Occupational Board Reform Act Survey – Notary Public

Question:

Provide a comparison of whether and how other states regulate the occupation.

Response:

To our knowledge, all states commission or regulate notaries public. The requirements for becoming a notary vary from state to state, but generally consist of the following: (1) meeting age requirements (commonly being over 18), (2) being a resident of the state, (3) submitting an application and a filing fee, (4) obtaining training or taking an exam, and (5) maintaining a surety bond.

Some states require applicants to submit to a background check or otherwise have no criminal record or no criminal record within a certain time period prior to applying for the notary commission. Additional requirements may include maintaining a journal of notarial acts. Notary terms are typically 4 years in length but can range from 4 years to 10 years. Typically, there is a separate process if the state allows notaries to perform remote or online notarizations.

The National Notary Association has compiled state law summaries for every state that can be found online at State Notary Laws | NNA (nationalnotary.org). Similarly, the American Society of Notaries also has notary requirements by state on their website: https://www.asnnotary.org/?form=stateinfo.