§ 42-30-3 Appointment of notaries and justices. – The governor shall appoint as many notaries public for the state, and as many justices of the peace for the several towns and cities, as he or she may deem expedient; and every notary public and justice of the peace, so appointed, shall hold office for four (4) years.

§ 42-30-4 Certificate of engagement – Term of engagement. – (a) Except as otherwise provided, each notary public and justice of the peace shall, at the time of receiving his or her commission, file with the secretary of state a certificate that he or she has been duly engaged thereon, signed by the person before whom the engagement shall have been taken, and the secretary of state shall, at the request of the notary public or justice of the peace and upon payment of the actual cost thereof, issue a wallet-size identification card to such person.
(b) The term of engagement for each notary public and justice of the peace shall be for a period of four (4) years.

§ 42-30-5 Application for appointment. – (a) Any qualified elector of this state desiring to be appointed a notary public, or a justice of the peace, shall make written application to the governor over his or her own signature, stating that he or she is a qualified elector who is an actual resident of the state of Rhode Island.
(b) Qualification as an elector of the state at the time of making application is to be certified to by a member of the board of canvassers and registration, in cities having such boards, or by the city or town clerk of the city or town in which the applicant claims a right to vote, and except for members of the bar of this state, the member of the board of canvassers and registration or the city or town clerk shall satisfy himself or herself that the applicant for appointment to the office of notary public or justice of the peace can speak, read, and write the English language and has sufficient knowledge of the powers and duties pertaining to that office.
(c) A member of the Rhode Island bar shall, regardless of residence, be appointed a notary public upon application and presentment of a certified copy of his or her certificate of admission to the bar.
(d) Any such person making written application to be appointed a notary public or justice of the peace shall, at the time of application, pay to the secretary of state the sum of eighty dollars ($80.00).

§ 42-30-7 Powers of notaries and justices. – The officers mentioned in §§ 42-30-3 – 42-30-5, inclusive, shall possess all the powers which now are or hereafter may be conferred by law upon justices of the peace or notaries public.

§ 42-30-8 Powers of notaries. – (a) Notaries public may, within this state, act, transact, do, and finish all matters and things relating to protests and protesting bills of exchange and promissory notes, and all other matters within their office required by law, take depositions as prescribed by law, and acknowledgments of deeds and other instruments.
(b) All notaries public shall maintain a written log or record book of all notarial acts performed for a period of five (5) years after each such notarial act. The log shall include a separate entry for each witness to the signing of a document. Each such entry shall contain the following:

1. The name of the person whose signature is being witnessed, acknowledged, or otherwise for whom a notarial act is being performed;
2. The city or town where such act is being performed;
3. The date when such act is being performed;
4. If applicable, the date and the type, nature or identity of the document which the notary is signing as a notary; and
5. The nature of the specific act which the notary is performing, including, but not limited to, taking an affidavit, taking an acknowledgment of any instrument, and affixing a seal.

§ 42-30-9 Lists of appointees – Certificates of appointment. – It shall be the duty of the secretary of state to make a list of all notaries public and justices of the peace appointed by the governor and duly qualified, and send a copy thereof to each of the clerks of the supreme, superior, and family courts and to the clerks of the district courts for the second, third, fourth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth judicial districts, to be kept in the files of those courts, and the clerks shall, upon application, issue certificates of office to the person entitled thereto, and shall receive a fee of one dollar ($1.00) for every certificate.

§ 42-30-10 Removal of notaries, justices, and commissioners. – Any notary public, justice of the peace or commissioner of deeds, appointed by the governor, may be removed for cause by the governor, in his or her discretion, within the term for which that officer shall have been appointed, after giving to that officer a copy of the charges against him or her and an opportunity to be heard in his or her defense; provided, however, that any notary public, justice of the peace or commissioner of deeds who is convicted of a felony and incarcerated shall have his or her commission revoked. Said notary public, justice of the peace or commissioner of deeds shall not be eligible to apply for a new commission until his or her voting rights are restored pursuant to R.I. Const., Art. II, Sec. 1.

