

STATE OF NEW YORK

1780

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 15, 2021

Introduced by Sen. SKOUFIS -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Finance

AN ACT to amend the executive law, in relation to providing for electronic notarization

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. The executive law is amended by adding a new section 137-a
2 to read as follows:

3 § 137-a. Electronic notarization. 1. Definitions. (a) "Electronic"
4 shall have the same meaning as set forth in subdivision one of section
5 three hundred two of the state technology law.

6 (b) "Electronic document" means information that is created, gener-
7 ated, sent, communicated, received or stored by electronic means.

8 (c) "Electronic notarial act" means an official act by a notary public
9 on or involving an electronic document and using means authorized by the
10 secretary of state.

11 (d) "Electronic notary public" or "electronic notary" means a notary
12 public who has registered with the secretary of state the capability of
13 performing electronic notarial acts.

14 (e) "Electronic signature" shall have the same meaning as set forth in
15 subdivision three of section three hundred two of the state technology
16 law.

17 (f) "Electronic notarial statement of authority" means the portion of
18 a notarized electronic document that is completed by a notary public and
19 contains the notary public's electronic signature and all information
20 required by section one hundred thirty-seven of this article.

21 (g) "Notary electronic signature" means those forms of electronic
22 signature, which have been approved by the secretary of state as an
23 acceptable means for an electronic notary to affix the notary public's
24 official signature to an electronic record that is being notarized.

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[-] is old law to be omitted.

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1 2. Identifying document signers. (a) The methods for identifying
2 document signers for an electronic notarization shall be the same as the
3 methods required for a paper-based notarization; provided, however, in
4 the case of an electronic notarization, such methods may be based on
5 video and audio conference technology that meet the following standards:

6 (i) the persons communicating shall simultaneously see and speak to
7 one another;

8 (ii) the signal transmission shall be in live, real time;

9 (iii) the signal transmission shall be secure from interception
10 through lawful means by anyone other than the persons communicating; and

11 (iv) the technology shall permit the notary to communicate with and
12 identify the document signer at the time of the notarial act, provided
13 that such identification is confirmed by:

14 (A) personal knowledge;

15 (B) an antecedent in-person identity proofing process in accordance
16 with the specifications of the Federal Bridge Certification Authority;
17 or

18 (C) a valid digital certificate accessed by biometric data or by use
19 of an interoperable Personal Identity Verification card that is
20 designed, issued, and managed in accordance with the specifications
21 published by the National Institute of Standards and Technology in
22 Federal Information Processing Standards Publication 201-1, "Personal
23 Identity Verification (PIV) of Federal Employees and Contractors", and
24 supplements thereto or revisions thereof, including the specifications
25 published by the Federal Chief Information Officers Council in "Personal
26 Identity Verification Interoperability for Non-Federal Issuers".

27 (b) If video and audio conference technology has been used to ascer-
28 tain a document signer's identity, the electronic notary shall keep a
29 copy of the recording of the video and audio conference and a notation
30 of the type of any other identification used. The recording shall be
31 maintained for a period of at least ten years from the date of trans-
32 action.

33 (c) In addition to the methods described in paragraphs (a) and (b) of
34 this subdivision, identity may be verified by: (i) the remote online
35 notary public's personal knowledge of the person creating the electronic
36 signature; or

37 (ii) each of the following: (A) remote presentation by the person
38 creating the electronic signature of a government-issued identification
39 credential, including a passport or driver's license, that contains the
40 signature and a photograph of the person; (B) credential analysis; and
41 (C) identity proofing.

42 (d) For purposes of this subdivision: (i) "credential analysis" means
43 a process or service that meets the standards established by the secre-
44 tary of state through which a third person affirms the validity of a
45 government-issued identification credential through review of public and
46 proprietary data sources; and

47 (ii) "identity proofing" means a process or service operating accord-
48 ing to standards established by the secretary of state through which a
49 third person affirms the identity of an individual: (A) by means of
50 dynamic knowledge based authentication such as a review of personal
51 information from public or proprietary data sources; or (B) by means of
52 analysis of biometric data such as, but not limited to, facial recogni-
53 tion, voiceprint analysis, or fingerprint analysis.

