STEP 2 · DO IT

Sign a US power of attorney without traveling: RON step by step.

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Someone in the United States has to sign on your behalf — a real estate closing, a bank matter, a document for your LLC — and you are thousands of miles away. This is the complete remote online notarization circuit: what the power of attorney has to say before the session, what you will be asked for to prove your identity, how the video call actually runs, and when an apostille is required versus when it is money thrown away.

First things first: who decides whether your POA works

Not the notary. A US Notary Public certifies **that the signature is yours and that you signed willingly**. The notary does not certify that the document is well drafted, that it is broad enough for the act you want performed, or that the recipient will accept it. That last decision always belongs to whoever receives the paper — the title company, the bank, the registry, the law firm or the counterparty.

So the correct order is not “I sign a POA and then see what happens.” It is the reverse: you ask what they need, then the document is drafted, and only then does the session get scheduled. Inverting that order is the cause of the vast majority of powers of attorney that have to be redone.

> ### The two-line email that saves you from redoing everything
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> Write to whoever will receive the power of attorney **before** you sign anything: “I will be granting a power of attorney from abroad, signed before a Florida notary over video. Do you accept remote online notarization? Do you need a wet-ink original? Do you have your own form I should use?” Those three answers define everything else about the process — and they cost nothing.

What RON is, and why it carries the same weight as signing in person

RON stands for *Remote Online Notarization*. Florida authorized it by statute effective **January 1, 2020**: a notary commissioned in Florida can take your signature over a video session whether you are in Buenos Aires, Madrid or Mexico City, with the same legal validity as if you were sitting across the desk.

What comes out of that session is not merely “a signed PDF.” It is a file carrying **the signer's electronic signature, an electronic notarial seal and a verifiable digital certificate**, plus an audit trail and the recording of the session, which the notary retains. In practice it is a harder document to forge than a paper one, and that is precisely why US banks, title companies and law firms accept it without argument.

Two limits worth understanding from the start. First: remote notarization certifies signatures on **private documents**. If what the destination requires is a public deed executed before a civil-law notary or before your country's consulate, that is a different route and no US notary replaces it. Second: some registries and agencies — especially outside the United States — still ask for the **wet-ink original on paper**. That does not invalidate the remote signature, but it changes the logistics and the timeline, so you need to know it beforehand, not afterward.

Before the video call: the document

The session takes twenty minutes. What actually takes time is having the right power of attorney on the table.

Who drafts it

If the power of attorney covers an act with financial consequences — selling, buying, mortgaging, litigating, moving accounts — drafting is a job for an attorney licensed in the state where it will be used. If it is a narrow power and the recipient has its own form, use theirs: it is the one their compliance department already approved.

It has to say exactly what it is for

A generic “represent me in any matter” power of attorney is usually **rejected** by banks and title companies, not accepted. The ones that go through without friction are the specific ones: the act, the identified property or account, the agent named in full with an identification number, and the term. The more concrete it is, the faster it gets approved.

The language

If the power of attorney will be used in the United States, it has to be in English — or in a bilingual two-column format, which is what we use most often when the signer wants to understand what they are signing. A power of attorney drafted only in Spanish by a lawyer in your country, however good it is, will draw an objection from the US recipient.

The cases that also require witnesses

Some documents are not resolved with a signature and a seal alone. In Florida, for example, a *durable power of attorney* requires the signer to sign before **two witnesses** in addition to the notarial certificate, and real estate closing documents often carry their own requirements. Witnesses can also join the remote session, but they have to be coordinated: it is the difference between scheduling for one person and scheduling for three.

What you need the POA for	What the recipient usually requires
Closing a real estate purchase or sale	A specific POA drafted or reviewed by the closing attorney, with witnesses and, very often, a wet-ink original
Operating your LLC's bank account	The bank's own form. Almost no bank accepts a third-party power of attorney over accounts
Signing corporate documents for your LLC	A POA or a members' resolution; the requirement is set by the operating agreement, not by the state
Representation before the IRS	Form 2848 or Form 8821. Neither requires notarization: do not pay to have them notarized
A filing with a registry outside the US	Entirely up to that registry. Confirm it in writing before signing

Requirements for the signer

A valid, government-issued photo ID

A passport is the safest option for anyone who does not live in the United States: it is the document the platforms read best and the one that draws the fewest objections. A national ID card usually works, but verify it when you schedule. Expired does not work, not even by a day.

Identity verification, which is stricter than you expect

Showing your ID to the camera is not enough. The platform runs **forensic analysis** on the document — security features, microprinting, data consistency — and adds an identity proofing step on top. When the signer has no US record history, that second step cannot always be built the usual way, and the rules provide alternative paths. Which one applies in your case is settled **before** scheduling, not in the middle of the session.

The name has to match, letter for letter

If the power of attorney says “Maria Fernandez” and your passport says “María José Fernández López,” fix it in the document before the session. Once it is notarized, correcting the name means signing all over again.

The technical side, which fails more often than people think

A stable connection, a working camera and microphone, and a computer rather than a phone. Also: the signer has to be **alone in front of the screen** and visible throughout the session. If there are witnesses, each one connects from their own device and is identified separately.

