

## DOCUMENT STANDARDIZATION GUIDE

**Format...** The first page of the document must have a three-inch margin at the top and a one-inch margin on the sides and bottom. The first page must also include the following key information:

- X Return address on left side (may be within the three-inch top margin)
- X Document title or title
- X Reference numbers of documents assigned or released (if applicable)
- X Names of the Grantors and Grantees with reference to pages where additional names can be found
- X Entire or abbreviated legal description
- X Assessor's property tax parcel number

All documents will not have all pieces of the above information. Please read the descriptions of each item found later in this guide to see if it applies to the document you are preparing.

Although the requirement is that the information appear on the first page, we appreciate all of the businesses who, when reformatting their documents move it up and have it immediately following the three-inch top margin. It is our preference for the information to be included in the same order as listed above.

Each additional page of same document must have one-inch margins on all sides.

Documents, which do not comply, will be returned for reformatting or complete the EMERGENCY NON-STANDARD DOCUMENT coversheet with an additional \$50.00 charge. Some portion of the document may be obscured by the labels or the scanning process.

**Coversheet...** A coversheet is only required if the first page of the document does not include the required information listed above and a three-inch top margin. When a coversheet is used to fulfill the three-inch top margin and indexing information requirements, all other requirements must still be met or the document will be returned for compliance. Also, when a coversheet is used, one dollar will be added to the recording fee for the additional page on the document.

It is our preference that documents be re-formatted to meet the requirements and therefore eliminating the need for an extra page. Coversheets will be provided in the Auditor's Office. Although the coversheet must be completed by the customer our staff will assist customers in identifying indexing type information (for exempt, explaining to a customer which name is the grantor and/or grantee). It is not acceptable to put "See Attached" or "See page \_\_\_" in place of including information on the form.

**Margins...** Aside from the return address in the top three-inch margin, all margins must be clear. No additional addresses, bar codes, company logos, hole punches, line numbers, order numbers, page numbers, tracking numbers, headers, footers, notary or other seals, signatures, initials, etc., may be placed in any margin. You may place this information on the documents; just keep it out of the required margins.

**Attachments...** No attachments may be affixed to documents presented for recording. Attachments, for purposes of this legislation, refer to notary seals, sticky notes, or other items stapled, taped, etc. on to the face of the document. Attachment does not refer to additional pages added to the end of a document such as addenda, schedules, or additional legal which may be referred to in the body of the document as "Attached A" or "Appendix A", etc.

**Font...** The font size must be 8-point type or larger. Smaller than that is very difficult to read and does not image or reproduce easily. This Guide is typed in 8-point font.

**Page Size...** The maximum page size is 8-1/2"x14". If your document is oversized you will need to reduce the original to fit on 8-1/2"x14" or use multiple 8-1/2"x14" pages. Some counties may accept the map on an 18"x24" mylar. Please call the county in which you intend to record.

**Legibility...**The paper must be of a weight and color capable of producing legible images. Watermarks in the body of the documents produce unreadable images and are being returned for reformatting. High lighters are also causing problems. When documents have been highlighted in certain colors those words are obliterated when scanned, copied or filmed.

**Title...**Title or titles of the document. If using a coversheet, the title(s) on the coversheet must be the same as the title(s) on the document.

**Return Address...**The return address should be placed within the three-inch top margin.

**Reference Number...**A reference number is the Auditor's file number (recording number) and volume and page (if used) of the document being assigned or released.

**Grantor...**See "Grantor"

**Legal Description...**If a document has not historically included a legal description this legislation does not require customers to begin adding a legal. If a legal does appear on the document or coversheet the Assessor's tax parcel number **must** appear also on the first page.

If your entire legal is on the first page, there is no need or requirement to also abbreviate it on the first page. In cases where the entire legal description does not appear on the first page it must be abbreviated and placed on the first page of the document or coversheet with a reference as to where the entire legal is located. Appropriate abbreviations are:

Lot – Block – Subdivision name (i.e. Lot 3, Block 1 Ephrata Hts)  
or  
Quarter – Section – Township – Range (i.e. NENE 32-17-28)

It is not acceptable to put "See Attached" or "Refer to Appendix A" in place of abbreviating the legal.

**Assessor's Tax Parcel Number...**A tax parcel number must appear on the first page of the document/coversheet only if a legal description is included in the document. If there are too many numbers to fit on the first pages, you must put what will fit and a reference to the page where the remainder of the numbers can be found. If you need help locating the number you can contact the local Assessor's Office. If the parcel number has not yet been assigned put the parent parcel number in the space for the parcel number. If a parcel number is on the document the legal description **must** also be included.

**Documents which will be recorded with a properly completed coversheet...**Anything signed or created prior to January 1, 1997, birth certificates, out of country documents, certified copies of documents recorded or filed (court documents), judgments or other court documents formatted to meet court requirements, marriage certificates from our of local county and DD214's.

**Documents that are exempt from the requirements and do not require coversheets...**IRS documents, marriage certificates from Local County.

**Uccs...**Washington State UCC forms (UCC1 & UCC3) are designed by the Washington State Department of Licensing for use by their office to be filled with them. These forms are for their internal use, and will no comply with document standardization requirements. Uccs for Auditor's office use (UCC2 & UCC5) that comply with the new requirements have been redesigned and are available from forms companies.

**Common problems for Documents Refusal...**Seals in margin, signature or initials in margins, missing parcel number, something other than the return address in the top 3" margin, 1"inch margins are not 1".