54 3. Registration requirements. (a) Before performing any electronic
55 notarial act or acts, a notary public shall register the capability to

1 notarize electronically with the secretary of state on a form prescribed
2 by the secretary of state.

3 (b) In registering the capability to perform electronic notarial acts,
4 the notary public shall provide the following information to the secre-
5 tary of state, notary processing unit:

6 (i) the applicant's name as currently commissioned and complete mail-
7 ing address;

8 (ii) the expiration date of the notary public's commission and signa-
9 ture of the commissioned notary public;

10 (iii) the applicant's e-mail address;

11 (iv) the description of the electronic technology or technologies to
12 be used in attaching the notary public's electronic signature to the
13 electronic document; and

14 (v) an exemplar of the notary public's electronic signature, which
15 shall contain the notary public's name and any necessary instructions or
16 techniques that allow the notary public's electronic signature to be
17 read.

18 4. Types of electronic notarial acts. Any notarial act authorized by
19 section one hundred thirty-five of this article may be performed elec-
20 tronically as prescribed by this section if under applicable law that
21 document may be signed with an electronic signature.

22 5. Form and manner of performing the electronic notarial act. (a) When
23 performing an electronic notarial act, a notary public shall apply an
24 electronic signature, which shall be attached to or logically associated
25 with the electronic document such that removal or alteration of such
26 electronic signature is detectable and will render evidence of alter-
27 ation of the document containing the notary signature which may invali-
28 date the electronic notarial act.

29 (b) The notary public's electronic signature is deemed to be reliable
30 if the following requirements are met: (i) it is unique to the notary
31 public;

32 (ii) it is capable of independent verification;

33 (iii) it is retained under the notary public's sole control;

34 (iv) it is attached to or logically associated with the electronic
35 document; and

36 (v) it is linked to the data in such a manner that any subsequent
37 alterations to the underlying document are detectable and may invalidate
38 the electronic notarial act.

39 (c) The notary public's electronic signature shall be used only for
40 the purpose of performing electronic notarial acts.

41 (d) The remote online notarial certificate for an electronic notarial
42 act shall state that the person making the acknowledgement or making the
43 oath appeared remotely online.

44 (e) The secretary shall adopt rules necessary to establish standards,
45 procedures, practices, forms, and records relating to a notary public's
46 electronic signature. The notary public's electronic signature shall
47 conform to any standards adopted by the secretary.

48 6. Recording of an electronic record. (a) If otherwise required by
49 law as a condition for recording that a document be an original docu-
50 ment, printed on paper or another tangible medium, or be in writing, the
51 requirement is satisfied by paper copy of an electronic record that
52 complies with the requirements of this section.

53 (b) If otherwise required by law as a condition for recording, that a
54 document be signed, the requirement is satisfied by an electronic signa-
55 ture.

1 (c) A requirement that a document or a signature associated with a
2 document be notarized, acknowledged, verified, witnessed, or made under
3 oath is satisfied if the electronic signature of the person authorized
4 to perform that act, and all other information required to be included,
5 is attached to or logically associated with the document or signature. A
6 physical or electronic image of a stamp, impression, or seal need not
7 accompany an electronic signature if the notary has attached an elec-
8 tronic notarial certificate that meets the requirements of this section.

9 7. Change of e-mail address. Within five days after the change of an
10 electronic notary public's e-mail address, the notary public shall elec-
11 tronically transmit to the secretary of state a notice of the change,
12 signed with the notary public's official electronic signature.

13 § 2. Section 136 of the executive law, as amended by chapter 143 of
14 the laws of 1991, is amended to read as follows:

15 § 136. Notarial fees. A notary public shall be entitled to [~~the~~
16 ~~following~~] fees[+]

17 ~~1. For administering an oath or affirmation, and certifying the same~~
18 ~~when required, except where another fee is specifically prescribed by~~
19 ~~statute, two dollars.~~

20 ~~2. For taking and certifying the acknowledgment or proof of execution~~
21 ~~of a written instrument, by one person, two dollars, and by each addi-~~
22 ~~tional person, two dollars, for swearing each witness thereto, two~~
23 ~~dollars], including for electronic notarial services, as authorized by~~
24 the secretary of state.

25 § 3. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
26 have become a law. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or
27 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of
28 this act on its effective date are authorized to be made on or before
29 such effective date.