

California Notary License Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

Copyright © 2025 by Examzify - A Kaluba Technologies Inc. product.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

No part of this book may be reproduced or transferred in any form or by any means, graphic, electronic, or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, web distribution, taping, or by any information storage retrieval system, without the written permission of the author.

Notice: Examzify makes every reasonable effort to obtain from reliable sources accurate, complete, and timely information about this product.

SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What does an acknowledgement certify?**
 - A. Signer's identity was satisfactorily proven to notary**
 - B. Document is original**
 - C. Notary knows the signer personally**
 - D. Document contains truthful information**
- 2. What is required for a notary public to change their name on their commission?**
 - A. No action is necessary**
 - B. They must submit a new application with updated information to the Secretary of State**
 - C. They need a witness to sign off on the change**
 - D. Just notify their clients of the change**
- 3. For a first time applicant to get a commission, they must do which of the following?**
 - A. Pass the exam**
 - B. Be a resident of the state**
 - C. Have a legal background**
 - D. Have previous experience in notarization**
- 4. What is the main purpose of a jurat?**
 - A. To notarize documents without presence**
 - B. To make sure the signer signs in front of the notary**
 - C. To verify the signer's identity through ID only**
 - D. To witness the signing via video**
- 5. What is it called when a subscribing witness brings a document for notarization?**
 - A. Certification of fact**
 - B. Proof of execution**
 - C. Acknowledgment of duty**
 - D. Verification of signature**

- 6. If a principal cannot appear, who may bring the document to the notary?**
- A. A close relative**
 - B. One subscribing witness**
 - C. Any available coworker**
 - D. The document signer's attorney**
- 7. Within how many days must a notary respond to a request for a transaction?**
- A. 5**
 - B. 10**
 - C. 15**
 - D. 20**
- 8. What is the penalty for stating a known false fact as true?**
- A. \$5,000**
 - B. \$10,000**
 - C. \$15,000**
 - D. \$20,000**
- 9. What may be used as 'satisfactory evidence of identity' other than ID Cards?**
- A. Utility bills**
 - B. Credible identifying witnesses**
 - C. Birth certificate**
 - D. Email verification**
- 10. What information is typically included in a notary's seal?**
- A. Only the state of California**
 - B. The notary's name, the words "Notary Public," and the state of California**
 - C. Signature of the signer**
 - D. Date of notarization only**

Answers

SAMPLE

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

SAMPLE

Explanations

SAMPLE

1. What does an acknowledgement certify?

- A. Signer's identity was satisfactorily proven to notary**
- B. Document is original**
- C. Notary knows the signer personally**
- D. Document contains truthful information**

An acknowledgement certifies that the signer's identity was satisfactorily proven to the notary. This means that the signer provided sufficient proof of their identity, such as a valid government-issued identification, to the notary. This information is important as it helps ensure the validity and authenticity of the document. The other options are incorrect because they do not pertain to the certification of the acknowledgement. Option B is incorrect because an acknowledgement does not certify the originality of the document. Option C is incorrect because it is not necessary for the notary to personally know the signer in order to certify an acknowledgement. Option D is incorrect because an acknowledgement does not certify the truthfulness of the information contained in the document.

2. What is required for a notary public to change their name on their commission?

- A. No action is necessary**
- B. They must submit a new application with updated information to the Secretary of State**
- C. They need a witness to sign off on the change**
- D. Just notify their clients of the change**

For a notary public in California to change their name on their commission, it is necessary to submit a new application with the updated information to the Secretary of State. This process ensures that all records are current and reflect the notary's legal name, which is crucial for the validity of notarial acts. When a notary's name changes—whether through marriage, divorce, or any other reason—a new application is the appropriate legal step. This application includes all the required information as well as the signature under the new name, thus maintaining the integrity of public records related to notarial services. The option indicating that no action is necessary overlooks the legal requirements for maintaining an accurate and up-to-date commission. Similarly, simply notifying clients or having a witness sign off on the change does not fulfill the regulatory requirements set forth by the Secretary of State for notaries. Therefore, submitting a new application is the definitive method to ensure compliance and proper documentation is in place.

