

Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

Effective Date: 2/6/03

Series: Administrative Services

Part 310: General

Chapter 10: Certification of Documents

Originating Office: National Business Center

310 DM 10

10.1 Purpose. This chapter provides procedures for certifying and/or affixing an official seal (310 DM 4) to attest to the source or authenticity of official documents of the Department.

10.2 Program Responsibilities.

A. The National Business Center (NBC), is responsible for establishing and disseminating Departmental policy regarding certification of official documents of the Department and certifying documents maintained in the Secretary's Central Files.

B. Bureaus and offices maintaining an official seal are responsible for certifying documents in their custody and for adopting procedures consistent with this chapter.

C. Secretarial Offices that have been designated as the AOffice of Record@ and bureaus not maintaining an official seal are responsible for certifying documents in their custody. These offices are authorized to use the Departmental Seal, which is located in the office of the NBC Records Manager.

D. Each office and bureau without an official seal will designate an authorizing individual on its staff in Washington, DC, who will have responsibility for affixing the Departmental Seal for certification or authentication purposes for records under its purview.

10.3 Certification of Documents. Documents which require certification will be accompanied by Form DI-480 (Illustration 1), and assembled as follows:

A. Documents will be attached to Form DI-480 with one metal eyelet spaced about one-half inch from the top and left-hand margins.

B. A one-quarter inch ribbon will be laced through the metal eyelet from the back so as to form a loop. The free ends of the ribbon will then be affixed in the lower left-hand corner of the form under a two-inch notarial seal.

C. The description of the documents must be brief and concise. If all the descriptive space on the form is not needed, the unused area must be lined through.

10.4 Certification of Document Unavailability. When a record of entry cannot be found in the official records of the Department, the format prescribed in Illustration 2 will be used. There is no need to affix a ribbon to a certification that records cannot be found, since there are no documents attached. However, a two-inch notarial seal will be affixed in the lower left-hand corner of the certification statement.

10.5 Charges. Charges for documents will be made in accordance with the Department's uniform fee schedule contained in Appendix A to 43 CFR 2, which also states a fee of 25 cents will be charged for certification of documents.

10.6 Disposition of Charge Fees. Money received from the collection of fees will be deposited in the Treasury to the credit of the current appropriation which incurred the cost.

2/6/03 #3562

Replaces 11/13/89 #2876