

EMC NOTARY • FLORIDA COMMISSION HH619187

EMC Remote Notary — SEO/AEO/GEO Program

EMC Notary — Document Recording SOP

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Internal working document — confidential, not for external distribution.

title: "EMC Notary — Document Recording SOP" subtitle: "Standard operating procedure for notarizing and preparing a document for county recording in Florida" last_verified: 2026-07-13 scope: "Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, Hillsborough, Orange, Duval, Pinellas (extendable to any FL county using the same statewide statutes)" distribution: "Website (downloadable PDF) and Evan McCall's Legal workspace reference set" authority_index: "See county-registry.json and county-recording-requirements.md in this directory for the full per-county citation set this SOP draws from."

EMC Notary — Document Recording SOP

o. What this document is

This is the operating procedure I follow (and that a client, title company, or attorney's office can follow alongside me) from the moment a document needs notarization through the moment it comes back from the county recorder as part of the Official Records. It covers the process, not legal judgment calls. Every requirement below cites the specific Florida statute and the recording office that enforces it, verified live against the county's own site or the state statute text as of the date in this document's front matter.

"I am not an attorney licensed to practice law in the State of Florida, and I may not give legal advice or accept fees for legal advice." (Fla. Stat. §117.05(10)) That boundary applies throughout this SOP: I confirm a document meets the formatting and execution requirements below; I don't determine whether a specific transaction is legally sufficient, and I don't submit documents to a recorder's office as part of the notarization service itself unless that's separately arranged (see Step 6).

1. Roles

Role	Responsibility
Notary (EMC)	Confirms signer identity, witnesses the signature, completes the notarial certificate, checks the document against the formatting and execution requirements in this SOP.
Signer / client	Provides the document, its factual content, and decides which county to file in.
Attorney (where one is involved)	Drafts the document and determines legal sufficiency for the client's purpose. Not part of the notary's role (Fla. Stat. §117.05(10)).
Title company / closing agent (real estate transactions)	Coordinates the closing package, collects and remits documentary stamp tax and recording fees, often handles the actual e-recording submission.
County recorder (Clerk of the Circuit Court, or Comptroller where that's the constitutional office)	Records the instrument into the Official Records under Fla. Stat. §28.222, collects the statutory fee under §28.24 and any documentary stamp tax under §201.02/§201.08.

2. Step-by-step process

Step 1 — Pre-appointment document review

Before the signing appointment, confirm:

- The document is unsigned. A Florida notary cannot notarize a signature that already happened outside their presence.
- The document type and its execution requirements (a deed needs a preparer's name and return address on its face; a power of attorney needs two witnesses under Fla. Stat. §709.2105(2); a will needs two witnesses plus a self-proving affidavit under Fla. Stat. §732.503).
- Which county the document will be recorded in, since fees, e-recording vendor lists, and any local surtax (Miami-Dade only, so far as this registry has confirmed) depend on that answer.

Step 2 — Identity verification and notarization

- Check one current government-issued photo ID against the name on the document. For Remote Online Notarization (RON), this runs through credential analysis and knowledge-based authentication before the live session, under Fla. Stat. Chapter 117, Part II.
- Witness the signature live, in person or via the RON platform's live audio-video session.
- Complete the notarial certificate matching the acknowledgment or jurat language required under Fla. Stat. §117.05(13), then apply the seal and complete the journal entry.

Step 3 — Format compliance check (Fla. Stat. §695.26)

Before a document leaves the signing table, confirm it has:

- A 3-inch by 3-inch blank space in the top right-hand corner of the first page, and a 1-inch by 3-inch blank space in the top right-hand corner of every subsequent page, reserved for the clerk's recording stamp.

- Legible printed, typewritten, or stamped names beneath every signature: signer, witnesses, notary, preparer, and grantee where the document type requires it.
- Each witness's name **and** post-office address legibly printed, typewritten, or stamped on any instrument conveying, assigning, or encumbering real property. This has been required statewide since January 1, 2024; an email address does not satisfy it.
- Page size no larger than 8.5 by 14 inches, unless the document is a plat, condominium exhibit, or similar instrument the recorder bills at its separate oversize rate.
- A preparer's name and return-mailing address on the face of a deed.

A document that fails one of these checks isn't invalid as a notarization, but most recorders will reject it on submission and send it back, costing the client a second trip or a second e-recording fee. Catching this before the appointment ends is the highest-leverage step in the whole SOP.

Step 4 — Fee calculation

Two separate cost categories apply, and an invoice or closing statement should never blend them into one line:

Recording fee (Fla. Stat. §28.24): \$10.00 for the first page, \$8.50 for each additional page, plus \$1.00 for each name indexed beyond the first four. This total is the sum of the statute's base fee, Public Records Modernization Trust Fund charge, and a page surcharge tied to §28.222; it has not changed since 2009.