§ 42-30-11 Continuation of powers without reappointment. – Every justice of the peace and notary public appointed by the governor and not reappointed, may continue to officiate for a space of thirty (30) days after the date on which his or her commission expires.

§ 42-30-12 Continuation of powers without new engagement. – Every such officer listed in § 42-30-14 who may be reappointed or continued in office, may continue to officiate while in office without taking a new engagement.

§ 42-30-13. Fees of notaries. – (a) The fees of notaries public shall be as follows not more than twenty-five dollars ($25.00) for performing any of the following:

1. For noting a marine protest
2. For drawing and extending a marine protest and recording it
3. For taking affidavits
4. For taking acknowledgment of any instrument and affixing his seal
5. For the protest of a bill of exchange, order or draft, for non-acceptance or nonpayment, or of a promissory note or check for nonpayment
6. For noting the non-acceptance or nonpayment of a bill of exchange, order or draft, or the nonpayment of a promissory note or check
7. For each notice of the non-acceptance or nonpayment of a bill, order, draft, check, or note, given to a party liable for the payment thereof

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(b) The cost for travel shall be equal to the standard deduction for mileage established by the United States Internal Revenue Service that is in effect at the time the notary public travels.

§ 42-30-14 Public officers having notary powers. – (a) Every state senator, state representative, member of a city or town council, chief, deputy, and assistant clerk of any state court, clerks of the board of canvassers, and worker’s compensation court, and municipal clerk and the board of canvassers registrar during the period for which he or she has been elected or appointed, shall, upon completion of the certificate of engagement as set forth in § 42-30-4, have the power to act as a notary public as provided in this chapter. (b) Two (2) police officers from each state and local police department, as identified in writing by the chief of police, shall, upon completion of the certificate of engagement as set forth in § 42-30-4, have the power to act as a notary public as provided in this chapter. No office holder set forth in this section shall be required to pay the commission fee as provided in § 42-30-5. The office holders must complete the certificate of engagement as set forth in § 42-30-4. .

§ 42-30-15 Fees for authentication of a notary public signature. – A fee of five dollars ($5.00) shall be charged and collected by the secretary of state for the authentication or certification of the signature of a notary public. A fee of no more than one hundred fifty dollars ($150) shall be charged and collected by the secretary of state for the authentication or certification of the signature(s) of a notary public on all relevant documents filed at one time which pertain to the same matter or transaction.

§ 42-30-16 Notary public – Fraud or deceit in office. – A notary public, who in the exercise of the powers, or in the performance of the duties of such office, shall practice any fraud or deceit, the punishment for which is not otherwise provided for by law, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and fined not more than one thousand dollars ($1,000), or imprisoned not more than one year, or both.

§ 42-30-17. Continuing professional developments for notaries public. – As a condition of continued licensure, every person licensed as a notary public shall participate in ongoing professional development. The secretary of state shall set forth the design and method of such development, which shall include at a minimum, the amount of three (3) hours of professional development each year. Such professional development shall include how to record information properly as set forth in this chapter.

§ 36-2-1 Officers with statewide power. – The following persons may administer oaths anywhere within the state: the governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, attorney general, assistant attorneys general, general treasurer, active and retired justices of the supreme, superior, family, and district courts, each member of the general assembly after he or she has filed his or her signature with the secretary of state, commissioners appointed by other states to take acknowledgments of deeds and depositions within this state, and notaries public.

§ 36-2-4 Fees for acknowledgments and engagements. – To all officers empowered to take acknowledgments of deeds and administer oaths of engagement to office, there shall be allowed:
   (1) For taking acknowledgment of one or more parties to any instrument at one time $ .50
   (2) For engaging every officer .25

§ 15-4-5 Acknowledgment of deeds and letters of attorney. – The deed of a married woman conveying her separate interest in any lands, tenements, or hereditaments shall be acknowledged by her in the same manner as if she were single and unmarried. If any deed
affecting her right of life estate created by chapter 25 of title 33 in any estate of her husband
during his life is executed by attorney of the wife, the letter of attorney shall be
acknowledged in the same manner as if she were single and unmarried.

