

Acquiring an Apostille from your State Government (Secretary of State) [and/or Authentication from the Federal Government (U.S. Dept. of State)]

What it is: One of functions of state and federal government is to authenticate documents for recognition and travel purposes. (For example birth certificates) In 1961 the Hague Convention made the recognition of documents between differing countries a very easy process for countries that are members of the Hague Convention (Nearly all European and “stable” governments are members of the Hague Convention: e.g. England, Spain, France, Mexico, etc.) The name of the authentication you need to acquire from the state is called an **Apostille** (I realize the words are confusing but think of this as a special or specific form of authentication). This is a form of *state governmental* authentication of a document such as for birth certificate, diploma, employment letter, etc. This is done on the state level through your state’s Secretary of State office. For most purposes, this step is all that is needed as the Federal government recognizes this state-government-issued **Apostille**; i.e. no Federal **authentication** is needed. However, you are always free to **authenticate** your Apostille documents “Federally” if you so choose via application for authentication through the U.S. Dept. of State. This could be used to either: (a) Further substantiate your claim, or (b) be used for a country that is *NOT* a member of the Hague Convention (e.g. Egypt)

How it Works: The authentication process works in steps from the lowest levels of government to the highest. This goes in the following order: (a) You sign the citizenship document and a **notary** witnesses the signature (b) The County Clerk of Courts (usually must be in same county as Notary as on her seal) **certifies** the document, (c) These get forwarded to the Secretary of State for the **Apostille** along with a cover letter stating country of travel. They return the document with the Apostille letter attached (d) If desired or needed (for travel to non-Hague country) you forward all these to the Federal government for **Federal Authentication and Acknowledgement**.

The Steps: In order, the steps are (1) **Notary** witness of signature, (2) **Certification** by state County Clerk, (3) **Apostille** issued by State government (i.e. the state Secretary of State) (4) **Federal Authentication and Acknowledgement** by the Federal government (U.S. Dept. of State) **IF you desire**. So the key phrase you need to remember when you walk into the county clerk’s office is this: “I want my signature **Notarized** on some citizenship papers. Then I want **Certification** of my **Notarized** citizenship document for the purposes of acquiring an **Apostille** from the state”.

Easy Step-by-Step Process:

- (1) Call up your local County Clerk’s Office and ask if they have a notary on staff. Most do and this will save you one step. (If not, you’ll most likely need to find a notary **in the county** of your county clerk’s office. Then you’ll take the document to the county clerk’s office.)
- (2) Take your unsigned (or signed/notarized if you acquired Notary witness elsewhere) **Affidavit (Clarification of Citizenship)** from your Administrative Process to the county clerk’s office with some form of picture ID. (Driver’s license). Tell them you are intending to apply to the State government for an Apostille for travel to a Hague convention country and you need some citizenship papers **notarized** and **certified**. They will **notarize** your signature after you sign

- (in front of them) the last page. They will then **certify** your document. This can take various forms but usually is a separate piece of paper with a Seal on it. (For example, Ohio calls it a Certificate of Official Character. This basically certifies the Notary is ok). If they get confused, remember your key phrase, “I want my signature **Notarized** on some citizenship papers. Then I want **Certification** of my **Notarized** citizenship document for the purposes of acquiring an **Apostille** from the state”.
- (3) Take the **Notarized** Affidavit along with the **Certification** document and make a couple copies for your own records. Next look up on the web for your state’s Secretary of State. Do a search on **Apostille** or Certification of Documents. Follow their instructions for acquiring an **Apostille**. (In most states this can be done either in person or by mail.) You will need to submit the originals (with the seals) of your **notarized affidavit** and **Certification** along with a cover letter requesting the **Apostille** and stating the country of travel. (For example use Spain-- as it’s a member of the Hague convention). The typical fee is \$5. Many states require the inclusion of a S.A.S.E. for return of your documents. When they return your documents make a copy of the Apostille and other documents if you haven’t done so already. You’ll need to retain these for future reference and I would suggest keeping the original along with your other papers in a safe place. An extra copy at another location is a good idea too.
- (4) If you want to obtain *Federal* recognition of your Apostille you can do so through the U.S. State Departments program called **authentication**. You will need to write them a letter stating you want **Federal Authentication and Acknowledgement** of your document for the purposes of travel to (e.g. Egypt) a non-member of the Hague Convention. The steps are available from the U.S. governments web site at www.state.gov/m/a/auth/ or you can use the steps below:

Please note the following information must be obtained before the authentication process can begin.

