



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS  
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
The Notaries Public Division**

**NOTARY**  
**The Bulletin**  
2026-3

**"The Final Stamp: What Happens When a Notary Passes"**

The death of a notary public is not only a personal loss but also triggers certain legal obligations related to the handling of the notary's official records and materials. Understanding and following these requirements helps ensure compliance with the law, protects the integrity of the notarial process, and preserves the validity of the notary's official acts.

Upon the death of a notary public, responsibility for the notary's journal, seal, and other official records generally falls to the personal representative of the estate, an executor, or the notary's next of kin. These individuals are responsible for safeguarding the notarial records and ensuring they are properly transferred or disposed of in accordance with applicable law. To facilitate this process, notaries are encouraged to leave written instructions identifying the location of their records and outlining the steps to be taken upon their death.

**Required Actions Following the Death of a Notary Public**

**1. Notify the Office of the Lieutenant Governor**

The personal representative or next of kin should promptly notify the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Notaries Public Division, of the notary's death and provide the date of death so that the notary commission records may be updated accordingly.

**2. Transfer the Notary Journal**

The notary's official journal, which serves as the permanent record of all notarial acts performed during the commission term, must be delivered to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor within the timeframe prescribed by United States Virgin Islands law, generally within thirty (30) days of the notary's death.



**THE UNITED STATES VIRGIN ISLANDS  
OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR  
The Notaries Public Division**

**3. Dispose of the Notarial Seal**

The notary's embossing seal, blue ink stamp, or other official notarial seal should be destroyed, permanently defaced, or surrendered to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor to prevent unauthorized use.

**4. Validity of Prior Notarial Acts**

The death of a notary public does not affect the validity of notarizations performed before the date of death. Any document properly notarized while the notary was commissioned remains legally effective and enforceable.

**5. Access to Official Records**

If questions arise regarding a prior notarization, the notary journal serves as the official record of the transaction. Once transferred to the Office of the Lieutenant Governor, the journal may be maintained in accordance with applicable record-retention requirements and made available as permitted by law.

By understanding and fulfilling these responsibilities, family members, personal representatives, and estate administrators can help ensure a smooth transition, protect the public interest, and preserve confidence in the notarial system. Proper handling of a deceased notary's records and materials helps prevent misuse and ensures that official documents remain secure and accessible when needed.

For additional guidance or assistance regarding notary matters, please contact the Notaries Public Division of the Office of the Lieutenant Governor at (340) 774-2991, extension 4120.

###