to perform the notarial act. [2017 c 281 s 10.]

RCW 42.45.090 Notarial act in another state—Effect in this state. (1) A notarial act performed in another state has the same effect under the law of this state as if performed by a notarial officer of this state, if the act performed in that state is performed by:

(a) A notary public of that state;

(b) A judge, clerk, or deputy clerk of a court of that state; or

(c) Any other individual authorized by the law of that state to perform the notarial act.

(2) The signature and title of an individual performing a notarial act in another state are prima facie evidence that the signature is genuine and that the individual holds the designated title.

(3) The signature and title of a notarial officer described in subsection (1)(a) through (c) of this section conclusively establishes the authority of the officer to perform the notarial act. [2017 c 281 s 11.]

RCW 42.45.100 Notarial act under authority of federally recognized Indian tribe. (1) A notarial act performed under the authority and in the jurisdiction of a federally recognized Indian tribe has the same effect as if performed by a notarial officer of this state, if the act performed in the jurisdiction of the tribe is performed by:

(a) A notary public of the tribe;

(b) A judge, clerk, or deputy clerk of a court of the tribe; or

(c) Any other individual authorized by the law of the tribe to perform the notarial act.

(2) The signature and title of an individual performing a notarial act under the authority of and in the jurisdiction of a federally recognized Indian tribe are prima facie evidence that the signature is genuine and that the individual holds the designated title.

(3) The signature and title of a notarial officer described in subsection (1)(a) through (c) of this section conclusively establishes

the authority of the officer to perform the notarial act. [2017 c 281 s 12.]

RCW 42.45.110 Notarial act under federal authority. (1) A notarial act performed under federal law has the same effect under the law of this state as if performed by a notarial officer of this state, if the act performed under federal law is performed by:

(a) A judge, clerk, or deputy clerk of a court;

(b) An individual in military service or performing duties under the authority of military service who is authorized to perform notarial acts under federal law;

(c) An individual designated a notarizing officer by the United States department of state for performing notarial acts overseas; or

(d) Any other individual authorized by federal law to perform the notarial act.

(2) The signature and title of an individual acting under federal authority and performing a notarial act are prima facie evidence that the signature is genuine and that the individual holds the designated title.

(3) The signature and title of an officer described in subsection (1)(a), (b), or (c) of this section conclusively establishes the authority of the officer to perform the notarial act. [2017 c 281 s 13.]

RCW 42.45.120 Foreign notarial act. (1) In this section, "foreign state" means a government other than the United States, a state, or a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(2) If a notarial act is performed under the authority and in the jurisdiction of a foreign state or constituent unit of the foreign state or is performed under the authority of a multinational or international governmental organization, the act has the same effect under the law of this state as if performed by a notarial officer of this state.

(3) If the title of office and indication of authority to perform notarial acts in a foreign state appears in a digest of foreign law or in a list customarily used as a source for that information, the authority of an officer with that title to perform notarial acts is conclusively established.

(4) The signature and official stamp of an individual holding an office described in subsection (3) of this section are prima facie evidence that the signature is genuine and the individual holds the designated title.

(5) An apostille in the form prescribed by the Hague Convention of October 5, 1961, and issued by a foreign state party to the Hague Convention conclusively establishes that the signature of the notarial officer is genuine and that the officer holds the indicated office.

(6) A consular authentication issued by an individual designated by the United States department of state as a notarizing officer for performing notarial acts overseas and attached to the record with respect to which the notarial act is performed conclusively establishes that the signature of the notarial officer is genuine and that the officer holds the indicated office. [2017 c 281 s 14.]

RCW 42.45.130 Certificate of notarial act. (1) A notarial act must be evidenced by a certificate. The certificate must:

(a) Be executed contemporaneously with the performance of the notarial act;

(b) Be signed and dated by the notarial officer and, if the notarial officer is a notary public, be signed in the same manner as on file with the department;

(c) Identify the jurisdiction in which the notarial act is performed;

(d) Contain the title of office of the notarial officer;

(e) Be written in English or in dual languages, one of which must be English;

(f) If the notarial officer is a notary public, indicate the date of expiration, if any, of the officer's commission; and

(g) If the notarial act is performed under RCW 42.45.280, indicate that the notarial act was performed using communication technology.

