

What is an Acknowledgment?

An Acknowledgment is a common notarial act that involves a notary certifying that a document signer personally appeared before the notary, acknowledged signing the document voluntarily, and confirmed their identity. In Georgia, completing an acknowledgment requires following specific steps and guidelines to ensure the validity and legality of the notarization.

Step 1: Verify the Signer's Identity

Before proceeding with the acknowledgment, the notary must verify the identity of the document signer. The signer must present a valid form of identification, such as a driver's license, passport, or state-issued ID card. The notary should carefully examine the identification document to ensure it is current, contains a photograph, and matches the name of the signer on the document to be notarized.

Step 2: Confirm the Signer's Voluntary Acknowledgment

Once the signer's identity has been verified, the notary must confirm that the signer is acknowledging signing the document voluntarily and without coercion. The notary should ask the signer if they understand the contents of the document and are signing it of their own free will. The signer must affirm that they are signing the document willingly before the acknowledgment can proceed.

Step 3: Complete the Acknowledgment Certificate

The notary must complete an acknowledgment certificate, which is a standardized form that confirms the details of the notarization. In Georgia, the acknowledgment certificate must include the following information:

- The venue (location) of the notarization, including the county and state
- The date of the notarization
- The name of the document signer
- The notary's name and commission expiration date
- A statement that the signer appeared before the notary and acknowledged signing the document voluntarily

The notary should carefully fill out the acknowledgment certificate, ensuring that all required information is accurate and legible.

Step 4: Administer the Oath or Affirmation (if required)

In some cases, the notary may be required to administer an oath or affirmation to the signer before completing the acknowledgment. An oath is a solemn pledge to tell the truth, while an affirmation is a solemn declaration that does not involve religious beliefs. If an oath or affirmation is required, the notary should ensure that the signer understands the significance of the oath or affirmation and administer accordingly.

Step 5: Sign and Seal the Document

After completing the acknowledgment certificate and any required oath or affirmation, the notary must sign and seal the document. The notary should affix their official seal to the document and sign their name in the designated area. The notary's signature and seal indicate that the acknowledgment has been properly completed and that the document has been notarized.

Completing an acknowledgment in Georgia requires careful attention to detail and adherence to specific guidelines. By following the steps outlined in this training guide, notaries can ensure that acknowledgments are completed accurately and in compliance with Georgia notarial laws and regulations. Properly executed acknowledgments help to protect the integrity and validity of notarized documents, providing assurance to all parties involved in the transaction.

Be sure to examine and adhere to all State laws regarding notarizations. In Georgia, notary law is published by Georgia Superior Court Clerks' Authority (GSCCCA) -- <https://www.gscca.org/notary-and-apostilles/notaries/georgia-notary-law>