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EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR NOTARY SECTION Notary E-Mail E-ducation January 2001

Greetings Florida Notaries!

Last year the company ARCANVS was grateful enough to help the Notary Section put together some information on electronic notarization for our Education Course. I would like to share this information with you by starting a three month long series. This month we will look at what electronic notarization means to the traditional notary.

WHAT DOES ELECTRONIC NOTARIZATION MEAN TO THE TRADITIONAL NOTARY?

Florida defines a notary public as a public officer appointed and commissioned by the Governor whose function is to administer oaths; to take acknowledgments of deeds and other instruments; to attest to or certify photocopies of certain documents; and to perform other duties as specified by law. Electronic notarization is simply a different platform to perform these legally sanctioned acts.

With the Internet permitting execution of online documents that often require notaries public to verify the identity of the individual, the notarized digital signature legally executes an electronic document. Now legally recognized in the Laws of Florida, Chapter 2000-164, the digital signature is equivalent to the traditional signature and seal of the notary - the pen is now a mouse and the stamp an electronic icon.

Using the Internet as a medium means transactions can happen at light speed for individuals and businesses alike. Transactions that previously took days or weeks to process can now be accomplished in a matter of minutes. Additionally, utilizing e-transactions results in a reduction of transaction and processing expenses.

Little additional training is needed to begin using electronic signatures since electronic notarization is the online version of an offline, hard-copy process. As use of electronic notarization increases, the opportunity for more and more economic transactions grows.

Various pilot projects around the nation have already proven the practicality and legality of using electronic means to conduct business. The use of the Internet provides Floridians with huge opportunities for e-commerce efficiencies. The service and experience of online notaries will enable this to occur.

A noteworthy transaction took place in Florida early this summer when the first fully paperless mortgage loan and home purchase in the United States was completed. The entire procedure was originated, underwritten, processed, approved, and recorded electronically. The transaction complied with [Florida's Uniform Electronic Transaction Act](#), which specifically addresses the legality of electronic transactions, electronic records and electronic contracts. Importantly, electronic signatures were required at each phase of the process- these signatures still required the service of a notary to perform the notarial act. However, instead of a traditional wet seal and signature, the acknowledgment was accomplished through the use of electronic notarization.

Same-day mortgages are only one example of how electronic signatures can benefit individuals. Other areas where electronic signatures can have a significant impact include business-to-business transactions, the financial and healthcare industries and governmental transactions

(voting, accessing vital tax records, etc.). In some cases, the use of this technology will be mandatory to comply with state or federal regulation, such as the Healthcare Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPPA).

The electronic medium is becoming the accepted norm in our society. The benefits are numerous. You can be an integral part of the Knowledge Age by utilizing technology, specifically this new and necessary tool- electronic notarization. Those using electronic notarization technology will be early adopters of the cutting-edge e-commerce revolution - with the associated prestige gained by those offering e-solutions.

Next month we will look at the need for electronic notarization. For more information about ARCANVS you can go to www.arcanvs.com

Until next month!
Jennifer Bertsch
Notary Education Coordinator
State of Florida, Office of the Governor
FL_GOV_NOTARY@EOG.STATE.FL.US