

CONSUMER ALERT:

Online Notarization Services Are NOT legal in Wisconsin.

Online webcam notarization is invalid and illegal in the State of Wisconsin. A private company claims to have the first online notarization website; neither they nor any other company may provide online notarization in Wisconsin. The web-based platform purports to allow a person to submit copies of identification over the Internet and to use a webcam in lieu of a personal appearance in front of a Notary Public. Appearance via webcam does not meet the requirement for notarization in Wisconsin.

Please be aware that a notary applicant does not need to “join” a notary association in order to become a notary public in Wisconsin. Additionally, a renewing notary does not need to buy a new stamp every four years, unless the current seal or stamp is worn out. If a company offers a notary stamp along with the bond, and the applicant doesn’t need a new stamp, the applicant may wish to consider other insurance companies.

Wisconsin Notaries Public are authorized under current law to perform notarizations as long as all the requirements for the act are met, including the use of a seal. Wisconsin law requires a person to appear personally before a Notary Public to obtain notarial acts. This means that party must be physically present before the Notary Public. A video image of other form of non-physical representation is not a personal appearance in front of a Notary Public under current state or federal laws. The technology solution offered by the private company does not comply with Wisconsin law.

If you have questions or would like additional information regarding this alert, please call the Department of Financial Institutions, Notary Section, at (608) 266-8915.

Thank you.