3. For a first time applicant to get a commission, they must do which of the following?

A. Pass the exam

B. Be a resident of the state

C. Have a legal background

D. Have previous experience in notarization

To obtain a notary commission in California as a first-time applicant, passing the exam is a critical requirement. The exam assesses the applicant's knowledge of notary laws and practices, ensuring that they understand their responsibilities and the legal implications of notarizations. This requirement is in place to promote professionalism and protect the integrity of the notarization process. While being a resident of the state might also be a requirement, it is not the only condition for first-time applicants, and it does not encompass the necessary qualifications specifically linked to the duties of a notary. Additionally, having a legal background or previous experience in notarization is not mandatory for becoming a first-time notary public. As such, the focus on passing the exam is emphasized to guarantee that all notaries have a foundational knowledge of their role and the laws governing notarial acts.

4. What is the main purpose of a jurat?

A. To notarize documents without presence

B. To make sure the signer signs in front of the notary

C. To verify the signer's identity through ID only

D. To witness the signing via video

The main purpose of a jurat is to make sure the signer physically signs the document in the presence of the notary. Option A, notarizing documents without presence, goes against the requirements of a jurat and notarization in general as it is meant to prevent fraud and ensure the signer is present and aware of what they are signing. Option C, verifying the signer's identity through ID only, is not enough as it does not prove that the signer physically signed the document. Option D, witnessing the signing via video, is not a reliable method as it may not capture the entire signing process or verify the signer's identity. Thus, B is the correct answer as it ensures the signer is present and acknowledges the document being signed.

5. What is it called when a subscribing witness brings a document for notarization?

A. Certification of fact

B. Proof of execution

C. Acknowledgment of duty

D. Verification of signature

This is often referred to as "Proof of Execution". This option is correct because subscribing witnesses are typically involved when legal documents need to be notarized and they are usually present to verify the signing of the document by the individual in question. The other options, "Certification of fact", "Acknowledgement of duty", and "Verification of signature" do not accurately describe the role of a subscribing witness in the notarization process.

6. If a principal cannot appear, who may bring the document to the notary?

- A. A close relative**
- B. One subscribing witness**
- C. Any available coworker**
- D. The document signer's attorney**

A subscribing witness is allowed to bring the document to the notary in the event that the principal cannot appear. The role of a subscribing witness is to witness the signing of a document and be able to attest to its authenticity. Therefore, they are seen as a reliable source to bring the document to the notary and confirm that it was indeed signed by the principal. A close relative, coworker, or attorney may not have the knowledge or authority to do so and cannot serve as a substitute for the principal in this situation.

7. Within how many days must a notary respond to a request for a transaction?

- A. 5**
- B. 10**
- C. 15**
- D. 20**

A, B, and D are incorrect because they all suggest longer time frames for a notary to respond to a request for a transaction. A notary is responsible for ensuring a timely and efficient processing of a transaction, and therefore it is recommended for them to respond within 15 days. This allows for sufficient time to gather necessary information and complete the request while also ensuring the transaction is not unnecessarily delayed.

8. What is the penalty for stating a known false fact as true?

- A. \$5,000**
- B. \$10,000**
- C. \$15,000**
- D. \$20,000**

Stating a known false fact as true is considered a form of fraud and can result in penalties of up to \$10,000. Options A, C, and D are incorrect because they either suggest a smaller or larger penalty than the correct amount. It is important to always properly fact-check and verify information before stating it as true to avoid any potential consequences.

9. What may be used as 'satisfactory evidence of identity' other than ID Cards?

- A. Utility bills**
- B. Credible identifying witnesses**
- C. Birth certificate**
- D. Email verification**

Credible identifying witnesses may be used as 'satisfactory evidence of identity' since they can confirm the person's identity based on their own knowledge and observation. Utility bills, birth certificate, and email verification may not be considered as strong evidence of identity since they can be easily forged or manipulated, or may not provide sufficient information about a person's identity.

10. What information is typically included in a notary's seal?

- A. Only the state of California**
- B. The notary's name, the words "Notary Public," and the state of California**
- C. Signature of the signer**
- D. Date of notarization only**

The correct response is that a notary's seal typically includes the notary's name, the words "Notary Public," and the state of California. This information is essential because it identifies the notary and their official capacity, providing assurance that the notarization is legitimate. The notary's name must match the name under which they are commissioned, affirming their identity. The inclusion of "Notary Public" clearly indicates the role of the individual, while specifying the state ensures that the notarization complies with the laws and regulations of that particular jurisdiction. In contrast, options that focus solely on the state, such as including only the state of California or the date of notarization, lack essential identification information that a notary seal requires. Additionally, the signature of the signer is unrelated to the contents of the notary's seal and serves a different purpose in the notarization process. Understanding the components of a notary's seal is crucial for recognizing valid notarizations and ensuring compliance with legal standards.