1. Your citizenship paper Signed before a **notary** public.
2. **Certified** by the clerk of Court of the County in which the document is commissioned.*
3. Certified by the Secretary of State of the State in which the document is executed. (i.e. the **Apostille**)
4. All seals and signatures must be originals.
5. All dates must follow in chronological order on all certifications.
6. All documents in foreign text must be accompanied with a certified (notarized) English translation.
7. Whenever a copy (if acceptable) is used, it must include a statement that it is a true and accurate copy.
8. Foreign governments require the U.S. Department of State to authenticate documents in order for the document to be considered legal. Therefore, it is suggested that you contact the embassy of the particular country to determine what documents are needed for transactions.
9. Include **\$5** payment made payable to **U.S. Department of State** and include a “sufficient size” SASE.

10. If you mail these by regular mail they will be delayed due to “terrorist screening”; a courier such as Fed-X will avoid this step.

*Item 2 may be omitted if the authority in item 3 will certify directly to the notary.

A request for authentication services under 22 CFR, Part 131, should include the *reason for authentication* and the *name of the country* (e.g. “I intend to travel to Egypt”) where the document will be used. Contact and **mailing address** information is below.

Authentications Office (A/OPR/GSM/AUTH)

518 23rd Street, N.W.

State Annex 1

Washington, DC 20037

Tel: 202 647-5002

TDD: 202 663-3468

1 800 688-9889

Fax: 202 663-3636

or you can email us at AOPRGSMAUTH@STATE.GOV.

For information about American citizens who were born, married, or deceased abroad, contact the [Passport Office](#), U.S. Department of State, 1111 19th Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20520, Tel. 202-955-0307.

Copies of consular reports of birth, marriage, and deaths may be obtained from this office. *You can call them with any question at 800 688-9889 (and enter 4, then 4, then 2 at each voice prompt)*

Note: Attached are the two sample cover letters; the first is for the state level and the second is for the U.S. Government authentication-- if desired or needed.

You R. Name

44 Anyplace Street* Anyplace, State[zipcode]

Date

Office of the Secretary of State
Manager, Apostille Section
City, State

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter has been written to request an authentication in the form of an **Apostille**. Attached is my **Notarized Affidavit** and supporting documentation with County Clerk **Certification** pertaining to the request for the **Apostille**. I am considering travel in Spain and Mexico and I am aware that these countries are signatories to the Hague Convention.

The required \$?? charge for this service is provided. I have enclosed a SASE for return of the documents.

Please return the **Apostille** *and Affidavit documents*, once these have been recorded by the Secretary of State's Office, to my address at the top of this letter. I will need to later file this document with Colin Powell, United States Secretary of State, for Federal Acknowledgement by his office.

Thank you for your assistance.

Best regards,

You R. Name

You R. Name

44 Anyplace Street* Anyplace, State[zipcode]

Date

Authentications Office (A/OPR/GSM/AUTH)
518 23rd Street, N.W.
State Annex 1
Washington, DC 20037

Dear Sir or Madam:

This letter has been written to request **Federal Authentication and Acknowledgement** of documents that have been **signed, notarized, certified** (by the county clerk of the my state), and authenticated via my state **Apostille**. Attached are these documents pertaining to the request for **Federal Authentication and Acknowledgement**. I am considering travel to Egypt and I am aware that this country is not a signatory to the Hague Convention.

The required \$5 charge for this service is provided. I have enclosed a SASE for return of the documents.

Please return the *original* **signed and notarized document, certification document, and Apostille**, with your **Federal Authentication** once these have been recorded by your office, to my address at the top of this letter. I will need to retain these documents for any needed presentation to embassy personnel..

Thank you for your assistance.

Best regards,

You R. Name

2 FAM 1290

AUTHENTICATION SERVICES

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)
(Office of Origin: A/OPR/GSM/AUTH)

2 FAM 1291 POLICY AND SCOPE

2 FAM 1291.1 Program Overview

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

The Authentications Office, Office of Operations, General Service Management (A/OPR/GSM/AUTH), provides authentication services to U.S. citizens and foreign nationals on documents that will be used for legal and administrative purposes overseas.