§ 34-12-1 Form of acknowledgment – Foreign acknowledgments. – Acknowledgment
of any instrument hereafter made need not be in any set form, but shall be made by all the
parties executing the instrument and the certificate thereof shall express the ideas that the
parties were each and all known to the magistrate taking the acknowledgment, and known by
the magistrate to be the parties executing the instrument, and that they acknowledge the
instrument to be their free act and deed; provided, however, that in case of any such
instrument executed without this state, and within the limits of the United States or of any
dependency thereof, if the instrument is acknowledged or proved in the manner prescribed by
the law of the state, District of Columbia, territory or such dependency, where executed, it
shall be deemed to be legally executed, and acknowledged and shall have the same effect as
if executed and acknowledged in the mode above prescribed, including an acknowledgment
by less than all parties if made in a jurisdiction the laws of which permit acknowledgments in
that manner; provided, however, that instruments requiring acknowledgments by parties
having opposing interests must be acknowledged by at least one party of each interest.

§ 34-12-2 Officers authorized to take acknowledgments. – Acknowledgment of any
instrument required by any statute of this state to be acknowledged shall be made:
(1) Within this state, before any state senator, any state representative, judge, justice of
the peace, clerk or assistant clerk of the superior court, mayor, notary public, town clerk or
recorder of deeds.
(2) Without this state and within the limits of United States or any dependency thereof,
before any judge or justice of a court of record or other court, justice of the peace, mayor or
notary public, of the state, District of Columbia, territory or such dependency, in which such
acknowledgment is made, or before any commissioner appointed by the governor of this
state, or before any officer authorized by law to take acknowledgments of deeds in the place
in which the acknowledgment is made.
(3) Without the limits of the United States, before any of the following officers acting within
his territorial jurisdiction or within that of the court of which he or she is an officer:
   (i) An ambassador, envoy, minister, charg/Ae d'affaires, secretary of legation,
   consul-general, consul, vice-consul, consular agent, vice-consular agent, or any other
   diplomatic or consular agent or representative of the United States, appointed or
   accredited to, and residing within the country where the acknowledgment or proof is
taken.
   (ii) A judge or other presiding officer of any court having a seal or the clerk or other
certifying officer thereof.
   (iii) A mayor or other chief civil officer of any city or other political subdivision.
   (iv) A notary public.
   (v) A person residing in, or going to, the country where the acknowledgment or proof
is to be taken, and specially authorized for that purpose by a commission issued to him
or her under the seal of the superior court.
   (vi) Any person authorized, by the laws of the country where the acknowledgment or
proof is made, to take acknowledgments of conveyances of real estate or to administer
oaths in proof of the execution thereof.

§ 34-12-3 Acknowledgments in good faith before person claiming to be authorized
– Penalty for misrepresentation. – Any acknowledgment made in good faith before a
person claiming to be one of the foregoing officials authorized to take acknowledgments
within the respective jurisdictions as above, shall be valid, although the official before whom
the acknowledgment is made was not duly qualified in that office; but every person who
shall, within this state, willfully take and certify to the taking of any such acknowledgment, without being lawfully qualified thereunto, shall be liable in a criminal proceeding to a fine not exceeding fifty dollars ($50.00), one-half (1/2) to the use of the complainant and the other half thereto to the use of this state.

§ 34-12-4 Instruments executed by diplomatic officials outside United States. – Every instrument requiring acknowledgment, executed without the limits of the United States, concerning lands lying within this state, in which instrument any ambassador, minister, charge d'affaires, consul general, vice-consul general, consul, vice-consul, consular agent, commercial agent, of the United States, or commissioner appointed by the governor of this state, shall be grantor, may be executed in the presence of two (2) witnesses; and when so executed, an official certificate under the hand and official seal of the grantor that such instrument is his act and deed shall be equivalent to an acknowledgment of such instrument in the manner required by law.

