FRE 902(13) / 902(14) Self-Authentication Certification Template

Template for certifying electronic records under Federal Rules of Evidence 902(13) and 902(14)

CERTIFICATION OF ELECTRONIC RECORD

Case: _____

Court: _____

I, [Name of Qualified Person], being a qualified person familiar with the electronic process or system described below, hereby certify under penalty of perjury pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746 as follows:

1. ELECTRONIC PROCESS DESCRIPTION

[Describe the electronic system used to generate, store, or manage the record. Include how files are uploaded, how cryptographic hashes are computed, how access is logged, and how integrity is maintained.]

2. RECORD IDENTIFICATION

File Name: _____

File Type: _____

File Size: _____

SHA-256 Hash (at collection): _____

Date of Collection/Upload: _____

Collected/Uploaded By: _____

3. ACCESS AUDIT TRAIL

[Describe or attach a log of every access to the record, including the accessor's identity, timestamp, IP address, and action taken.]

4. INTEGRITY VERIFICATION

SHA-256 Hash (current): _____

Verification Date: _____

Hash Match Confirmed: ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. CERTIFICATION

I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on: _____

_____

[Signature]

_____

[Printed Name and Title]

How to Use This Template

Instructions for completing the FRE 902(13) / 902(14) certification

WHO QUALIFIES AS A "QUALIFIED PERSON"

Under FRE 902(13), a "qualified person" is someone with sufficient knowledge of the electronic process to describe how it works and attest that it produces accurate results. This does not require a forensic expert. In practice, this is typically the attorney or paralegal who manages the evidence in the platform, or a representative of the platform provider who can describe the technical process.

WHEN TO PREPARE THE CERTIFICATION

Prepare the certification well in advance of trial or any evidentiary hearing. The certification must be provided to all parties before the evidence is offered. Attempting to authenticate digital evidence for the first time at trial risks exclusion. See FRCP 26(a) and the applicable court's scheduling order for production deadlines.

NOTICE REQUIREMENTS TO OPPOSING COUNSEL

FRE 902(13) requires that the certification be provided within the time required by Rule 902(11), which in turn requires "reasonable written notice" before trial. Some courts have held this means 14 days; others apply longer periods. Provide the certification as early as practicable and confirm the notice period with the court's local rules.

HOW TO COMPUTE SHA-256 HASHES

macOS / Linux (Terminal):

```
shasum -a 256 filename.mp4
```

Windows (Command Prompt):

```
certutil -hashfile filename.mp4 SHA256
```

Windows (PowerShell):

```
Get-FileHash filename.mp4 -Algorithm SHA256
```

Record the hash value exactly as displayed. The hash is case-insensitive but must match character-for-character. Any modification to the file will produce a completely different hash.

LEGAL REFERENCES

- FRE 902(13): Self-authentication of certified records generated by an electronic process or system
- FRE 902(14): Self-authentication of certified data copied from an electronic device or storage medium
- FRE 901(b)(9): Authentication by evidence describing a process or system used to produce the result
- 28 U.S.C. § 1746: Unsworn declarations under penalty of perjury (required language for certification)