2 FAM 1291.2 Scope and Policy

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. The Authentications Office authenticates a variety of documents from commercial organizations, private citizens, and officials of the Federal and State governments. Documents include, but are not limited to, company bylaws, powers of attorney, trademark, diplomas, treaties, warrants, extraditions, agreements, certificates of good standing, and courier letters.

b. It will not authenticate documents that are contrary to public policy or are for an improper or unlawful purpose (see 22 CFR 131.1).

c. The Authentications Office does not authenticate documents issued abroad by U.S. Consular officials, such as Birth, Marriage, or Death certificates.

2 FAM 1291.3 Procedures

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. The Authentications Office is responsible for signing and issuing certificates under the Seal of the U.S. Department of State.

b. The Authentications Office receives, records, and accounts for fees in accordance with procedures established jointly with the Bureau of Resources Management, Domestic Financial Services, and all moneys received by the Department.

c. A service number is assigned to each certificate of authentication, and this number reflects all fees associated with a certificate.

2 FAM 1291.4 Authorities

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. “The Hague Convention for Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents,” TIAS 10072; 33 U.S.T. 883, 527 U.N.T.S. 189.

b. 28 U.S.C. 1739; Rule 44 (Federal Rules of Civil Procedure) and Rule 902 (Federal Rules of Evidence).

2 FAM 1291.5 Processing

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

The Authentications Office tracks all correspondence and documents through the Document Authentication, Retrieval, and Tracking Systems (DARTS). A case service number is assigned to all requests received in the Authentications Office. This service number appears on all authentication certificates and tracks all aspects of the authentication process, as well as fees collected, and is used as an effective method for the Authentications Office’s internal control process.

2 FAM 1292 AUTHENTICATION CERTIFICATES

2 FAM 1292.1 Apostille

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. Apostille certificates are issued for documents destined to be used in participating countries and their territories that have joined the 1961 Hague Convention Abolishing the Requirement of Legalization for Foreign Public Documents. The Convention provides for the simplified certification of public documents to be used in member countries through a special form called an “apostille.”

b. The Authentications Office is designated as the competent authority to issue apostilles for documents executed by Federal agency officials. An original signature with the raised or stamped seal of the Federal agency must accompany the document. (see 2 FAM Exhibit 1292.1 for a sample format of an apostille.)

2 FAM 1292.2 Department of State Official Certificate

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. Department of State official certificates are issued for documents executed and/or records maintained by offices within the Department intended to be used in a foreign country. A gold ribbon and wafer seal with the impression of the U. S. Department of State seal is affixed to this certificate.

b. Officials should submit the following information with their documents:

- (1) Office; acronym or office title;
- (2) Address/location;
- (3) Telephone number; and
- (4) Country in which the documents are to be used.

c. Officials should submit a certification statement on Department of State letterhead, which is used for files or copies originating within the Department of State. Example statement may include, but is not limited to, the following:

(1) [Official's name] certifying that the document(s) attached [is or are] a [true copy or original] [originating or maintained] in the [files or records] of the [originating office]; and

(2) Original signature and title of submitting official (see 2 FAM Exhibit 1292.2 for a sample of a Department of State Official Certificate).

2 FAM 1292.3 Regular Authentication Certificate

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. Regular authentication certificates are issued for documents originating in the United States to be used in foreign countries and their territories. This certificate is also issued for documents originating in foreign countries that require authentication before they can be recognized as valid in other foreign countries. Various seals are placed and/or attached on the document before this certificate can be issued. This certificate is issued with the impression of the U.S. Department State seal. (See 2 FAM Exhibit 1292.3 for a sample of a regular authentication certificate.

b. Requestors should submit the following information with their documents:

- (1) Name;
- (2) Contact person;
- (3) Address;
- (4) Telephone number; and
- (5) Country in which the documents are to be used.

2 FAM 1292.4 Extradition Certificate

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. Extradition certificates are certified with a gold ribbon and wafer seal with the impression of the U.S. Department of State. Extradition cases are executed by the U.S. Department of Justice (see 7 FAM 1611 and 1612).

b. Department of Justice officials should submit the following information with their documents:

- (1) Agency; name;
- (2) Office; acronym or office title;
- (3) Address/location;
- (4) Telephone number; and
- (5) Country documents are to be used in.

