Make $100K as a Notary Public

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I’ve always said I would retire from the nine to five, at age 45. My friends always ask, “How are you going to earn a living?” My answer is always, “As a Notary Public”.

For decades, Notaries were thought of as individuals who did nothing more than “stamp & seal” a piece of paper. Today, changes in the real estate climate, increased identification measures and a surmountable effort against fraud, have created vast opportunities, and respect, for notaries, giving them the chance to become six-figure earning solopreneurs. Read on to briefly learn how you can be a pretty darn impressive “stamper & sealer.”

The Role of the Notary

Appointed by the State government, a Notary Public serves as an impartial witness to the signing of important documents. As the first line of defense against fraud, notaries ensure that document signers are indeed who they say they are and are signing without coercion. Deeds and Powers of Attorney are examples of documents that can only be legally binding when notarized. Notaries make money by charging for various notarial acts and some even serve as mobile (traveling) notaries, but these charges are limited to state statutes and are somewhat low. As a result, many Notaries have turned to the profession of a Notary Signing Agent (NSA).

The Opportunities

In the past, home purchasing or selling, taking out a loan, or refinancing debt meant being at the mercy of third parties and bank’s hours in order to execute documents. In the new world of conveniences, borrowers now have the luxury of having documentation brought to them, in the comfort of their home or office, at their convenience. Certified and trained to understand all aspects of real estate loan documents, NSAs serve as independent contractors hired by the closing agent to ensure documents are properly executed, notarized and returned for processing.
Typical assignments range from two to one hundred pages, take between ten and fifty minutes and pay anywhere from $25 to $125 or more. Determining factors include the type and number of documents, the NSA’s experience and signers’ comfort and knowledge levels. The earning potential varies in level of assignments with a typical day involving three to five signings, generating $225 or more. For an in-depth look into the role of, and certification for, the NSA, visit the National Notary Association.

**It Doesn’t Stop There**

While being an NSA has a high earning potential, it’s important to complement your services for increased earnings and clients’ needs: These include:

- **Trusted Enrollment Agent (TEA)** – Known as “The New Identity Managers,” by the National Notary Association, TEAs conduct secure identity proofing sessions. Their job is to prepare digital credentials in order to render them tamper evident for use in electronic records and documents. Assignments range from 15 to 30 minutes and pay between $35 and $100, depending on the number of credentials performed. [www.nationalnotary.org/trustedagent](http://www.nationalnotary.org/trustedagent).

- **Field Inspector** – Known as the “Business Verifiers”, Field Inspectors are Notaries, and non-notaries, who verify the existence of a business. The assignment involves visiting the site, checking for certain things as per instruction, taking pictures, asking the proprietor some questions and then uploading all of the information to the hiring agent’s website. Typical assignments range from 15 to 20 minutes and pay, on average $35 to $50. For more on this Google “field inspector” or visit [www.SOFI-USA.com](http://www.SOFI-USA.com).

Even more opportunities exist if you possess or are willing to attain other skills that can complement the business, such as e-Verify Agent ([www.dhs.gov/everify](http://www.dhs.gov/everify)), Virtual Assistant ([www.ivaa.org](http://www.ivaa.org)), Virtual Bankruptcy Assistant ([www.aavba.org](http://www.aavba.org)) and Mystery Shopper ([www.mysteryshop.org/shopping](http://www.mysteryshop.org/shopping)).

**Starting the Business**

For under $900 you can begin your business.

- $250, for training, licenses, certifications and stamps ([www.nationalnotaryassociation.org](http://www.nationalnotaryassociation.org))

- $50 or less, for 250 business cards and 100 postcards ([www.vistaprint.com](http://www.vistaprint.com))
– $100 for an entire year of website and email services (www.godaddy.com); and
– $50 or less for office supplies (NNA members receive a 15% discount off Office Depot purchases)

Assuming you already have a computer with high speed internet, you’ll also need a LaserJet printer
(average $250 new) and a regular paper fax (average $129 new). Shop around or buy them used
(www.craigslist.com or www.e-bay.com), until you get established.

**Pointers… The Do’s**

- Gain Experience & Be Patient – Like all professionals you’ll become an expert through hands on
  experience, but you’ll have to give it time.
- Be Organized, Neat and Detail-Oriented – Failing to have things in order, submitting sloppy work
  or overlooking detail will only result in unpaid assignments, unhappy clients and never getting
  called back for additional work.
- Market Yourself - Give out your business card like candy. Establish yourself with everyone in
  your neighborhood as well as Loan Signing Agencies; Title Agencies, real estate firms, banks,
  home inspectors, lawyers, and other professionals. Visit gogetnotary.com for marketing ideas
  and leads.
- Do a Good Job – Give one hundred percent to every assignment. You’ll be remembered and
  consistently called back.

**Pointers… The Don’ts**

- Quit Your Job – At least not until you are firmly established. This can take anywhere from 6 to
  12 months.
- Pass on Low Paying Assignments - Sometimes it’s the small jobs that help us establish credibility
  and clients, adding to our experience and income.
- Quit Trying because It’s Slow – Being a Notary doesn’t equate to overnight riches. Like other
  professions, business fluctuates. You’ll find some months are so busy you’re turning down work,
while others may generate less. As with anything, you’ll have to haggle and hustle and be ready
to see out the tough periods.
Establishing yourself through good marketing and a proven consistency are the key factors to notary
success. The more people know you and your credible work, the more they will call. A smart notary who
has built a reputation and established clientele will have steady work, even during the slower seasons. If
you’re willing to hang through the slower periods and work hard to be known, you’ll find that being a
professional notary is not only a rewarding career but allows you the freedom and flexibility to do more
of the things you love.