

How do I Sign Documents When I am Physically Unable?

❖ Read this only if you live in the state of Washington.

Should I use this?

Yes, if both of these are true:

- You want to sign a document such as a power of attorney, Will, or deed.
- You are physically unable to write your name.

If you understand the document, and the consequences of signing it, you may have alternatives to a physical signature.

Could a notary public help me?

Yes. A notary can sign for you if all these are true:

1. You have a disability that keeps you from being able to sign the document.
2. The notary has proof that you cannot sign your name or make your mark and you otherwise understand the document and the consequences of signing it.
3. The notary's statement states that the notary obtained your signature under [RCW 64.08.100](#).
4. You tell the notary to sign your name for you.

I Have Power of Attorney. Could they sign for me?

Maybe. Your Power of Attorney form gives your agent the power to make certain decisions on your behalf, including health care decisions and financial decisions. You will need to review your Power of Attorney form to see if it gives your agent the power to sign for you on the form you would like to sign.

What if I want to sign my Will?

State law at [RCW 11.12.030](#) tells you exactly how to sign a Will when you are physically unable.

Example 1: You understand the Will and the consequence of signing a Will (for example, your possessions will go to certain people or organizations when you die). A stroke has paralyzed you. You tell your friend, Sue Smith, to sign your name on your Will. Sue signs your name, then her own name, and states that she signed your name at your request. The Will would look like this: "Your Name, signed by Sue Smith at Your Name's request."

Example 2: you could make a mark, such as an "X," on the signature line. That is the same as a signature.

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- ❖ You must still have two people witness you signing a Will when you are signing it with a mark or are having someone sign for you.
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I can still sign my name, but it is hard to read. What should I do?

If you can still sign with a mark that you consider your signature, you do not need a notary. Legally, the mark is enough. It does not matter how it looks.

If it is hard to read, have the mark notarized or witnessed. Then no one can argue later that you did not sign the document.

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- ❖ If your signature is now different from the last time you signed an official document (such as an election ballot, driver license, and so on), you will need to contact the agency in charge of the document to explain the change.
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