2 FAM 1293 FEES

2 FAM 1293.1 Applicable Fees Chargeable for Authentication Services

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

For applicable fees chargeable for authentication services, see “Bureau of Administration, Doing Business”

2 FAM 1293.2 Procedures

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

a. These procedures and requirements apply to fees relating to requests for Department authentication services from the Authentications Office, Office of Operations, General Service Management (A/OPR/GSM/AUTH). A request for services must be accompanied by remittance of the exact total fee chargeable. The fee shall be in the form of one of the following:

- (1) Check or bank draft drawn on a bank in the United States;
- (2) Postal money order;
- (3) Master or Visa Card; or
- (4) Cash.

b. Remittances should be made payable to the order of the U.S. Department of State. The Department assumes no responsibility for cash lost in the mail.

2 FAM 1294 THROUGH 1299 UNASSIGNED

2 FAM Exhibit 1292.1

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

APOSTILLE

(Convention de La Haye du 5 octobre 1961)

1. Country: *United States of America*
2. This public document
has been signed by _____ NAME _____
3. acting in the capacity of _____ TITLE _____
4. bears the seal/stamp of _____ AGENCY _____

Certified

5. at Washington, D.C.
6. the twenty-ninth of July, 2004
7. *by Assistant Authentication Officer, United States Department of State*
8. No. 03018898-1
9. Stamp/Seal: _____
10. Signature: _____

Fernesia T. Crawford

2 FAM Exhibit 1292.2

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

United States of America



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greetings:

I Certify That [OFFICIAL'S NAME] whose name is subscribed to the document hereunto annexed, was at the time of subscribing the same [TITLE], [ORIGINATING OFFICE AND BUREAU NAME], Department of State, United States of America, and that full faith and credit are due to his or hers acts as such.

In testimony whereof, I, Colin L. Powell, Secretary of State, have hereunto caused the seal of the Department of State to be affixed and my name subscribed by the Assistant Authentication Officer, of the said Department, at the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, this twenty-ninth day of July, 2004.

Secretary of State

By _____

Assistant Authentication Officer,
Department of State

*Issued pursuant to CHXIV, State of
Sept. 15, 1789, 1 Stat. 68-69; 22
USC 2657; 22 USC 2651a; 5 USC
301; 28 USE 1733 et. seq.; 8 USC
1443 (f); RULE 44 Federal Rules of
Civil Procedure.*

This certificate is not valid if it is removed or altered in any way whatsoever.

2 FAM Exhibit 1292.3

(TL:GEN-313; 08-18-2004)

United States of America



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greetings:

I Certify That the document hereunto annexed is under the Seal of the State(s) of (NAME OF STATE), and that such Seal(s) is/are entitled to full faith and credit.*

In testimony whereof, I, Colin L. Powell, Secretary of State, have hereunto caused the seal of the Department of State to be affixed and my name subscribed by the Assistant Authentication Officer, of the said Department, at the city of Washington, in the District of Columbia, this twenty-ninth day of July, 2004.

