

## **What is a Notary Public?**

A notary public acts as an official and unbiased witness to the identity of a person who appears before the notary. This person may be taking an oath, giving written testimony, or acknowledging his/her signature on a legal document.

Identity is critical. The notary must be certain that the person appearing before him/her is who that person claims to be. Personal appearance before the notary is required. A notary cannot notarize a document by video or remotely.

A notary public cannot notarize his/her own signature, or a document to which the notary is party, or a document from which the notary would gain direct or indirect financial benefit.

A notary is authorized by law to perform certain notarial acts. Each notarial act has legal significance and affects the legal rights of others.

## **Application and Renewal Process**

### **Qualification**

Under Arkansas law, a notary public is appointed and commissioned by the Secretary of State. Each applicant must complete an application stating:

- 1. The applicant is a legal resident of Arkansas, or a legal resident of an adjoining state and employed in Arkansas.*
- 2. The applicant is a United States citizen or a permanent resident alien. (Include a copy of a recorded Declaration of Domicile.)*
- 3. The applicant is at least eighteen (18) years old.*
- 4. The applicant is able to read and write English.*
- 5. A prior notary commission has not been revoked in the past ten (10) years.*
- 6. The applicant has not been convicted of a felony.*
- 7. The applicant's residential address, or if the applicant lives in an adjoining state but works in Arkansas, list both the business and residential address.*
- 8. The applicant has reviewed the law concerning notaries public and understands the duties of a notary public.*