

Maryland Notary Practice Exam (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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- 1. Which role is authorized to complete the notarial certificate?**
 - A. The signer**
 - B. Only the notary**
 - C. A witness**
 - D. The signer's attorney**

- 2. Notarial act certifying a copy of a document is a true reproduction?**
 - A. Oaths or Affirmations**
 - B. Signature Witnessing or Attesting**
 - C. Copy Certification**
 - D. Protest**

- 3. Notary certifies that the signer personally appeared, signed the document in the notary's presence, and swore to or affirmed the truth of the statement.**
 - A. Acknowledgement**
 - B. Jurat**
 - C. Notarization**
 - D. Verification on Oath or Affirmation**

- 4. What needs to be put in the notes section of the journal for disabled people?**
 - A. The accommodations you used**
 - B. Note the accommodations you used**
 - C. The signer's disability status**
 - D. The time of day**

- 5. Whose name gets printed under "Name of Person making the Acknowledgment?"**
 - A. the signer**
 - B. the notary**
 - C. the clerk**
 - D. the witness**

- 6. What must you NEVER do if a document has blanks?**
- A. Never instruct the signer on how to complete; suggest originator or attorney for instructions.**
 - B. Fill in blanks for the signer.**
 - C. Mark the blanks as N/A without signer input.**
 - D. Leave the document unsigned until blanks are filled.**
- 7. How do you determine the willingness of a signer?**
- A. By checking their handwriting**
 - B. By asking the signer if they are signing of their own free will**
 - C. By verifying that a witness is present**
 - D. By ensuring the signer is over 21**
- 8. Who is allowed to complete a notarial certificate?**
- A. Only the notary**
 - B. The signer**
 - C. A witness**
 - D. The signer's attorney**
- 9. If there is no date on a document, what should you record as the date?**
- A. Today's date**
 - B. No date**
 - C. The date of the notary's journal entry**
 - D. The date the document was prepared**
- 10. When can you start the reappointment process?**
- A. 60 days before expiration or up to 30 days after.**
 - B. Immediately after expiration.**
 - C. Only on the day your current term ends.**
 - D. When you are notified by the Clerk of Circuit Court.**

Answers

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

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Explanations

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1. Which role is authorized to complete the notarial certificate?

- A. The signer**
- B. Only the notary**
- C. A witness**
- D. The signer's attorney**

The notarial certificate is the notary's official attestation that the notarization was performed correctly. Only the notary public has the authority to complete this part, because the certificate records the steps the notary must take—verifying the signer's identity, witnessing the signing or administering an oath, and then signing and affixing the seal with the date and place. The signer may sign the document and present identification, but they do not fill out the certificate. A witness or the signer's attorney cannot complete the notarial certificate unless they are also a commissioned notary. In both common forms of notarization—acknowledgment and jurat—the notary is responsible for completing the certificate.

2. Notarial act certifying a copy of a document is a true reproduction?

- A. Oaths or Affirmations**
- B. Signature Witnessing or Attesting**
- C. Copy Certification**
- D. Protest**

Copy Certification is the notarial act that confirms a copy is a true and exact reproduction of the original document. When a notary performs this act, they review the original to ensure the copy matches it exactly, then attach a certificate stating that the copy is true and complete, and affix the notary's seal and signature with the date and location. This is distinct from other notarial acts: oaths or affirmations involve swearing to statements, signature witnessing or attesting validates a signature on a document, and protest deals with nonpayment of negotiable instruments. The key idea here is that the notary is vouching for the accuracy of the copy itself, not for the content of the original or for the signing of the document. Note that some documents must be copied by the issuing agency or a government office, and a notary may not certify those.

3. Notary certifies that the signer personally appeared, signed the document in the notary's presence, and swore to or affirmed the truth of the statement.

A. Acknowledgement

B. Jurat

C. Notarization

D. Verification on Oath or Affirmation

The essential idea here is the notary's act of certifying a sworn statement. When the signer personally appears, signs the document in the notary's presence, and swears to or affirms the truth of its contents, the notary is performing a sworn notarization. In Maryland practice, that overall certification—witnessing the appearance, the signing, and the oath or affirmation and then issuing the certificate—is called notarization. An acknowledgment would involve only verifying the signature (without an oath or affirmation). The jurat term refers specifically to the oath component, but the act described encompasses the entire certification process, which is why notarization is the best fit. Verification on oath or affirmation is another phrasing for sworn statements but typically used in different contexts; it still centers on the sworn aspect, not the full notarization of the document.