(2) Regarding notarial act certificates on a tangible record:

(a) If a notarial act regarding a tangible record is performed by a notary public, an official stamp must be affixed to or embossed on the certificate.

(b) If a notarial act regarding a tangible record is performed by a notarial officer other than a notary public and the certificate contains the information specified in subsection (1)(b), (c), and (d) of this section, an official stamp may be affixed to or embossed on the certificate.

(3) Regarding notarial act certificates on an electronic record:

(a) If a notarial act regarding an electronic record is performed by an electronic records notary public, an official stamp must be attached to or logically associated with the certificate.

(b) If a notarial act regarding an electronic record is performed by a notarial officer other than a notary public and the certificate contains the information specified in subsection (1)(b), (c), and (d) of this section, an official stamp may be attached to or logically associated with the certificate.

(4) A certificate of a notarial act is sufficient if it meets the requirements of subsections (1) through (3) of this section and:

(a) Is in a short form set forth in RCW 42.45.140;

(b) Is in a form otherwise permitted by the law of this state;

(c) Is in a form permitted by the law applicable in the jurisdiction in which the notarial act was performed; or

(d) Sets forth the actions of the notarial officer and the actions are sufficient to meet the requirements of the notarial act as provided in RCW 42.45.030, 42.45.040, and 42.45.050 or law of this state other than this chapter.

(5) By executing a certificate of a notarial act, a notarial officer certifies that the officer has complied with the requirements and made the determinations specified in RCW 42.45.030, 42.45.040, and 42.45.050.

(6) A notarial officer may not affix the officer's signature to, or logically associate it with, a certificate until the notarial act has been performed.

(7) If a notarial act is performed regarding a tangible record, a certificate must be part of, or securely attached to, the record. If a notarial act is performed regarding an electronic record, the certificate must be affixed to, or logically associated with, the electronic record. If the director has established standards pursuant

to RCW 42.45.250 for attaching, affixing, or logically associating the certificate, the process must conform to the standards. [2019 c 154 s 4; 2017 c 281 s 15.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: See note following RCW 42.45.280.

RCW 42.45.140 Short form certificates. The following short form certificates of notarial acts are sufficient for the purposes indicated, if completed with the information required by RCW 42.45.130 (1) through (4) and 42.45.280:

(1) For an acknowledgment in an individual capacity:

State of .....

County of .....

This record was acknowledged before me on (date) by (name(s) of individuals).

.....
(Signature of notary public)

(Stamp)

.....
(Title of office)
My commission expires:
.....
(date)

(2) For an acknowledgment in a representative capacity:

State of .....

County of .....

This record was acknowledged before me on (date) by (name(s) of individuals) as (type of authority, such as officer or trustee) of (name of party on behalf of whom record was executed).

.....
(Signature of notary public)

(Stamp)

.....
(Title of office)
My commission expires:
.....
(date)

(3) For verification on oath or affirmation:

State of .....

County of .....

Signed and sworn to (or affirmed) before me on (date) by (name(s) of individuals making statement).

.....
(Signature of notary public)

(Stamp)

.....
(Title of office)
My commission expires:
.....
(date)

(4) For witnessing or attesting a signature:

State of .....

County of .....

Signed or attested before me on (date) by (name(s) of individuals).

.....
(Signature of notary public)

(Stamp)

.....
(Title of office)
My commission expires:
.....
(date)

(5) For certifying or attesting a copy of a record:

State of .....

County of .....

I certify that this is a true and correct copy of a record in the possession of .....

Dated: .....

.....
(Signature of notary public)

(Stamp)

.....
(Title of office)
My commission expires:
.....
(date)

(6) For certifying the occurrence of an event or the performance of any act:

State of .....

County of .....

I certify that the event described in this document has occurred or been performed.

Dated: .....

.....
(Signature of notary public)

(Stamp)

.....
(Title of office)
My commission expires:
.....
(date)

[2019 c 154 s 5; 2017 c 281 s 16.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: See note following RCW 42.45.280.

RCW 42.45.150 Official stamp. (1) It is unlawful for any person intentionally to manufacture, give, sell, procure, or possess a seal

or stamp evidencing the current appointment of a person as a notary public until the director has issued a notary commission. The official seal or stamp of a notary public must include:

(a) The words "notary public";

(b) The words "state of Washington";

(c) The notary public's name as commissioned;

(d) The notary public's commission expiration date; and

(e) Any other information required by the director.

