

Information for Notary Public Applicants

A Notary Public is a public official who has the power to acknowledge signatures, administer oaths and take depositions, affidavits and acknowledgements.

Qualifications. A notary must be at least 18 years of age and, at the time of the election, be a resident of or maintain a principal place of business in the county from which he or she is elected. United States citizenship is not a requirement of the office.

Application. Applications for election as a notary, together with the application fee of \$15.50 are submitted to the Shelby County Clerk. After the Board of Commissioners has met and approved your application, the County Clerk certifies the notary's election to the Secretary of State. When the commission is issued by the Governor, it is returned to the County Clerk's office.

Bond. Upon notification by the County Clerk's office that you have been approved as a Notary Public at Large for the State of Tennessee, you must next secure a \$10,000.00 notary public surety bond. The bond is payable to the State of Tennessee and conditional upon the faithful performance of the duties of a notary public.

Oath. Once the bond is secured, you must bring it to Room 200 at 150 Washington Avenue or in Room W-103 at 1075 Mullins Station Road and subscribe to an oath to support the constitutions of the State of Tennessee and the United States. The oath also states that the notary will, without favor or partiality, honestly, faithfully, and diligently discharge the duties of notary public.

Official Seal. State law requires that all notaries use an official seal prescribed and designed by the Secretary of State. The notary must purchase the official seal at his or her own expense. The current design prescribed by the Secretary of State is a circular seal with the notary's name (as it appears on the commission) printed at the top, the county of election printed at the bottom, and the words "State of Tennessee Notary Public" or "Tennessee Notary Public" printed in the center. Notaries commissioned on or after July 1, 2004 must use a rubber or other type stamp (not an impression seal), and the stamp must be imprinted in some color, other than black or yellow, that is clearly legible and appears black when copied on a non-color copier.

Re-appointment. The Notary's term of office is four (4) years, such term to begin on the date of issuance by the Governor. Renewal is by the same method as the original procedure.

Change of Address. If a notary moves his or her residence or principle place of business out of the county from which he or she was elected to another county in Tennessee, the notary remains qualified to act as a notary in Tennessee; however, the notary must notify the County Clerk in the county from which the notary was elected and pay to the County Clerk a fee of \$7.

Name Change. A notary must come in person into County Clerk's office if a name change occurs due to a marriage or divorce. The notary must bring a rider from insurance company with name change, two certified copies of marriage certificate / divorce decree, the original notary certificate and sign the notary expiration register. The fee is \$5.00 payable to the Secretary of State.

For additional Notary information, please contact our Notary Division at (901) 545-4254.