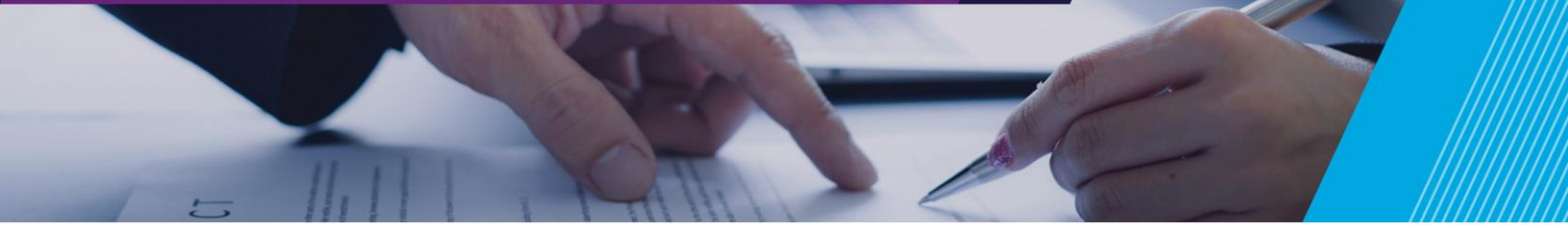


# Making a Certified Copy

*Explaining the Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018*



This information sheet explains how to make a certified copy of an original document in Victoria in accordance with the *Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018*.

## **Please note:**

- A person who seeks certification of a copy of an original document may, but is not required to, use the process set out in the *Oaths and Affirmations Act 2018* (unless specifically required to do so by or under another Act).
- Certain organisations may require the use of particular certification procedures for their own purposes. If a person proposes to submit a certified copy of an original document to a particular organisation then they should contact that organisation for advice about the certification process that should be used.

## **What must a person who wants a certified copy do?**

A person who wants a certified copy of an original document must bring the original document and a true copy of it to a person who is authorised to certify copy documents.

## **Who can certify copies of original documents?**

Anyone authorised to take affidavits or witness statutory declarations can certify a copy of an original document. For a complete list of those who are authorised to certify a copy of an original document, refer to the attached list titled "Authorised Statutory Declaration Witnesses".

## **What counts as an original document?**

An original document is any document that an authorised certifier, using their best judgement, determines to be original. Usually the original document will be a hard copy such as a driver's licence.

However, if someone needs an electronic document certified, such as a phone bill from a paperless account, the authorised certifier will have to use their best judgement to determine whether the printed document is the same as the electronic original or whether it has been altered.

## **Does the copy need to be identical to the original document?**

Yes, the content of the copy needs to be identical to the content of the original document. The copy does not need to be the same size or colour as the original.

### How must an authorised certifier certify that a document is a true copy of an original document?

Once the certifier is satisfied that the document that has been presented to them is an original document, they must inspect the copy document to make sure it is identical to the original document.

To certify the copy document the certifier must:

- write or stamp the following prescribed words on the copy: 'Certified to be a true copy of the original seen by me';
- sign and date the copy document; and
- write or stamp the copy document with their name, the qualification that authorises them to certify, and their address (whether personal or professional, although professional is recommended where possible).

### What does an authorised certifier need to do if the copy being certified has multiple pages?

The first page of the copy can be certified using the process above. Then, each additional page of the copy document must be certified by:

- signing or initialling each page of the copy; and
- numbering each page of the copy (for example, page 4 of 26).

### Can an authorised certifier certify a copy of a certified copy?

Yes, if the certifier is satisfied that the certified copy is authentic, that certified document can be used as the original document. The copy document is then certified in accordance with the above processes. The prescribed words to be written on the copy are: 'Certified to be a true copy of another certified true copy seen by me.'

### Can an authorised certifier certify a copy of a document written in a language they cannot understand?

The certifier can certify a copy of an original document in any language if the certifier is satisfied that the original document and the copy document are identical.

### What if the certified copier makes a mistake when certifying the copy?

If the mistake is minor, unintended and does not materially affect the nature of what is being certified then the certified copy document will be valid despite the mistake.