(2) The size and form or forms of the seal or stamp shall be prescribed by the director in rule.

(3) The seal or stamp must be capable of being copied together with the record to which it is affixed or attached or with which it is logically associated.

(4) The seal or stamp used at the time that a notarial act is performed must be the seal or stamp evidencing the notary public's commission in effect as of such time, even if the notary public has received the seal or stamp evidencing his or her next commission. [2017 c 281 s 17.]

RCW 42.45.160 Stamping device—Security. (1) A notary public is responsible for the security of the notary public's stamping device and may not allow another individual to use the device to perform a notarial act. On resignation from, or the revocation or expiration of, the notary public's commission, or on the expiration of the date set forth in the stamping device, the notary public shall disable the stamping device by destroying, defacing, damaging, erasing, or securing it against use in a manner that renders it unusable. On the death or adjudication of incompetency of a notary public, the notary public's personal representative or guardian or any other person knowingly in possession of the stamping device shall render it unusable by destroying, defacing, damaging, erasing, or securing it against use in a manner that renders it unusable.

(2) The seal or stamp should be kept in a locked and secured area, under the direct and exclusive control of the notary public. If a notary public's stamping device is lost or stolen, the notary public or the notary public's personal representative or guardian shall notify promptly the department on discovering that the device is lost or stolen. Any replacement device must contain a variance from the lost or stolen seal or stamp. [2017 c 281 s 18.]

RCW 42.45.170 Fees. (1) The director may establish by rule the maximum fees that may be charged by notaries public for various notarial services.

(2) A notary public need not charge fees for notarial acts. [2017 c 281 s 19.]

RCW 42.45.180 Journal. (1) A notary public shall maintain a journal in which the notary public chronicles all notarial acts that the notary public performs. The notary public shall retain the journal for ten years after the performance of the last notarial act chronicled in the journal. The journal is to be destroyed as required by the director in rule upon completion of the ten-year period.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter requiring a notary public to maintain a journal, a notary public who is an attorney licensed to practice law in this state is not required to chronicle a notarial act in a journal if documentation of the notarial act is otherwise maintained by professional practice.

(3) A notary public shall maintain only one tangible journal at a time to chronicle notarial acts, whether those notarial acts are performed regarding tangible or electronic records. The journal must be a permanent, bound register with numbered pages. An electronic records notary public may also maintain an electronic format journal, which can be kept concurrently with the tangible journal. The electronic journal must be in a permanent, tamper-evident electronic format complying with the rules of the director.

(4) An entry in a journal must be made contemporaneously with performance of the notarial act and contain the following information:

(a) The date and time of the notarial act;

(b) A description of the record, if any, and type of notarial act;

(c) The full name and address of each individual for whom the notarial act is performed; and

(d) Any additional information as required by the director in rule.

(5) The journal shall be kept in a locked and secured area, under the direct and exclusive control of the notary public. Failure to secure the journal may be cause for the director to take administrative action against the commission held by the notary public. If a notary public's journal is lost or stolen, the notary public promptly shall notify the department on discovering that the journal is lost or stolen.

(6) On resignation from, or the revocation or suspension of, a notary public's commission, the notary public shall retain the notary public's journal in accordance with subsection (1) of this section and inform the department where the journal is located. [2017 c 281 s 20.]

RCW 42.45.190 Notarial acts on electronic records—Technology—Notification—Standards. (1) A notary public may not perform notarial acts with respect to electronic records unless the notary public holds a commission as an electronic records notary public.

(2) An electronic records notary public may select one or more tamper-evident technologies to perform notarial acts with respect to electronic records that meet the standards provided in subsection (4) of this section. A person cannot require an electronic records notary public to perform a notarial act with respect to an electronic record with a technology that the notary public has not selected.

(3) Before an electronic records notary public performs the notary public's initial notarial act with respect to an electronic record, an electronic records notary public shall notify the department that he or she will be performing notarial acts with respect to electronic records and identify the technology the electronic records notary public intends to use.

(4) The director shall establish standards for approval of technology in rule. If the technology conforms to the standards, the director shall approve the use of the technology. [2017 c 281 s 21.]