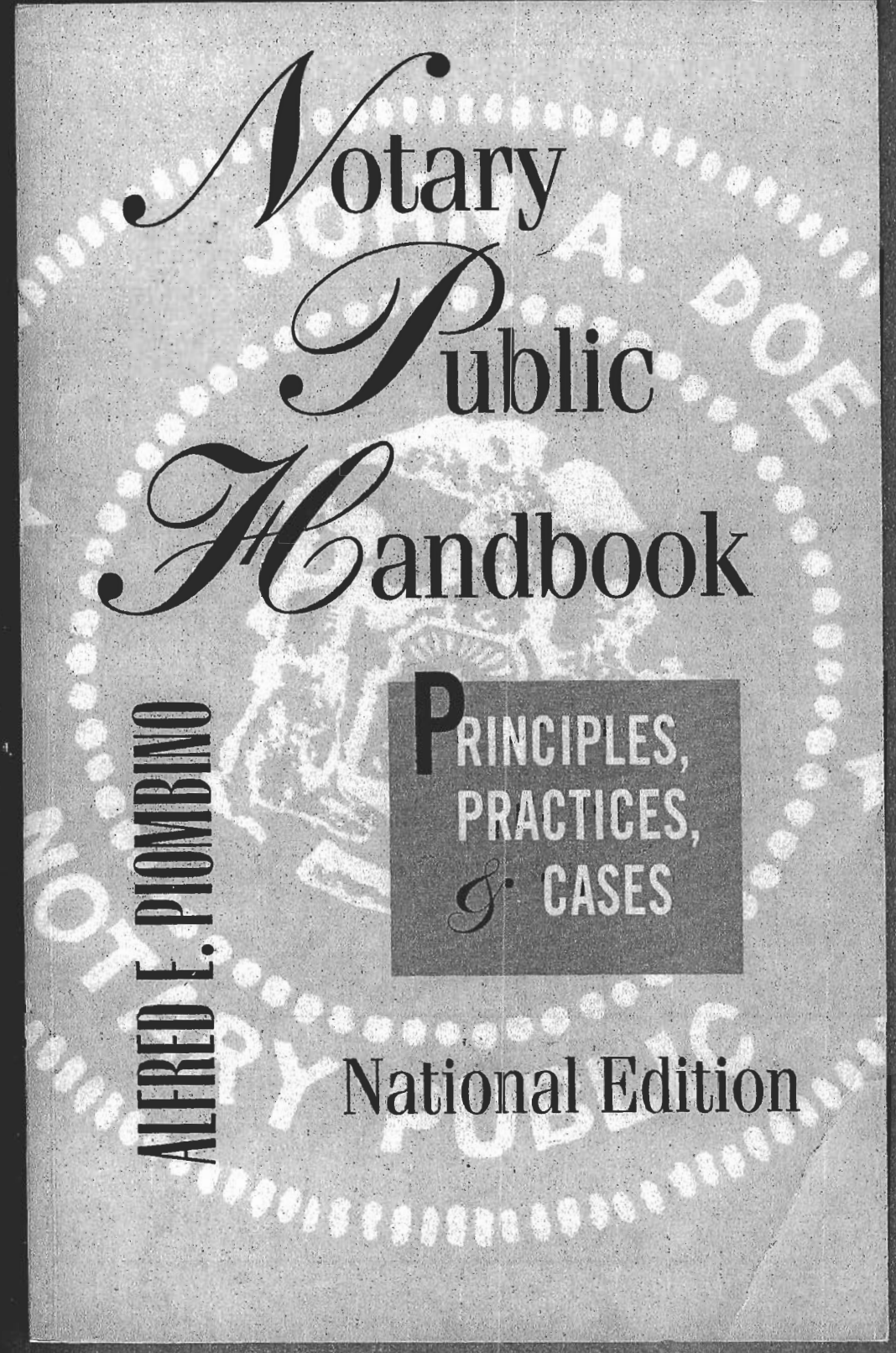
Secretary of State

By _____
Assistant Authentication Officer,
Department of State

*Issued pursuant to CHXIV, State of
Sept. 15, 1789, 1 Stat. 68-69; 22
USC 2657; 22 USC 2651a; 5 USC
301; 28 USE 1733 et. seq.; 8 USC
1443 (f); RULE 44 Federal Rules of
Civil Procedure.*

**For the contents of the annexed document, the Department
assumes no responsibility.*

This certificate is not valid if it is removed or altered in any way whatsoever.



Notary Public Handbook

ALFRED E. PIOMBINO

PRINCIPLES,
PRACTICES,
& CASES

National Edition

CHAPTER

5

PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES

JURISDICTION OF OFFICE

Some notaries public are limited to performing official duties within the geographical boundaries of the county in which they reside. However, most notaries are granted state-wide authority and may be referred to as "notaries-at-large". A few states permit a notary to act on matters outside of the commissioning state, provided the document or legal matter pertains to the original state. However, this is highly unusual. It is customary that a notary may act only within the confines of the territorial limits of the jurisdiction issuing the commission, including land, sea and air space.

AUTHENTICATION

It is a generally accepted principle throughout the United States that the signed certificate of a notary public is prima-facia evidence. In other words, the written certification by the notary is

sufficient evidence to establish the fact that the legal ceremony documented by the notary actually took place, unless disproved by other evidence. Therefore, no further authentication is typically required if the document signed by the notary is to remain in the jurisdiction where the notary is commissioned.

Authentication may be required in cases where the document signed by a notary is to be entered into evidence in a court, recorded in a public recorder's or clerk's office, or utilized in some other fashion outside of the state where the notary is commissioned. This may also occur when the document concerns matters of significant legal, business or financial nature. It is the responsibility of the party executing the document to determine the necessity for obtaining a certificate of authentication. Some states do not require authentication of documents signed by a notary from another state if the notary impressed his embossing-style seal onto the document. Documents not possessing the seal embossment will require customary authentication by the appropriate official(s) from the original state (see appendix).

