

New regs for shady notaries

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Body

ALBANY - State officials want to crack down on **notaries** who bilk immigrants by portraying themselves as legal experts.

New regulations announced Wednesday would prohibit **notaries** public from falsely claiming to be lawyers or immigration specialists in foreign language advertisements.

They would also need to include the disclaimer: "I am not an attorney licensed to practice law and may not give legal advice about immigration or any other legal matter or accept fees for legal advice."

In some languages, the term "**notary** public" implies that a person is an attorney, and scammers have often charged immigrants excessive fees to prepare documents and legal papers, which they are not authorized to do, state officials said.

The **new** regulations, which become effective in three months, include \$1,000 fines and license suspensions for violators.

"**New** York State can finally look forward to the day when the notario fraud reference is no longer part of its lexicon," said **New** York Secretary of State Cesar Perales.

Graphic

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