RCW 42.45.200 Commission—Qualifications—Oath—Surety bond—Commission term—Electronic records notary public. (1) An individual qualified under subsection (2) of this section may apply to the director for a commission as a notary public. The applicant shall comply with and provide the information required by rules established by the director and pay any application fee.

(2) An applicant for a commission as a notary public must:

(a) Be at least eighteen years of age;

(b) Be a resident of or have a place of employment or practice in this state;

(c) Be able to read and write English; and

(d) Not be disqualified to receive a commission under RCW 42.45.210.

(3) Before issuance of a commission as a notary public, an applicant for the commission shall execute an oath of office and submit it to the department in the format prescribed by the director in rule.

(4) Before issuance of a commission as a notary public, the applicant for a commission shall submit to the director an assurance in the form of a surety bond in the amount established by the director in rule. The assurance must be issued by a surety or other entity licensed or authorized to write surety bonds in this state. The assurance must be effective for a four-year term or for a term that expires on the date the notary public's commission expires. The assurance must cover acts performed during the term of the notary public's commission and must be in the form prescribed by the director. If a notary public violates law with respect to notaries public in this state, the surety or issuing entity is liable under the assurance. The surety or issuing entity shall give at least thirty days' notice to the department before canceling the assurance. The surety or issuing entity shall notify the department not later than thirty days after making a payment to a claimant under the assurance. A notary public may perform notarial acts in this state only during the period that a valid assurance is on file with the department.

(5) On compliance with this section, the director shall issue a commission as a notary public to an applicant for a term of four years or for a term that expires on the date of expiration of the assurance, whichever comes first.

(6) A commission to act as a notary public authorizes the notary public to perform notarial acts. The commission does not provide the notary public any immunity or benefit conferred by law of this state on public officials or employees.

(7) An individual qualified under (a) of this subsection may apply to the director for a commission as an electronic records notary public. The applicant shall comply with and provide the information required by rules established by the director and pay the relevant application fee.

(a) An applicant for a commission as an electronic records notary public must hold a commission as notary public.

(b) An electronic records notary public commission may take the form of an endorsement to the notary public commission if deemed appropriate by the director. [2024 c 50 s 10; 2017 c 281 s 22.]

Effective date—2024 c 50: See note following RCW 18.415.010.

RCW 42.45.210 Grounds to deny, refuse to renew, revoke, suspend, or condition commission of notary public. (1) In addition to conduct defined as unprofessional under RCW 18.235.130, the director may take action as provided for in RCW 18.235.110 against a commission as notary public for any act or omission that demonstrates the individual lacks the honesty, integrity, competence, or reliability to act as a notary public, including:

(a) Failure to comply with this chapter;

(b) A fraudulent, dishonest, or deceitful misstatement or omission in the application for a commission as a notary public submitted to the department;

(c) A conviction of the applicant or notary public of any felony or crime involving fraud, dishonesty, or deceit;

(d) A finding against, or admission of liability by, the applicant or notary public in any legal proceeding or disciplinary action based on the applicant's or notary public's fraud, dishonesty, or deceit;

(e) Failure by the notary public to discharge any duty required of a notary public, whether by this chapter, rules of the director, or any federal or state law;

(f) Use of false or misleading advertising or representation by the notary public representing that the notary public has a duty, right, or privilege that the notary public does not have;

(g) Violation by the notary public of a rule of the director regarding a notary public;

(h) Denial, refusal to renew, revocation, suspension, or conditioning of a notary public commission in another state;

(i) Failure of the notary public to maintain an assurance as provided in RCW 42.45.200(4); or

(j) Making or noting a protest of a negotiable instrument without being a person authorized by RCW 42.45.030(5).

(2) If the director denies, refuses to renew, revokes, suspends, imposes conditions, or otherwise sanctions, a commission as a notary public, the applicant or notary public is entitled to timely notice and hearing in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW.

(3) The authority of the director to take disciplinary action on a commission as a notary public does not prevent a person from seeking and obtaining other criminal or civil remedies provided by law. [2017 c 281 s 23.]

RCW 42.45.220 Database of notaries public. The director shall maintain an electronic database of notaries public:

(1) Through which a person may verify the authority of a notary public to perform notarial acts; and

(2) Which indicates whether a notary public has notified the director that the notary public will be performing notarial acts on electronic records. [2017 c 281 s 24.]

