

ID INSPECTION CHECKLIST

A practical, reasonable review before you notarize

Your job is not to become a forensic document examiner. Your job is to make a careful, common-sense inspection and follow your state's ID rules.

1 CHECK THE PERSON

- ☐ **Photo:** Does the photograph reasonably resemble the signer?
- ☐ **Name:** Does the name on the ID reasonably match the name on the document?
- ☐ **Physical details:** Do the listed age, height, and other descriptors appear plausible?
- ☐ **Awareness:** Does the signer appear alert, willing, and able to understand the transaction?
- ☐ **Signature:** When appropriate, does the signature appear reasonably consistent?

2 CHECK THE ID

- ☐ **Acceptable type:** Is this form of ID acceptable under your state's notary law?
- ☐ **Expiration:** Is it current, or otherwise permitted by your state?
- ☐ **Issuing authority:** Was it issued by a recognized government authority?
- ☐ **Condition:** Is the card intact and readable enough to inspect?

3 LOOK FOR WARNING SIGNS

- ☐ **Alteration:** Scratches, erasures, peeling laminate, lifted photos, or changed dates
- ☐ **Mismatch:** Different fonts, spacing, colors, alignment, or information that does not line up
- ☐ **Damage:** Cracks, holes, heavy wear, or obscured information that prevents a reasonable inspection
- ☐ **Behavior:** A signer who rushes you, avoids questions, becomes aggressive, or refuses reasonable inspection
- ☐ **Story problems:** Information on the ID conflicts with what the signer tells you

4 RECORD & DECIDE

- ☐ **Journal:** Record the ID details required by law or by your sound business practice.
- ☐ **Privacy:** Do not photocopy, photograph, or retain ID information unless permitted and genuinely necessary.
- ☐ **Pause:** Ask questions when something does not make sense.
- ☐ **Decline:** Do not proceed if the ID is unacceptable, the signer cannot be reasonably identified, or you suspect fraud.

WHEN IN DOUBT, STOP.

It is better to delay or decline a notarization than to ignore a serious concern.

PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE: I.D. CHECKING GUIDE - U.S. & CANADA

Full-color examples of current driver licenses and identification cards, published annually. [View the current guide](#)

Also available through the National Notary Association: [NNA product page](#)

IMPORTANT: Acceptable identification requirements vary by state and may change. Always confirm current law and official guidance for the state in which you are commissioned.

Course resource - The Notary Blueprint