

The Montana "Document Standards Bill" passed during the 2003 Legislative session has become law effective April 28, 2007. This law pertains to the recording of real estate documents and establishes standards for these documents. It also addresses the legal description and return mailing information. As of October 1, 2011, the document standards law has been amended as follows:

7-4-2636 Standards for recorded document – exemptions.

(1) Unless accompanied by the appropriate fee required in 7-4-2637, a document submitted for recording must:

(a) be legibly printed or typed in blue or black ink on white paper that is either 8 ½ x 11 inches or 8 ½ x 14 inches in size;

(b) provide the names of the parties to the conveyance on the first or second page of any document with more than one page;

(c) provide a description of the property if the document conveys an interest in real property;

(d) have all signatures, initials, dates or handwriting in blue or black ink;

(e) except as provided in subsection (1)(f) and except for page numbers, initials, or other designations, have margins that are clear of all markings in the following dimensions:

(i) at least 3 inches at the top of the first page and at least 1 inch at the top of the second and any subsequent pages;

(ii) at least 1 inch on the bottom of each page;

(iii) at least ½ inch on the sides of each page; and

(f) include the name and mailing address of the person to whom the document is to be returned in the upper left-hand corner of the first page between the ½-inch side margins of each document submitted and may include legibly printed or typed transactional information.

(2) (a) Except as provided in subsection (2)(b), only documents submitted for recording and filing that conform to the provisions of this section are considered standard documents for the purposes of 7-4-2637.

(b) Documents that are acknowledged as having been executed prior to April 28, 2007, must be accepted for recording and considered standard documents, regardless of whether they conform to the provisions of this section.

(3) (a) An acknowledgment by a notary is exempt from the color and margin requirements of this section.

(b) Page numbers, the name and mailing address of the person to whom the document is to be returned, and other administrative information or designations may appear in the margins.

(c) If the notarial seal is made by impression of an embosser, the seal is exempt from the requirements of this section.

(4) An officially certified court or other government document, whether from an in-state or out-of-state office, is exempt from the provisions of this section.