RCW 42.45.230 Prohibited acts. (1) A commission as a notary public does not authorize an individual to:

(a) Assist persons in drafting legal records, give legal advice, or otherwise practice law;

(b) Act as an immigration consultant or an expert on immigration matters;

(c) Represent a person in a judicial or administrative proceeding relating to immigration to the United States, United States citizenship, or related matters;

(d) Receive compensation for performing any of the activities listed in this subsection; or

(e) Provide court reporting services.

(2) A notary public may not engage in false or deceptive advertising.

(3) A notary public, other than an attorney licensed to practice law in this state, or a Washington-licensed limited license legal technician acting within the scope of his or her license, may not use the term "notario" or "notario publico."

(4) A notary public, other than an attorney licensed to practice law in this state or a limited license legal technician acting within the scope of his or her license, may not assist another person in selecting the appropriate certificate required by RCW 42.45.130.

(5) A notary public, other than an attorney licensed to practice law in this state, or a Washington-licensed limited license legal technician acting within the scope of his or her license, may not advertise or represent that the notary public may assist persons in drafting legal records, give legal advice, or otherwise practice law. If a notary public who is not an attorney licensed to practice law in this state, or a Washington-licensed limited license legal technician acting within the scope of his or her license, in any manner advertises or represents that the notary public offers notarial services, whether orally or in a record, including broadcast media, print media, and the internet, the notary public shall include the following statement, or an alternate statement authorized or required by the director, in the advertisement or representation, prominently and in each language used in the advertisement or representation: "I am not an attorney licensed to practice law in this state. I am not allowed to draft legal records, give advice on legal matters, including immigration, or charge a fee for those activities." If the form of advertisement or representation is not broadcast media, print media, or the internet and does not permit inclusion of the statement required by this subsection because of size, it must be displayed prominently or provided at the place of performance of the notarial act before the notarial act is performed.

(6) Except as otherwise allowed by law, a notary public may not withhold access to or possession of an original record provided by a person that seeks performance of a notarial act by the notary public. A notary public may not maintain copies or electronic images of documents notarized unless the copies or images are maintained by an attorney or Washington-licensed limited license legal technician acting within his or her scope of practice for the performance of legal services or for other services performed for the client and the copies or images are not maintained solely as part of the notary transaction. [2017 c 281 s 25.]

RCW 42.45.240 Validity of notarial acts. Except as otherwise provided in RCW 42.45.020(2), the failure of a notarial officer to perform a duty or meet a requirement specified in this chapter does not invalidate a notarial act performed by the notarial officer. The validity of a notarial act under this chapter does not prevent an aggrieved person from seeking to invalidate the record or transaction that is the subject of the notarial act or from seeking other remedies

based on law of this state other than this chapter or law of the United States. This section does not validate a purported notarial act performed by an individual who does not have the authority to perform notarial acts. Nothing in chapter 281, Laws of 2017 gives the director authority to invalidate a notarial act. [2017 c 281 s 26.]

RCW 42.45.250 Rules. (1) The director may adopt rules necessary to implement this chapter.

(2) In adopting, amending, or repealing rules about notarial acts with respect to electronic records, the director shall consider standards, practices, and customs of other jurisdictions that substantially enact this chapter. [2017 c 281 s 27.]

RCW 42.45.260 Commissions in effect July 1, 2018—Continuation. A commission as a notary public in effect on July 1, 2018, continues until its date of expiration. A notary public who applies to renew a commission as a notary public on or after July 1, 2018, is subject to and shall comply with this chapter. A notary public, in performing notarial acts after July 1, 2018, shall comply with this chapter. [2017 c 281 s 28.]

RCW 42.45.270 Uniform regulation of business and professions act—Application. The uniform regulation of business and professions act, chapter 18.235 RCW, governs unlicensed practice, the issuance and denial of licenses, and the discipline of licensees under this chapter. [2017 c 281 s 32.]

RCW 42.45.280 Electronic records notary public. ***(Effective until January 1, 2027.)*** (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Communication technology" means an electronic device or process that:

(i) Allows an electronic records notary public and a remotely located individual to communicate with each other simultaneously by sight and sound; and

(ii) When necessary under and consistent with other applicable law, facilitates communication with a remotely located individual with a vision, hearing, or speech impairment.

