



State of Wisconsin
Department of Financial Institutions

Scott Walker, **Governor**

Ray Allen, **Secretary**

January 4, 2016
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin DFI to begin issuing apostilles, authentications

MADISON – The Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) will begin issuing apostilles and authentications – certificates needed to verify a document for use in a foreign country – effective today. That service currently is available through the Wisconsin Secretary of State’s office.

“Wisconsin citizens now will have another option if they are in need of an apostille or authentication,” DFI Secretary Ray Allen said. “Governor Walker and his administration are committed to making government services more efficient and effective for taxpayers, and this change is another example of that ongoing effort.”

Businesses and individuals at times need to authenticate the origin of a public document issued in Wisconsin for use in a foreign country. Some examples of such public documents are birth certificates, adoption papers, marriage licenses, corporate documents, school transcripts and trademarks. There are two ways to accomplish this:

- By obtaining an apostille, an authentication certificate that is recognized and required by countries that are parties to a treaty called the *Hague Convention of 5 October 1961*. It is commonly called the Hague Convention.
- By obtaining an authentication certificate, which is similar to an apostille but is used in countries that are not parties to the Hague Convention.

DFI has filed the necessary paperwork with The Hague to be recognized as a Competent Authority to issue apostilles and authentications in the State of Wisconsin.

Secretary Allen said that having this authority makes sense for DFI because the agency already has an established business relationship with hundreds of thousands of stakeholders, many of whom could have a need for apostilles or authentications. For example, DFI is the filing office for more than 400,000 business entities, 130,000 securities professionals, 82,000 notarys public, and the holders of nearly 25,000 trademarks and tradenames.

“Giving these stakeholders the option of obtaining an apostille or authentication from a state agency with whom they already do business is efficient, effective government,” Allen said. The addition of

DFI as a Competent Authority also should help reduce a backlog that currently exists at the Secretary of State's office.

“The Secretary of State himself has stated that his office cannot keep up with the demand for apostilles and authentications,” Allen noted. “By adding DFI as a Competent Authority, we can help reduce the backlog and make government more efficient for Wisconsin citizens.”

More information about apostilles and authentications is available on the DFI website, www.wdfi.org, or by calling 1-608-266-8915. Additional information is available on the Hague Convention website, http://www.hcch.net/index_en.php?act=text.display&tid=37.

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