

"I need a notarization" ... A conversation between notary and signer

Most of the public at large may not know the intricacies of having a document notarized, and when the document doesn't already include notarial language, they may not know what they need. However, the notarial language is not something you, the notary, can determine, unless you are a licensed attorney. This can leave you in a bind, so here are some helpful hints in completing a notarization with a signer who may be unfamiliar with the process.

Signer:

"I need a notarization."

What they really mean is: "I need you to do something that may have something to do with a stamp?"

Notary:

"Ok, great! Here's what I'll need in order to complete the notarization: A valid ID, and the document in which you need to have notarized."

If they have both, proceed with further probing questions, like:

Notary:

"What type of notarization do you need?"

Signer:

"I don't know" or "I just need a notarization."

To which your next response could be:

Notary:

"I can definitely try and help you determine which would best suit your needs by describing each type of notarial act, and you can let me know which one applies to you."

This is a great time to have your [study guide](#) handy. Or you can use these simplified definitions:

Notary:

"To use Jurat notarial language I would witness you sign the document and place you under oath or affirmation to the truthfulness of the contents. This means you have read and understood the document's contents and are willingly signing under penalty of perjury. A Jurat places you under a higher legal obligation for the truthfulness of the signed document."

"An acknowledgement typically happens after you have signed a document and did not have a notary present at the time. I will ask you to acknowledge that you willingly signed the document. There is no penalty of perjury; however, the signature still affirms that you acknowledged you understood the contents of the document and you are still liable for any of its contents"

"A signature witnessing is similar to a Jurat, however I will not place you under oath, I am simply stating that I witnessed you sign the document, after providing proof of identification."

"A copy certification is an act that does not require you to sign a document; I merely make a copy of your non-public document and certify that it is a copy of the original."

If the signer is still unsure of what type of notarization they need, ask them to consult an attorney or the entity that is requiring the notarization. This part is difficult, as it would seem that a notarization would be "your territory" as a notary, however because you are annotating exactly what occurred in the transaction, only the signer can tell you how it should be.

Disclaimer: This document is not a substitute for Utah State Code and it is not intended to be comprehensive or an authoritative statement of law. For further information, please consult Utah State Code Title 46 "Notaries Public Reform Act".