4. What needs to be put in the notes section of the journal for disabled people?

A. The accommodations you used

B. Note the accommodations you used

C. The signer's disability status

D. The time of day

Documenting accommodations in the notary journal is about recording the supports provided for a signer with a disability. In the notes section, you should note the accommodations you used. This clearly shows what was done to make the notarization accessible and verifies that appropriate steps were taken. It also avoids recording sensitive disability information and focuses only on the actions taken to assist, which is the important part for the journal. The time of day isn't related to documenting accommodations, and noting the signer's disability status isn't required and raises privacy concerns.

5. Whose name gets printed under "Name of Person making the Acknowledgment?"

A. the signer

B. the notary

C. the clerk

D. the witness

In an acknowledgment, the line for "Name of Person making the Acknowledgment" is filled with the name of the individual who appeared before the notary and acknowledged signing the document—the signer. The notary's job is to verify identity and witness the signing, then complete the certificate with the notary's own information and seal. The other roles (clerk or a witness) aren't the ones whose name goes on that particular line; that line identifies the person who actually made the acknowledgment.

6. What must you NEVER do if a document has blanks?

- A. Never instruct the signer on how to complete; suggest originator or attorney for instructions.**
- B. Fill in blanks for the signer.**
- C. Mark the blanks as N/A without signer input.**
- D. Leave the document unsigned until blanks are filled.**

When a document has blanks, your role as a notary is to witness the signing and verify identity, not to advise on or complete the content. The only appropriate action is to direct the signer to seek instructions from the originator of the document or from a qualified attorney about how to fill those blanks. Providing guidance on what to put in the spaces or filling them in yourself would amount to altering the document or giving legal advice, which a notary should not do. That boundary is why choosing not to instruct and instead referring to the proper source is essential. Filling in blanks yourself would directly change the instrument, which is not allowed. Marking blanks as not applicable without signer input can misrepresent the document's status. And while it's prudent not to notarize until all blanks are resolved, the fundamental rule the question highlights is that you must never instruct the signer on how to complete the document.

7. How do you determine the willingness of a signer?

- A. By checking their handwriting**
- B. By asking the signer if they are signing of their own free will**
- C. By verifying that a witness is present**
- D. By ensuring the signer is over 21**

The key idea is verifying that the signer is acting of their own free will, not under pressure or duress. The most reliable way to establish this is to ask the signer directly if they are signing of their own free will. This direct question makes the signer consciously acknowledge their voluntary participation, which is essential for a valid notarial act. Handwriting analysis won't prove willingness; a signature can be genuine or coerced, and handwriting won't reveal coercion or consent. The presence of a witness doesn't by itself confirm willingness; someone could be signing under pressure even with a witness. Age alone doesn't guarantee willingness—being over a certain age doesn't address whether the signer is free to choose to sign. If there's any doubt about willingness, the notary should pause and address that concern rather than proceed. Asking the signer directly about their voluntary participation is the appropriate check for willingness.

8. Who is allowed to complete a notarial certificate?

- A. Only the notary**
- B. The signer**
- C. A witness**
- D. The signer's attorney**

The notarial certificate is the official statement of the notary's act, so it must be completed by the notary themselves. The certificate records essential details of the notarization—what was done (acknowledgment, jurat, etc.), who appeared, the date and place, and the identity verification—and it carries the notary's signature and seal to give the act legal authority. The signer may present the document and provide information, but the authority to attest to the act and finalize the certificate rests with the notary. A witness or the signer's attorney does not have the authority to complete the certificate, since that would place the attestation outside the notary's official role. In Maryland practice, this ensures the notarization remains a reliable, verifiable public record.

9. If there is no date on a document, what should you record as the date?

- A. Today's date**
- B. No date**
- C. The date of the notary's journal entry**
- D. The date the document was prepared**

The date on a notarial certificate should reflect the actual day you perform the act. If the document itself has no date, you should not guess or add a date to the certificate. Leaving the date blank avoids implying a date of execution that isn't supported by the document, and keeps the record accurate. You still record the date of the act in your notary journal, but the certificate itself remains without a date when the document provides no date.

10. When can you start the reappointment process?

- A. 60 days before expiration or up to 30 days after.**
- B. Immediately after expiration.**
- C. Only on the day your current term ends.**
- D. When you are notified by the Clerk of Circuit Court.**

In Maryland, you can start the reappointment (renewal) process within a specific window to keep your commission active. The window is from 60 days before your current term ends up to 30 days after expiration. This timing gives the Clerk of the Circuit Court enough time to review and issue a new commission so there's no gap in your authority to notarize. You initiate the renewal with the Clerk of the Circuit Court in your county, and you don't need to wait for a notice to begin. If you wait beyond 30 days after expiration, you risk having your commission lapse and facing a more involved renewal.

Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://marylandnotary.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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