

# California Notary License Practice Exam (Sample)

## Study Guide



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**SAMPLE**

## **Questions**

- 1. What can a subscribing witness bring you?**
  - A. Homestead Declaration**
  - B. Property Title**
  - C. Legal Advice**
  - D. Notarization Certificate**
- 2. Your jurisdiction as a CA Notary Public will be**
  - A. the county where you reside**
  - B. the entire state of CA**
  - C. Only the city where you work**
  - D. Specifically designated areas**
- 3. Under which condition shall notaries not perform notary actions?**
  - A. If they are not certified**
  - B. If they are named as a principal in a financial transaction**
  - C. If the document is in a foreign language**
  - D. If they have not met the signer in person**
- 4. Is a notary required to verify the mental capacity of a signer?**
  - A. Yes, they must conduct a detailed examination**
  - B. No, but they must determine the signer appears mentally competent**
  - C. No, they rely on the signer's word**
  - D. Yes, if the document contains significant legal implications**
- 5. What may happen to a notary who engages in the unauthorized practice of law?**
  - A. Commission extension**
  - B. Public commendation**
  - C. Commission suspension**
  - D. A formal apology**

- 6. The most frequently completed form by notaries is:**
- A. The power of attorney**
  - B. The affidavit**
  - C. The acknowledgement**
  - D. The deed of trust**
- 7. Which of the following must be included in a notary's journal?**
- A. Character of every document**
  - B. The notary's personal notes**
  - C. Confidential information about signers**
  - D. None of the above**
- 8. A commission is valid for how many years?**
- A. 2 years**
  - B. 4 years**
  - C. 5 years**
  - D. 10 years**
- 9. Which of the following is NOT a notary action?**
- A. Proof of Execution**
  - B. Jurat**
  - C. Sealing the document**
  - D. Acknowledgement**
- 10. What is the main purpose of a notary's training course?**
- A. To allow notaries to practice independently**
  - B. To understand their responsibilities, laws, and procedures**
  - C. To teach legal concepts in detail**
  - D. To fulfill hourly work requirements**

## **Answers**

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1. A
2. B
3. B
4. B
5. C
6. C
7. A
8. B
9. C
10. B

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. What can a subscribing witness bring you?

**A. Homestead Declaration**

**B. Property Title**

**C. Legal Advice**

**D. Notarization Certificate**

A subscribing witness can bring you a Homestead Declaration, which is a legal document that protects the equity in a homeowner's primary residence. Option B is incorrect because a property title is a legal document that shows ownership of a property, not something a subscribing witness can bring you. Option C is also incorrect because a subscribing witness is not qualified to provide legal advice. Option D is incorrect because a notarization certificate is a document that certifies the authenticity of a signature, but it is not something that a subscribing witness can bring you.

## 2. Your jurisdiction as a CA Notary Public will be

**A. the county where you reside**

**B. the entire state of CA**

**C. Only the city where you work**

**D. Specifically designated areas**

As a CA Notary Public, your jurisdiction refers to the area where you are authorized to notarize documents. In this case, it would be the entire state of CA. This means that you are able to notarize documents anywhere within the state, not just within the county where you reside or the city where you work. Therefore, options A and C are incorrect. Option D is also incorrect because although there may be certain areas within the state that you are specifically designated to notarize in (such as a designated office or location), your overall jurisdiction still encompasses the entire state of CA.

## 3. Under which condition shall notaries not perform notary actions?

**A. If they are not certified**

**B. If they are named as a principal in a financial transaction**

**C. If the document is in a foreign language**

**D. If they have not met the signer in person**

Notaries are required to act as a neutral third party and should not be named as a principal in a financial transaction in which they are notarizing documents. This could create a conflict of interest and compromise the integrity of the notary's actions. Options A, C, and D are not necessarily conditions that would prevent a notary from performing notary actions. Option A may vary by state, but in general, a certification is not required for notaries to perform their duties. Option C may require a translator to be present to ensure the notary understands the contents of the document, but it does not prohibit them from performing their duties. Finally, option D may be preferred for the notary to properly identify the signer, but it is not a condition that must be met for notary actions to take place. Overall, option B is the most correct answer as it goes against the ethical standards

4. Is a notary required to verify the mental capacity of a signer?
- A. Yes, they must conduct a detailed examination
  - B. No, but they must determine the signer appears mentally competent**
  - C. No, they rely on the signer's word
  - D. Yes, if the document contains significant legal implications

A notary's role involves ensuring that the signer is willing and able to enter into the agreement as it is being signed, which includes assessing their mental capacity at a basic level. The correct answer highlights that while a notary is not required to conduct a detailed examination of the signer's mental capacity, they must observe whether the signer appears mentally competent during the signing process. This means that the notary should look for signs of confusion, incoherence, or inability to understand the nature of the document being signed. If the notary has any doubts about the mental competence of the signer, it is prudent to refuse to perform the notarization. This approach protects both the notary and the integrity of the notarized document. In contrast, the other options impose a level of scrutiny or a lack of responsibility that is not aligned with the duties of a notary. The emphasis is on a reasonable observation rather than an exhaustive assessment, which is why this answer is accurate.