Documentary stamp tax (Fla. Stat. §201.02, deeds; §201.08, mortgages and notes): \$0.70 per \$100 of consideration on a deed, \$0.35 per \$100 on a mortgage or note, in every county in this SOP's scope except Miami-Dade, where the effective deed rate is \$0.60 per \$100 plus a \$0.45 per \$100 county surtax on transfers other than single-family residences (a Miami-Dade County Code provision, not a state statute). Confirm the current Miami-Dade figures directly with that recorder's office before finalizing a closing statement; this is the one documented rate variance across all seven counties in scope.

Notarial act fee, separately, is capped under different statutes (\$10 per signature in person under Fla. Stat. §117.05(2), \$25 per signature by RON under Fla. Stat. §117.275) and is not part of the recording fee at all; keep it on its own invoice line.

Step 5 — Choose the filing method

Every county in scope offers three paths:

1. **In person**, at the recording office address listed for that county in county-registry.json.
2. **By mail**, sending the original document with payment for the total fee (and, for counties that return the original, a self-addressed stamped envelope).
3. **E-recording**, through one of the county's approved vendors (Simplifile, CSC, ePN, Hopdox, Indecomm, and others appear across different counties; no county in this registry endorses a single vendor over its approved list). Title companies and law firms typically already have a standing vendor relationship; an individual filer without one usually finds mail or in-person filing simpler for a single document.

Step 6 — Submission

Recording itself is a separate act from notarization. I don't submit filings to a recorder's office as part of a standard notarization; that's a step the signer, their attorney, or their title company completes directly, in person, by mail, or through e-recording, unless a specific engagement (for example, a title company's standing signing-service agreement) has arranged for EMC or its signing coordination to handle the electronic submission on the client's behalf.

Step 7 — Confirmation and record retention

- Confirm the document came back with a recording stamp, book/page reference, or instrument number, proving it's now part of that county's Official Records.
- E-recorded documents typically return within 24 to 48 hours; mailed and in-person documents vary by office volume, and the client should confirm current turnaround with the specific county if timing matters.
- Retain the notarial journal entry per Florida's retention requirement, and, for RON sessions, retain the audio-video session recording for the statutory minimum of 10 years (Fla. Stat. §117.245).
- Keep the client's recorded copy. A certified copy later costs an additional fee at most recorders' offices; the original recorded copy the client receives back after submission avoids that cost.

3. Per-county variations at a glance

See `county-registry.json` for the complete machine-readable per-county data and `county-recording-requirements.md` for the narrative version. The variations that actually change how this SOP runs, county to county:

- **Miami-Dade** has a different deed doc-stamp rate and an added surtax on non-single-family transfers, the only such variance found across all seven counties.
- **Palm Beach** operates multiple recording locations, and some document types are accepted only at the Main Courthouse; confirm before a client travels to a branch office.
- **Duval, Hillsborough, Orange** and other counties whose own fee pages don't restate the documentary stamp rate directly still use the statewide \$0.70 rate; that's confirmed at the state level (Florida Department of Revenue), not a gap in county practice.
- **Pinellas** blocked direct automated verification of its live recording-services web page during this SOP's research pass (HTTP 403); its fee schedule and the 2024 witness rule were confirmed instead from official PDFs on the same domain. Treat its e-recording vendor list as probable, not confirmed, until a manual check.

4. What EMC does not do (repeated here because it governs every step above)

I notarize the signatures on a document and confirm it meets the formatting and execution requirements a recorder's office will check for. I do not draft documents, determine which document type fits a client's situation, submit filings to a recorder's office as part of a standard notarization, or advise on whether a specific transaction or transfer is legally sufficient. Those are the roles of the client's attorney, title company, or the recorder's own staff.

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5. Authority index

Requirement	Citation	Verified
Clerk as county recorder	Fla. Stat. §28.222	2026-07-13, leg.state.fl.us
Recording fee schedule	Fla. Stat. §28.24	2026-07-13, leg.state.fl.us
Documentary stamp tax, deeds	Fla. Stat. §201.02	2026-07-13, leg.state.fl.us
Documentary stamp tax, notes/mortgages	Fla. Stat. §201.08	Cited via existing packet research, 2026-07-09
Document formatting for recording	Fla. Stat. §695.26	2026-07-13, leg.state.fl.us
Notarial act fee caps	Fla. Stat. §117.05(2) (in-person), §117.275 (RON)	Cited via existing packet research, 2026-07-09
Notarial certificate forms	Fla. Stat. §117.05(13)	Cited via existing packet research, 2026-07-09
RON session recording retention	Fla. Stat. §117.245	Cited via existing packet research, 2026-07-09
Non-attorney disclaimer	Fla. Stat. §117.05(10)	Verbatim, standing requirement
Power of attorney execution	Fla. Stat. §709.2105(2)	Cited via existing packet research, 2026-07-09
Declaration of domicile	Fla. Stat. §222.17	2026-07-09, prior verification, statute text unchanged