§ 34-12-5 Power of armed forces officers to take acknowledgments. – In addition to the acknowledgment of instruments and the performance of other notarial acts in the manner and form and as otherwise authorized by law, instruments may be acknowledged, documents attested, oaths and affirmations administered, depositions and affidavits executed, and other notarial acts performed, before or by any commissioned officer in active service of the armed forces of the United States with the rank of second lieutenant or higher in the army, air force, or marine corps, or with the rank of ensign or higher in the navy or coast guard, or with equivalent rank in any other component part of the armed forces of the United States, by any person without the limits of the United States, and to any person who is a member of the armed forces who is within or without the limits of the United States and their lawful dependents.

§ 34-12-6 Effect of acknowledgment before armed forces officer. – An acknowledgment of instruments, attestation of documents, administration of oaths and affirmations, execution of depositions and affidavits, and performance of other notarial acts, made or taken before an armed forces officer, are hereby declared legal, valid, and binding, and instruments and documents so acknowledged, authenticated, or sworn to shall be admissible in evidence and eligible to be recorded in this state under the same circumstances and with the same force and effect as if the acknowledgment, attestation, oath, affirmation, deposition, affidavit, or other notarial act had been made or taken within this state before or by a duly qualified officer or official as otherwise provided by law.

§ 34-12-7 Contents of certificate of armed forces officer. – In the taking of acknowledgments and the performing of other notarial acts requiring certification, a certificate endorsed upon or attached to the instrument or documents, which shows the date of the notarial act and which states, in substance that the person appearing before the officer acknowledged the instrument as his or her act or made or signed the instrument or document under oath, shall be sufficient for all intents and purposes. The instrument or document shall not be rendered invalid by the failure to state the place of execution or acknowledgment.

§ 34-12-8 Proof of authority of armed forces officer. – If the signature, rank, and branch of service or subdivision thereof, of any such commissioned officer appear upon such instrument or document or certificate, no further proof of authority of the officer so to act shall be required and the action by the commissioned officer shall be prima facie evidence that the person making the oath or acknowledgment is within the purview of §§ 34-12-5 – 34-12-7.
§ 34-12-9 Validation of prior acknowledgments before foreign notary public. – Any acknowledgment taken or made prior to April 27, 1928, of or upon any instrument used in conveying, directly or indirectly, any interest in real estate in this state, including power of attorney, and any other instruments heretofore acknowledged prior to April 27, 1928, before any notary public in any foreign country or territory without the United States, which instrument appears of record to have been duly recorded in any of the records of land evidence in this state, and the acknowledgment therein appearing was taken before a notary public outside the United States, which notary public was duly commissioned in the foreign place where the acknowledgment was taken, to take the acknowledgment, and the acknowledgment is accredited, approved or affirmed, or the commission of the foreign notary public is attested or certified by any ambassador, minister, charge d’affaires, consul general, vice-consul general, consul, vice consul, or consular agent of the United States, or any commissioned officer in active service of the armed forces of the United States with the rank of second lieutenant or higher in the army, air force, or marine corps, or with the rank of ensign or higher in the navy or coast guard, or with equivalent rank in any other component of the armed forces of the United States, duly establishing the fact that the notary public was at the time of taking the acknowledgment duly authorized by the law, rules, or regulations of his or her particular country or territorial section thereof, in which the acknowledgment was taken, to duly administer oaths or take acknowledgments, then the acknowledgment and conveyance in connection with which the acknowledgment was taken shall, for the purpose of the acknowledgment and execution thereof, be deemed a valid acknowledgment, and shall have the same effect as if acknowledged before a notary public in this state.

§ 9-17-3 Subpoenas issued by other officials. – Auditors, referees, masters in chancery, and commissioners may issue subpoenas to witnesses in all cases and matters pending before them, respectively; and justices of the peace and notaries public may issue subpoenas to witnesses in any case, civil or criminal, before any court, and in any matter before any body or person authorized by law to summon witnesses.

§ 9-18-1 Officials authorized to take depositions. – Any justice of the supreme or superior or family court, justice of the peace, or notary public may take the deposition of any witness to be used in the trial of any civil suit, action, petition, or proceeding in which he or she is not interested, nor counsel, nor the attorney of either party, and which shall then be commenced or pending in this state, or in any other state, or in the District of Columbia, or in any territory, government, or country.