5. What may happen to a notary who engages in the unauthorized practice of law?
- A. Commission extension
  - B. Public commendation
  - C. Commission suspension**
  - D. A formal apology

If a notary engages in the unauthorized practice of law, their commission may be suspended. This refers to the act of providing legal advice or services without proper authorization or qualifications. A commission extension (A) is when a notary's term is extended. Public commendation (B) is when a notary is recognized for their exceptional work. A formal apology (D) is a statement expressing regret or remorse, but it would not be a consequence for engaging in the unauthorized practice of law. Therefore, the option of commission suspension (C) is the most accurate and logical choice.

6. The most frequently completed form by notaries is:
- A. The power of attorney
  - B. The affidavit
  - C. The acknowledgement**
  - D. The deed of trust

The acknowledgement is the most frequently completed form by notaries because it is a legal requirement in many jurisdictions for certain types of documents to be notarized, such as deeds, contracts, and legal agreements. The power of attorney and deed of trust are also commonly notarized, but not as frequently as acknowledgements. The affidavit can also be notarized, but it is not necessary for this document to be notarized in most situations. Therefore, the acknowledgement is the most commonly completed form by notaries.

**7. Which of the following must be included in a notary's journal?**

- A. Character of every document**
- B. The notary's personal notes**
- C. Confidential information about signers**
- D. None of the above**

A notary's journal is an important record of the notarial acts they perform and must be kept accurately and securely. The correct answer is A, the character of every document. This includes recording the type of document, date and time of notarization, and the names and signatures of the signers. This information is necessary in case there are any issues with the notarized document in the future. Option B, the notary's personal notes, should not be included in the journal as it is not relevant to the act of notarization. Option C, confidential information about signers, should also not be included as it is against notary ethics to disclose personal information about signers without their consent. Option D, none of the above, is incorrect as the journal must include the character of every document. Any other options not mentioned in the choices should also not be included in

**8. A commission is valid for how many years?**

- A. 2 years**
- B. 4 years**
- C. 5 years**
- D. 10 years**

A commission is a contract between a salesperson and their employer, outlining the terms of their employment and compensation. Typically, a commission lasts for a specific period of time and is valid for the duration of that time. Option A, 2 years, is too short of a time frame for a commission to be valid, as it may not allow the salesperson enough time to reach their sales goals and earn their commission. Option C, 5 years, is also not ideal as it is longer than the typical duration of a commission and may not incentivize the salesperson to continually work towards their sales targets. Option D, 10 years, is too long of a time frame for a commission as it may not accurately reflect the current market conditions or sales goals set by the employer. Therefore, option B, 4 years, is the most appropriate answer as it allows for a reasonable amount of time

**9. Which of the following is NOT a notary action?**

- A. Proof of Execution**
- B. Jurat**
- C. Sealing the document**
- D. Acknowledgement**

Notaries do not seal documents as part of their official duties. They may use a seal or stamp to mark a document as notarized, but this is not considered a notary action. The other options, Proof of Execution, Jurat, and Acknowledgement, are all types of notary actions that involve certifying signatures or verifying the authenticity of a document. Therefore, C is the incorrect option as it does not match the criteria of a notary action.

**10. What is the main purpose of a notary's training course?**

- A. To allow notaries to practice independently**
- B. To understand their responsibilities, laws, and procedures**
- C. To teach legal concepts in detail**
- D. To fulfill hourly work requirements**

The main purpose of a notary's training course is to ensure that notaries understand their responsibilities, applicable laws, and the procedures they must follow while performing their duties. This foundational knowledge is crucial because notaries play a key role in preventing fraud, verifying identities, and maintaining the integrity of official documents. Familiarity with laws related to notarization ensures that notaries comply with state regulations, which helps protect both the notary and the public. Understanding their responsibilities helps notaries conduct their work properly, such as ensuring that signers are emotionally competent and aware of what they are signing. Training courses are designed to provide this vital information effectively, making option B the most appropriate choice. Focusing on the other options: While the ability to practice independently is a result of completing the training, the main emphasis is on understanding responsibilities and laws. Learning legal concepts in detail goes beyond what is necessary for notarial duties, as notaries are not expected to be legal advisors. Lastly, fulfilling hourly work requirements may be a component of some training programs, but it is not the primary aim of these courses, which is to equip notaries with essential knowledge and skills to perform their duties competently.