

## August 2000

### **Greetings Florida Notaries!**

I hope everyone has been enjoying the summer! As we approach the fall season let's look at what you need to do to keep all of your notary information up to date.

### **NOTARY RENEWAL**

The process to renew your notary commission is exactly the same as the application process to obtain your first appointment. The application form is the same and all the required information must be submitted. Please see sections 117.01(2) and (6), Florida Statutes.

The state does not notify you prior to the expiration of your notary commission. However, you will probably receive notification from your bonding agency and a number of other companies seeking your business.

Submit your application for renewal about two months in advance of your expiration date, or earlier if your application will require special review by the Governor's Office. That should be ample time for processing to ensure that there is no break in service.

You may continue using your current notary seal through the end of your current commission. If you are reappointed, you must not use your new seal until the first day of your new commission. Remember to destroy your old seal to prevent its misuse.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

The Department of State maintains a computer database of all 370,000 notaries in the State of Florida. These records are essential in order to communicate information to you or in the event that a document you notarized is questioned. Florida law requires you to notify the Department of State in writing within 60 days of any change in your home or business address or your telephone numbers. Failure to do so is grounds for suspension from office by the Governor.

If you have a change of address to report, please provide your exact commissioned name, your date of birth, your commission number, your new home address and telephone number (including area code), and your new employer's name, address, and telephone number. You may not report your home address as only a post office box we must have the street address in our records. All correspondence mailed to you from the State will be mailed to your home address unless you specify a different mailing address. Mail or fax your change of address to:

Department of State  
Notary Commissions & Certifications Section  
1801 Capitol  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250  
(850) 488-7522  
(850) 488-1768 (fax)

### **CHANGE OF LEGAL NAME**

The law provides that you may only be commissioned in your legal name. If you change your legal name, you must change or amend your notary commission. Many notaries mistakenly believe that they can wait until their commission expires. That's not true the law requires you to amend your notary commission immediately upon changing your name. If, however, your commission expires within 4 months, the State will allow you to combine your renewal and the name change into one process.

To amend your notary commission, you must contact your bonding agency for an application

form, a rider to your notary bond (a supplemental document linking your notary bond to your new name), pay the required state fee of \$25, and purchase a new notary seal. You will retain the same expiration date, but you will be given a new commission number. Once you have requested an amended commission, you may continue notarizing in your former name for 60 days or until receipt of the new commission, whichever date is earlier.

Don't put it off call your bonding agency today to begin the process. If you are unsure who your bonding agency is, contact the Department of State at the above address or telephone number.

#### **NOTIFICATION OF LOST SEAL**

You should keep your notary seal under lock and key. That seal is for your exclusive use, and you could be held liable for the misuse of your notary seal by another person. If your notary seal is lost, stolen, or believed to be in the possession of another person, you must notify the State in writing of the problem. Give us your commission name, commission number, a brief statement about the circumstances of the loss or theft, and the last date the seal was in your possession. An appropriate notation will be added to the State records. The State does not furnish notary seals; but, you may order a replacement notary seal from your bonding agency or the vendor of your choice.

If you have any specific topics you would like to have covered please e-mail your suggestions to [fl\\_gov\\_notary@eog.state.fl.us](mailto:fl_gov_notary@eog.state.fl.us) and I will try to incorporate them into future newsletters.

Thank you for your time!

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If you would like to receive this electronic newsletter please e-mail me, [NOTARY EDUCATION COORDINATOR](#)