> ## What to have on hand the day of the session

> Your physical ID document (not a photo of it) · the power of attorney in its final version, already reviewed by whoever will receive it · complete details for the agent — name exactly as it appears on their ID, address and identification number — and, if the document requires them, the witnesses connected with their own IDs ready.

The session, minute by minute

1 · Identity verification (5 to 10 minutes)

You upload and validate your ID, the forensic analysis runs, and the identity proofing step is completed. This is the longest stage and the only one that can fail: if something does not validate, it gets resolved there and retried — the session does not simply move on “anyway.”

2 · Document review on screen (5 minutes)

The notary confirms your identity, that you understand what you are signing, and that you are doing it of your own free will, without pressure from anyone. The notary verifies the document is complete with no blanks. A power of attorney with gaps to be filled in later does not get notarized.

3 · Signature and seal (5 minutes)

You sign electronically on the document, the witnesses sign if there are any, and the notary applies an electronic signature and seal backed by a digital certificate. Everything is recorded and entered in the notary's journal.

4 · Delivery

You receive the notarized PDF by email, almost always the same day. For most uses inside the United States, that file **is already the final document**: there is no paper to wait for.

Do you need an apostille? Usually not

This is where money gets wasted regularly, so the rule is worth stating plainly: **an apostille exists so that a US document is recognized in another country**. If your power of attorney will be used exclusively inside the United States — the closing is in Florida, the bank is American, the LLC is in Wyoming — the notarization is enough and the apostille adds absolutely nothing.

The apostille comes into play in the opposite case: when that same document, or a sibling of it, has to be presented to an authority **outside** the United States. A power of attorney that also has to be recorded in a registry back home, a sworn statement going to a foreign court, a corporate document filed with an agency abroad. Because the notary is commissioned in Florida, the apostille is issued by the **Florida Department of State**.

If that is your case, two decisions get made before the session and not after: whether the destination accepts the document and the apostille in electronic form or demands paper, and whether a translation is needed. On translation, the order is always the same: **apostille first, translate second**, because most agencies in

Spanish-speaking countries require the translation to cover the text of the apostille as well, and to be produced by a translator licensed in the destination country.

Realistic timelines

Stage	Time	What it depends on
Drafting or reviewing the POA	Variable	The attorney or the recipient. The most unpredictable stage, and the one almost nobody budgets for
Scheduling the session	24 to 48 hours	Your calendar, the witnesses' and the time zones
The session and PDF delivery	Same day	Whether identity verification passes on the first try
Florida apostille, if required	3 to 7 business days	The state's workload. There is a priority window at extra cost
International shipping of the paper original	2 to 5 days	The destination country and the courier

Translated into planning: a power of attorney for use inside the United States can be done in **48 hours** from the moment the text is final. One that also needs an apostille and travels on paper is planned in **two to three weeks**. If there is a closing date or a court deadline, count backward from that date.

The four mistakes that get a power of attorney rejected

1 · Signing it before asking what they need

This is the expensive one. A power of attorney that is correct in the abstract but fails the recipient's requirement — a missing witness, not in English, the property not identified — has to be executed again. The session gets paid for either way.

2 · Asking for a broad one “just in case”

A sweeping power of attorney creates suspicion and tends to stall on a compliance desk. The specific one goes through. If two different acts are needed, one power of attorney per act is generally better than a single enormous one meant to cover everything.

3 · Notarizing in one state and requesting the apostille in another

The apostille is issued by the state where the notary is commissioned. If you signed before a Florida notary, the apostille is Florida's: no other state has authority over that signature.

4 · Translating before apostilling

A translation done in advance almost always has to be redone, because it does not cover the text of the apostille and frequently is not signed by a translator authorized in the destination country. It is the same expense twice.

Two things that need no notarization — and that someone may try to charge you for

Form 2848 (authorizing someone to represent you before the IRS) and **Form 8821** are not notarized: they are signed and filed. The same goes for the **W-8BEN** and **W-8BEN-E** that platforms ask you for: sign and send. If someone offers to notarize them, you are not buying a requirement.

What is worth delegating

If you already have the final document reviewed by whoever will receive it and the matter is a single signature with no witnesses, it is a simple service and you can hire it on its own. The cost depends on the number of signers, whether there are witnesses, and whether an apostille follows: it gets quoted against your actual document, in two minutes, before you pay anything.

The full circuit is genuinely worth delegating in three situations. When the power of attorney has to **leave the country**, because that chains together the notarization, the Department of State apostille and international shipping, and every stage has its own way of failing: that service starts at **USD 250 per document**, with shipping of the original quoted separately by destination. When there is a **closing date** and a rejection costs the transaction. And when there are **several documents or several signers**, where what keeps the matter on track is the schedule more than the signature.

Your next step

Do it. Get a quote for your power of attorney in two minutes — document type, whether witnesses are required, destination country and urgency: **emprendenus.com/en/apostille/**

I notarize over video as a Florida Notary Public — commission #HH 652310 — handle the apostille before the Department of State when the document leaves the country, and coordinate shipping. The circuit with apostille starts at **USD 250** per document, with shipping quoted separately.

Not sure which power of attorney you need? Before anything gets drafted, a 15-minute consultation is **USD 29** and is credited toward any service you hire afterwards: **onell.us/en**

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