LOCAL AND STATE AUTHENTICATION

If a document may leave the state or country, or if the client wishes to simply verify the legitimacy of a notary public, authentication is available from either a local court clerk, county clerk, secretary of state, lt. governor or similar government official. The official will confirm that a commission has been issued, and an oath of office with specimen signature is on file. The official will verify that the notary was properly authorized to perform the notarial act at the time of officiating and the notary signature appears genuine. The certificate of authentication signed by the official and sealed with his official seal is now attached to the document by means of a secure attachment thereby reducing the likelihood of a person tampering with the certification. Some certifications may be directly impressed onto the document by means of a rubber stamp or similar marking instrument, usually with an official seal embossment. A document signed by a notary with a state authentication certificate is permitted to be entered as evidence in any court or hearing, or be

Courtesy of Vermont Department of State

APOSTILLE

(Convention de La Haye du 5 Octobre 1961)

1. Country: United States of America

This public document

2. has been signed by _____
3. acting in the capacity of _____
4. bears the seal/stamp of _____

Certified

5. at _____
6. the _____
7. by _____
8. No. _____
9. Seal/Stamp: _____ 10. Signature: _____

Secretary of State

Figure 1 Apostille Certificate

recorded in any state in the United States. There is a nominal fee to obtain an authentication certificate. Payment of the charge is the responsibility of the client or document holder, not the notary.

Please note that some states, Alabama for example, have a two-part authentication process. First, the document must be presented for certification to the probate judge who commissioned the notary. Then, the county certified document is delivered to the secretary of state for the state certification. The document would now be ready for inter-state use anywhere in the United States.

APOSTILLE

An apostille is a special certification issued by a secretary of state, lt. governor or other government official. An apostille

(pronounced "ah-po-steel") verifies certain document certifications and may be required if a document is to be presented or filed outside of the United States (see appendix). While it may not be frequently required, an alert and conscientious notary would recommend obtaining such certification in the possible event it was necessary.

If a document is intended to be delivered to a foreign nation, there are two options for accomplishing the process called "Legalisation for Foreign Documents". In the past, every document intended to be delivered to a foreign nation required a multi-step "legalisation". This process, sometimes called "chain certification", is still necessary for nations not party to the "Hague Convention on Abolishing the Requirements of Legalisation for Foreign Documents". However, in 1981, the United States signed this treaty called the "Hague Convention" and the authentication process has been streamlined. Kindly refer to the table of nations who have signed this treaty and will therefore accept the special apostille certification. If the destination nation is not found in the table, please refer to the particular foreign embassy to determine if that nation has since signed the treaty.

HAGUE CONVENTION ON ABOLISHING THE REQUIREMENT OF LEGALISATION FOR FOREIGN DOCUMENTS*

NATIONS PARTY TO THE TREATY

Antigua and Barbuda

Argentina

Austria

The Bahamas

Belgium

Botswana

Commonwealth of the Independent States, including:

Belarus

Russia

Cyprus

El Salvador

Fiji

Finland

France, including:

Affars and the Issas

French Guiana

Guadeloupe

Martinique

New Caledonia

Reunion

St. Pierre and Miquelon

Wallis and Futuna

Germany

Greece

Hungary

Israel

Italy

Japan

Latvia

Lesotho

Liechtenstein

Luxembourg

Malawi

Malta

Marshall Islands

Mauritius

Mexico

Netherlands, including:

Netherlands

Antilles

Norway

Panama

Portugal

Seychelles

Slovinia

South Africa

Spain

Suriname

Swaziland

Switzerland

Tonga

Turkey

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, including:

Anguilla

Bailiwick of Guernsey

Barbados

Bermuda

British Antarctic Territory

British Guiana

British Solomon Islands Protectorate

Cayman Islands

Falkland Islands

Gibraltar

Gilbert & Ellice Islands

Hong Kong

The Isle of Man Jersey

Montserrat

New Hebrides

St. Helena

St. Christopher and Nevis

Southern Rhodesia

Turks and Caicos Islands

British Virgin Islands

United States of America

Yugoslavia

*Effective January, 1997

The following example will illustrate the authentication process.

A client signs a power of attorney in Buffalo, New York before a New York notary (who has qualified in Erie County). The notary takes and certifies the acknowledgment of the principal signing the power of attorney. The client delivers the executed legal document to the Erie County Clerk for county clerk authentication. The oath of office and signature record of a New York notary is recorded at the county clerk's office in the county in which the notary resides. This is re-

ferred to as the county in which the notary has qualified for the office of notary. Therefore, the county clerk verifies the validity of the notary's authority on the date the acknowledgment was taken, and also verifies the signature on file with that on the document. The county clerk authenticated document is now delivered to the New York Department of State for either the state authentication or apostille certification.