(b) "Foreign state" means a jurisdiction other than the United States, a state, or a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(c) "Identity proofing" means a process or service by which a third person provides an electronic records notary public with a means to verify the identity of a remotely located individual by a review of personal information from public or private data sources.

(d) "Outside the United States" means a location outside the geographic boundaries of the United States, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and any territory, insular possession, or other location subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(e) "Remotely located individual" means an individual who is not in the physical presence of the electronic records notary public who performs a notarial act under subsection (3) of this section.

(2) A remotely located individual complies with RCW 42.45.040 by using communication technology to appear before an electronic records notary public.

(3) An electronic records notary public located in this state may perform a notarial act using communication technology for a remotely located individual if:

(a) The electronic records notary public:

(i) Has personal knowledge under RCW 42.45.050(1) of the identity of the remotely located individual;

(ii) Has satisfactory evidence of the identity of the remotely located individual by a verification on oath or affirmation of a credible witness appearing before and identified by the electronic records notary public under RCW 42.45.050(2); or

(iii) Has obtained satisfactory evidence of the identity of the remotely located individual by using at least two different types of identity proofing;

(b) The electronic records notary public is reasonably able to confirm that a record before the electronic records notary public is the same record in which the remotely located individual made a statement or on which the individual executed a signature;

(c) The electronic records notary public, or a person acting on behalf of the electronic records notary public, creates an audiovisual recording of the performance of the notarial act; and

(d) For a remotely located individual located outside the United States:

(i) The record:

(A) Is to be filed with or relates to a matter before a public official or court, governmental entity, or other entity subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; or

(B) Involves property located in the territorial jurisdiction of the United States or involves a transaction substantially connected with the United States; and

(ii) The act of making the statement or signing the record is not prohibited by the foreign state in which the remotely located individual is located.

(4) If a notarial act is performed under this section, the certificate of notarial act required by RCW 42.45.130 and the short form certificate provided in RCW 42.45.140 must indicate that the notarial act was performed using communication technology.

(5) A short form certificate provided in RCW 42.45.140 for a notarial act subject to this section is sufficient if it:

(a) Complies with rules adopted under subsection (8)(a) of this section; or

(b) Is in the form provided by RCW 42.45.140 and contains a statement substantially as follows: "This notarial act involved the use of communication technology."

(6) An electronic records notary public, a guardian, conservator, or agent of an electronic records notary public, or a personal representative of a deceased electronic records notary public shall retain the audiovisual recording created under subsection (3)(c) of this section or cause the recording to be retained by a repository designated by or on behalf of the person required to retain the recording. Unless a different period is required by rule adopted under subsection (8)(d) of this section, the recording must be retained for a period of at least ten years after the recording is made.

(7) Before an electronic records notary public performs the electronic records notary public's initial notarial act under this

section, the electronic records notary public must notify the director that the electronic records notary public will be performing notarial acts and identify the technologies the electronic records notary public intends to use. If the director has established standards under subsection (8) of this section and RCW 42.45.250 for approval of communication technology or identity proofing, the communication technology and identity proofing must conform to the standards.

(8) In addition to adopting rules under RCW 42.45.250, the director may adopt rules under this section regarding performance of a notarial act. The rules may:

(a) Prescribe the means of performing a notarial act involving a remotely located individual using communication technology;

(b) Establish standards for communication technology and identity proofing;

(c) Establish requirements or procedures to approve providers of communication technology and the process of identity proofing; and

(d) Establish standards and a period for the retention of an audiovisual recording created under subsection (3)(c) of this section.

(9) Before adopting, amending, or repealing a rule governing performance of a notarial act with respect to a remotely located individual, the director must consider:

(a) The most recent standards regarding the performance of a notarial act with respect to a remotely located individual adopted by national standard-setting organizations and the recommendations of the national association of secretaries of state;

(b) Standards, practices, and customs of other jurisdictions that have laws substantially similar to this section; and

(c) The views of governmental officials and entities and other interested persons. [2019 c 154 s 1.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: "This act takes effect October 1, 2020." [2019 c 154 s 10.]

