



Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Office of the Court Administrator
Manila

OCA CIRCULAR NO. 213-2023

TO: ALL JUDGES AND CLERKS OF COURT

SUBJECT: CLARIFICATION ON THE ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY FOR A NOTARIAL ACT AND SUBMISSION OF ELECTRONIC SPECIMEN SIGNATURES FOR VERIFICATION OF COURT DOCUMENTS

After meeting with the Department of Foreign Affairs-Office of Consular Affairs (DFA-OCA), it has come to the attention of this Office the supposed practices of Executive Judges issuing a single Certificate of Authority for a Notarial Act (CANA) referring to multiple documents, and the proliferation of spurious court documents submitted to and received by the DFA-OCA.

Section 1 Rule IX of A.M. No. 02-8-13-SC, otherwise known as the "2004 Rules on Notarial Practice", which became effective on August 1, 2004, provides that a CANA evidencing the authenticity of the official seal and signature of a notary public shall be, upon request, issued by the Executive Judge (or single-sala Regional Trial Court [RTC] Judge).

The Philippines officially became a party to the Apostille Convention on May 14, 2019, wherein the DFA-OCA became the Philippine Competent Authority under the said Convention. Under the DFA-OCA regulations in issuing an Apostille for notarized documents, the same must be certified through a CANA to be issued by the concerned Executive Judge (or single-sala RTC Judge) having jurisdiction over the notarial commission of the notary public.

Thus, acting on the letter-request dated 30 March 2023 of Assistant Secretary Henry S. Bensurto, Jr. of the DFA-OCA, and to streamline the verification procedure of notarized documents submitted to the DFA-OCA, all EXECUTIVE JUDGES/SINGLE-SALA RTC JUDGES and CLERKS OF COURT of the RTCs are hereby **DIRECTED** to comply with the following:

I. Standardized format of the Certificate of Authority for a Notarial Act (CANA).

The following standardized format shall indicate the notarial details (i.e., the *Document No.*, *Page No.*, *Book No.*, and *Series of [year]*) in the CANA and must be substantially complied with in the following form:

**CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORITY FOR A NOTARIAL
ACT**

I, (name, title, jurisdiction of the Executive Judge), certify that (name of notary public), with Appointment No. _____, is a duly Commissioned Notary Public in and for the (City/Municipality/Province) of the Republic of the Philippines for the period (month, year) ending (month, year) and the (name/type of document) consisting of (no. of page/s), was duly entered in his/her Notarial Registry Book as Document No. __; Page No. __; Book No. __; Series of ____, and purportedly sworn to and acknowledged before him as Notary Public.

This Certification is issued upon the request of (name of requestor), this (date) day of (month) (year) at (place).

(Official Signature)

(seal of Executive Judge)

II. Issuance of a single CANA per notarized document

To ensure that every CANA is issued to only one (1) document per DFA-OCA's regulations, all Executive Judges/single-sala RTC Judges must strictly observe the issuance of one (1) CANA per document. A single CANA referring to multiple notarized documents shall not be allowed.

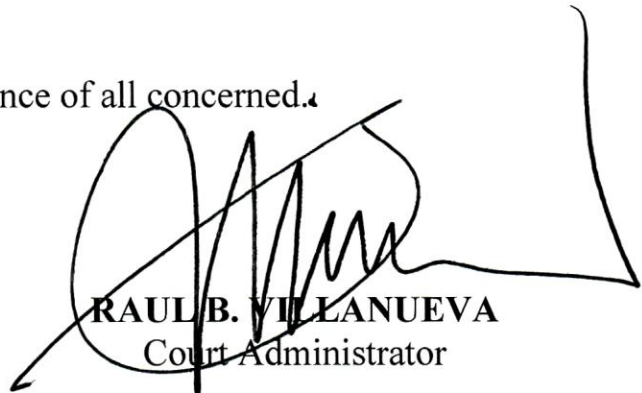
MOREOVER, to avoid the proliferation of spurious court documents received by the DFA-OCA, all JUDGES and CLERKS OF COURT are likewise **DIRECTED** to submit their electronic specimen signatures through the Office of Administrative Services – Office of the Court Administrator at ocaoas.sc@judiciary.gov.ph.

All electronic specimen signatures submitted by the said authorized court officials shall be treated with utmost confidentiality and shall be solely used by the DFA-OCA for verification purposes.

In case there is/are newly appointed authorized personnel, the Office of the Clerk of Court, in case of a multiple sala, station, or the Clerk of Court of a single-sala court, shall **SUBMIT** an updated electronic specimen signature of the said newly appointed authorized personnel within ten (10) working days from his/her assumption to duty.

For strict compliance and guidance of all concerned.

08 June 2023



RAUL B. VILLANUEVA
Court Administrator

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atp/csc/rda