

What Is A Vital Record — And Can I Notarize It?

By David Thun on July 01, 2019 in Best Practices

Customers often ask Notaries to notarize birth certificates or marriage certificates — also known as vital records. But because of the special nature of these documents, you will have to say no. Here is more information about what a vital record is, and why they cannot be notarized.

What Documents Are Considered Vital Records?



A vital record is a government document containing information about a person's important life events. Examples of vital records include birth certificates, death certificates and marriage certificates. In the United States, vital records are typically issued and maintained at the county or state level by offices such as a county clerk or recorder's office, registrar's office or vital records office.

Can I Notarize A Vital Record?

Customers most commonly ask if Notaries can certify a photocopy of a vital record. Unfortunately, Notaries cannot do this. The reason is that a copy certification requires the Notary to certify that the copy is a true and accurate reproduction of the original document. However, original vital records documents are kept by the government agency that issues them. Only that agency is authorized to issue certified copies of the vital record in question — Notaries are not authorized to make copies or certify copies of vital records.