

Tips for Checking State Identification Cards During an In-Person Notarization

1. Use tools of the trade

- **Magnifying glass for microprint:** Many state driver's licenses and IDs have microprinting as a security feature, but you will need a magnifying glass to read it.
- **UV light for holograms:** Many IDs have holographic images that you can see only with a "blue" (UV) light.
- **ID Checking Guide:** Has pictures and information on drivers' licenses and state IDs of all 50 states. Use it to master your state's IDs and also to verify an out-of-state ID that is presented to you.



2. Know your state's IDs

- Most notarizations you will perform will involve state residents who present your state's driver's license or state ID to verify their identity.
- Know the versions of IDs that are currently valid in your state.
 - Real ID.
 - Non-Real ID.
 - Current but no longer issued versions.
- Know the security features of your state IDs, including: Ghost photos, microprinting, holograms, laser perforations and tactile security features.

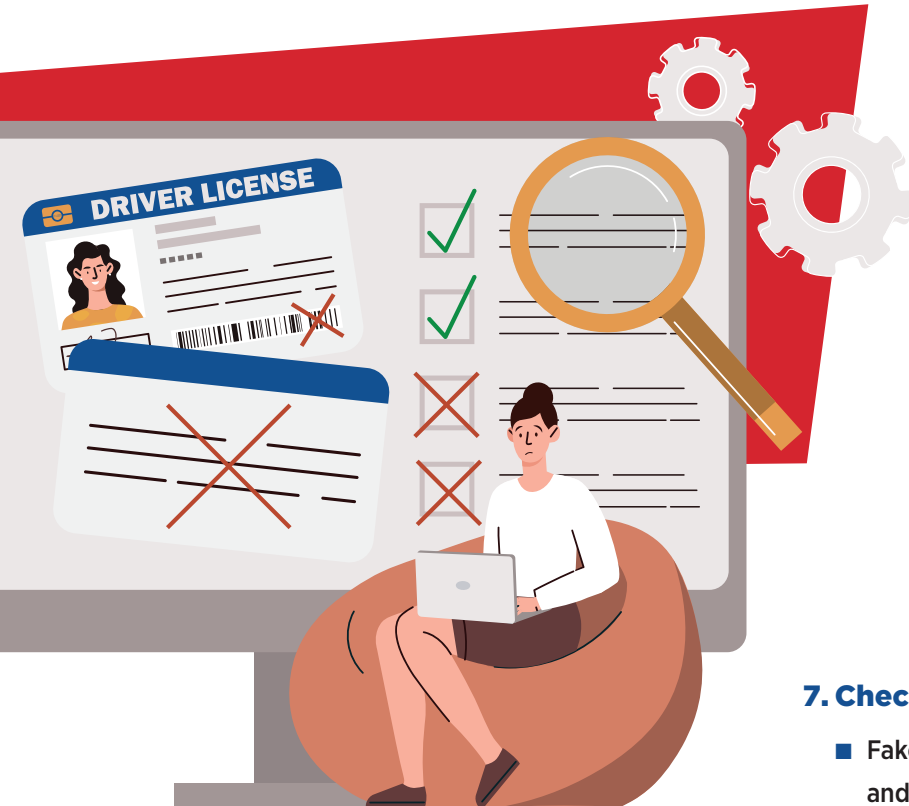
3. Handle the ID

Ask the signer to take the ID out of their wallet or from behind the "ID window" of their wallet so you can handle it. To check the physical attributes of an ID, you must inspect the ID up close and touch it.

While handling the ID, check for tell-tale signs that the lamination is fake (ragged edges, peeling, air pockets underneath, creasing, etc.)

4. Compare the physical description, photo and signature

- The physical description of the person on the ID should reasonably match the appearance of the individual who appears before you.
- While a person may change their hair color, length or style, certain facial elements such as the position of the eyes, eyebrows, ears, nose and chin usually will not change. Focus on these elements in the photo and the person before you.
- Does the signature on the ID reasonably resemble the signature on the document being notarized and in the journal of notarial acts?



5. Inspect the front

- Physical attributes of the ID.
 - Thickness.
 - Rounded and smooth corners (a state DL or ID that does not have rounded corners is likely a fake).
 - Smoothness of photo: A “bump” could indicate an altered photo was placed on top.
- Design elements: For example, the current California driver’s license has a fine-line state map, mountains, orchards, gold prospector, sailboats and California poppies on the front of the license.
- Fonts and color of fonts (mismatched and miscolored fonts are evidence of a fake ID).
- License number should reflect the proper type and number of characters. For example, in California, the first character is a letter followed by seven unspaced digits.
- Photo and ghost photo.
- Holograms and visual security features (laser perforations that require you to hold the ID at a certain angle or up to the light to see).
- Tactile security features such as raised lettering that you can feel by touch.

- Overlapping elements and printing.
- License or ID term length.
- Does the signature on the ID reasonably resemble the signature on the document being notarized and in the journal of notarial acts?

6. Inspect the back.

- Fake IDs may compellingly reproduce the front of the ID but not the reverse side.
- Check the back side for the inclusion of all elements that should appear such as a magnetic swipe strip, barcode, and design and security elements (The ID Checking Guide will identify these elements).

7. Check for signs of tampering.

- Fake IDs may tamper with the signature, photo and typed information.
- If the ID contains overlapping type as a feature, the absence of overlapping type could be a sign of tampering.

8. Check the ID expiration date

9. Ask questions

- Ask the cardholder to verify personal data on the card. If they can’t, it is a red flag.
- Ask the cardholder what the middle initial in their name stands for.
- Purposely mispronounce their name or misstate their middle initial to see if the cardholder instinctively gives the correct information.

10. Look for signs of deceit

- Nervousness.
- Lack of eye contact.
- Hesitation when answering questions.
- Eyes tracking upward (as a sign they may be trying to remember or make something up).