RCW 42.45.280 Electronic records notary public. ***(Effective January 1, 2027.)*** (1) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Communication technology" means an electronic device or process that:

(i) Allows an electronic records notary public and a remotely located individual to communicate with each other simultaneously by sight and sound; and

(ii) When necessary under and consistent with other applicable law, facilitates communication with a remotely located individual with a vision, hearing, or speech impairment.

(b) "Foreign state" means a jurisdiction other than the United States, a state, or a federally recognized Indian tribe.

(c) "Identity proofing" means a process or service by which a third person provides an electronic records notary public with a means to verify the identity of a remotely located individual by a review of personal information from public or private data sources.

(d) "Outside the United States" means a location outside the geographic boundaries of the United States, Puerto Rico, the United States Virgin Islands, and any territory, insular possession, or other location subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

(e) "Remotely located individual" means an individual who is not in the physical presence of the electronic records notary public who performs a notarial act under subsection (3) of this section.

(2) A remotely located individual complies with RCW 42.45.040 by using communication technology to appear before an electronic records notary public.

(3) An electronic records notary public located in this state may perform a notarial act using communication technology for a remotely located individual if:

(a) The electronic records notary public:

(i) Has personal knowledge under RCW 42.45.050(1) of the identity of the remotely located individual;

(ii) Has satisfactory evidence of the identity of the remotely located individual by a verification on oath or affirmation of a credible witness appearing before and identified by the electronic records notary public under RCW 42.45.050(2); or

(iii) Has obtained satisfactory evidence of the identity of the remotely located individual by using at least two different types of identity proofing;

(b) The electronic records notary public is reasonably able to confirm that a record before the electronic records notary public is the same record in which the remotely located individual made a statement or on which the individual executed a signature;

(c) The electronic records notary public, or a person acting on behalf of the electronic records notary public, creates an audiovisual recording of the performance of the notarial act; and

(d) For a remotely located individual located outside the United States:

(i) The record:

(A) Is to be filed with or relates to a matter before a public official or court, governmental entity, or other entity subject to the jurisdiction of the United States; or

(B) Involves property located in the territorial jurisdiction of the United States or involves a transaction substantially connected with the United States; and

(ii) The act of making the statement or signing the record is not prohibited by the foreign state in which the remotely located individual is located.

(4) An electronic records notary public located in this state may use communication technology under subsection (3) of this section to take an acknowledgment of a signature on a tangible record physically present before the electronic records notary public if the tangible record is displayed to and identified by the remotely located individual during the audiovisual recording under subsection (3)(c) of this section.

(5) The requirement under subsection (3)(b) of this section for the performance of a notarial act with respect to a tangible record not physically present before the electronic records notary public is satisfied if:

(a) The remotely located individual:

(i) During the audiovisual recording under subsection (3)(c) of this section, signs:

(A) The tangible record; and

(B) A declaration, in substantially the following form, that is part of or securely attached to the tangible record:

I declare under penalty of perjury that the tangible record of which this declaration is a part or to which it is attached is the same tangible record on which (name of electronic records notary public), an electronic records notary public, performed a notarial act and before whom I appeared by means of communication technology on (date).

. . .

Signature of remotely located individual

. . .

Printed name of remotely located individual; and

(ii) Sends the tangible record and declaration to the electronic records notary public not later than three days after the notarial act was performed; and

(b) The electronic records notary public:

(i) In the audiovisual recording under subsection (3)(c) of this section, records the individual signing the tangible record and declaration; and

(ii) After receipt of the tangible record and declaration from the individual, executes a certificate of notarial act under RCW 42.45.130, which must include a statement in substantially the following form:

I (name of electronic records notary public) witnessed, by means of communication technology, (name of remotely located individual) sign the attached tangible record and declaration on (date).

(6) A notarial act performed in compliance with subsection (5) of this section complies with RCW 42.45.130(1)(a) and is effective on the date the remotely located individual signed the declaration under subsection (5)(a)(i)(B) of this section.

(7) An electronic records notary public located in this state may use communication technology under subsection (3) of this section to administer an oath or affirmation to a remotely located individual if, except as otherwise provided by other law of this state, the electronic records notary public:

(a) Identifies the individual under subsection (3)(a) of this section;

(b) Creates or causes the creation under subsection (3)(c) of this section of an audiovisual recording of the individual taking the oath or affirmation; and

(c) Retains or causes the retention under subsection (10) of this section of the recording.

