

ANN MAHONY
COURT QUALIFIED DOCUMENT EXAMINER

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WARNING SIGNS OF POSSIBLE FORGERY



Document Itself

1. Are there corrections, cross-outs, overwriting, erasures, tears, tracing?
2. Is the document in exceptionally pristine or battered condition?
3. Was an old letterhead used in an effort to backdate document?
4. Are there pages, paragraphs or sentences that appear out of sequence?
5. Is there more than one type style/font used to create the document?
6. Is there a letter, card, etc. with the envelope missing? (thus no date verification)
7. Does the signature appear genuine, but the contents of the document are suspicious? (This can indicate a possible substitution of pages.)
8. Are ink patterns over days, weeks or months too consistent? (Sometimes calendars, diaries, medical records, have been recopied, or re-created.)
9. Are several different inks/pens used on a single document?
10. If typewritten or computer generated, does the material line up consistently?
11. Is the type font a different style on the portion of the disputed document?

Circumstances Surrounding the Document

1. Are the original witnesses deceased, unavailable or unknown?
2. Was the document discovered under unusual or timely circumstances? Belated disclosure?
3. Are only photocopies available?
4. Is the client or claimant reluctant or unwilling to produce originals?
5. Is the client or claimant reluctant or unwilling to undergo requested writing?
6. Does the client, claimant or witness repeatedly point out items to support the document's authenticity?