If the destination nation is a Hague Treaty party, the New York Department of State will attach an apostille certificate signed by the New York Secretary of State. This step certifies that the prior certification by the county clerk was legitimate. The power of attorney is now properly "legalised" and prepared to be received at the Hague Treaty destination country with full legal recognition.

If the destination nation is not a Hague Treaty party, the New York Department of State will attach a state authentication certificate signed by the New York Secretary of State. This step certifies that the prior certification by the county clerk was legitimate. The state certified document now is delivered to the U.S. Department of State. The U.S. Department of State will attach a federal authentication certificate signed by the U.S. Secretary of State. This step certifies that the prior certification by the New York Secretary of State was legitimate. A final step may be required. Certification by a consular officer at a foreign consulate or the embassy of the foreign nation may be necessary. This step certifies that the prior certification by the U.S. Secretary of State was legitimate. The power of attorney is now properly "legalised" and prepared to be received at the non-Hague Treaty destination country with full legal recognition.

It is also possible that the destination country may also require a final certification of the consul certification upon the arrival of the document in the foreign nation.

FEDERAL AUTHENTICATION

Documents destined for use in nations that are not part of the Hague Treaty will require an authentication from the U.S. Department of State. Federal authentications are only available from Washington, D.C. and may be obtained either by mail or in-person.

Federal authentications may be requested from the U.S. Department of State, Authentication Office, 518 23rd Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20520. The direct telephone number is 202/647-5002. The main switchboard telephone number is 202/647-4000. Information may also be obtained from the Federal Information Telephone Center at 800/688-9889. Call ahead to verify the office address.

Walk-in, counter service is provided at the Washington, D.C. office on a while-you-wait basis, Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. Call ahead to verify hours of operation. The limit is 15 documents per person, per day. Pre-payment is required by cash, business or personal check, or money order. Checks or money orders are to be made payable to the U.S. Department of State.

The fee for a federal authentication is \$4 each document, not per page. Payment of the charge is the responsibility of the client or document holder, not the notary public.

For mail service, the approximate turn-around time is about three weeks. The name, address and telephone number of the requesting party is required. The Department of State will forward the authenticated document to the appropriate foreign embassy only if the requesting party includes a pre-addressed, postage-paid envelope to accommodate the request.

A request for authentication services should include the reasons for authentication and the name of the country where those documents will be used. For all documents being authenticated the following must be complied with:

1. All seals and signatures must be originals;
2. All certifications must contain a jurat or statement as to what is being certified to;
3. Rubber stamp seals are not acceptable on state certificates;
4. State certificates using mechanically subscribed signature must have one original signature subscribed by a deputy;
5. All dates must follow in consecutive order on notary, clerk of court and secretary of state certification;
6. All documents in foreign language must be accompanied with a certified, notarized English translation;
7. If a copy of the document is used, it must include the statement that this is a true and accurate copy;

Reprinted with permission.
U.S. Department of State.

No.

United States of America



DEPARTMENT OF STATE

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

I Certify That the document hereunto annexed is under the
Seal of the State

In testimony whereof, I, (), Secretary of
State, have hereunto caused the seal of the
Department of State to be affixed and my
name subscribed by the Authentication
Officer of the said Department, at the
city of Washington, in the District of
Columbia, this () day of (), 19XX.

Secretary of State

By _____
Authentication Officer,
Department of State

Issued pursuant to RS 161, 5 USC 22, RS
203, 5 USC 136, Sec. 1 of Act of June 25,
1948, 62 St 946, 28 USC 1733, Sec. 4 of Act
of May 26, 1949, 63 St 111, 5 USC 191c,
and Secs. 104 and 112 of Act of June 27, 1952
66 St 174 and 253, 5 USC 1104, 1143, and
5 USC 140

* FOR THE CONTENTS OF THE ANNEXED
DOCUMENT, THE DEPARTMENT ASSUMES NO
RESPONSIBILITY

This certificate is not valid if it is removed or altered in any way whatsoever

Figure 2 Certificate of Authentication—Federal

DOWNLOADED FROM:

***Sovereignty Education and Defense Ministry
(SEDM) Website***

<http://sedm.org>