(8) If a notarial act is performed under this section, the certificate of notarial act required by RCW 42.45.130 and the short form certificate provided in RCW 42.45.140 must indicate that the notarial act was performed using communication technology.

(9) A short form certificate provided in RCW 42.45.140 for a notarial act subject to this section is sufficient if it:

(a) Complies with rules adopted under subsection (12)(a) of this section; or

(b) Is in the form provided by RCW 42.45.140 and contains a statement substantially as follows: "This notarial act involved the use of communication technology."

(10) An electronic records notary public, a guardian, conservator, or agent of an electronic records notary public, or a personal representative of a deceased electronic records notary public shall retain the audiovisual recording created under subsection (3)(c) of this section or cause the recording to be retained by a repository designated by or on behalf of the person required to retain the recording. Unless a different period is required by rule adopted under subsection (12)(d) of this section, the recording must be retained for a period of at least ten years after the recording is made.

(11) Before an electronic records notary public performs the electronic records notary public's initial notarial act under this section, the electronic records notary public must notify the director that the electronic records notary public will be performing notarial acts and identify the technologies the electronic records notary public intends to use. If the director has established standards under subsection (12) of this section and RCW 42.45.250 for approval of communication technology or identity proofing, the communication technology and identity proofing must conform to the standards.

(12) In addition to adopting rules under RCW 42.45.250, the director may adopt rules under this section regarding performance of a notarial act. The rules may:

(a) Prescribe the means of performing a notarial act involving a remotely located individual using communication technology;

(b) Establish standards for communication technology and identity proofing;

(c) Establish requirements or procedures to approve providers of communication technology and the process of identity proofing;

(d) Establish standards and a period for the retention of an audiovisual recording created under subsection (3)(c) of this section; and

(e) Prescribe methods for an electronic records notary public to confirm under subsections (4) and (5) of this section the identity of a tangible record.

(13) Before adopting, amending, or repealing a rule governing performance of a notarial act with respect to a remotely located individual, the director must consider:

(a) The most recent standards regarding the performance of a notarial act with respect to a remotely located individual adopted by national standard-setting organizations and the recommendations of the national association of secretaries of state;

(b) Standards, practices, and customs of other jurisdictions that have laws substantially similar to this section; and

(c) The views of governmental officials and entities and other interested persons.

(14) By allowing its communication technology or identity proofing to facilitate a notarial act for a remotely located individual or by providing storage of the audiovisual recording under subsection (3)(c) of this section, the provider of the communication technology, identity proofing, or storage appoints the director as the provider's agent for service of process in any civil action in this state related to the notarial act. [2026 c 21 s 1; 2019 c 154 s 1.]

Effective date—2026 c 21: "This act takes effect January 1, 2027." [2026 c 21 s 2.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: "This act takes effect October 1, 2020." [2019 c 154 s 10.]

RCW 42.45.900 Short title. This chapter may be known and cited as the 2018 revised uniform law on notarial acts. [2019 c 154 s 6; 2017 c 281 s 1.]

Effective date—2019 c 154: See note following RCW 42.45.280.

RCW 42.45.901 Application. This chapter applies to a notarial act performed on or after July 1, 2018. [2017 c 281 s 3.]

RCW 42.45.902 Savings. This chapter does not affect the validity or effect of a notarial act performed before July 1, 2018. [2017 c 281 s 29.]

RCW 42.45.903 Application—Construction. In applying and construing this uniform act, consideration must be given to the need to promote uniformity of the law with respect to its subject matter among states that enact it. [2017 c 281 s 30.]

RCW 42.45.904 Relation to electronic signatures in global and national commerce act. This chapter modifies, limits, and supersedes the electronic signatures in global and national commerce act, 15 U.S.C. Sec. 7001 et seq., but does not modify, limit, or supersede section 101(c) of that act, 15 U.S.C. Sec. 7001(c), or authorize electronic delivery of any of the notices described in section 103(b) of that act, 15 U.S.C. Sec. 7003(b). [2017 c 281 s 31.]

RCW 42.45.905 Effective date—2017 c 281. This act takes effect July 1, 2018. [2017 c 281 s 44.]