



# Standard Administrative Policy and Procedure

**Subject:** Electronic and Digital Signatures

**Number:**

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## I. PURPOSE

To establish when an electronic or digital signature may replace a written signature in official University business.

## II. DEFINITIONS

**Electronic Signature:** An electronic sound, symbol or process attached to or logically associated with a record and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the record. Examples may include typing one's name or symbol, a scanned signature, and an electronic signature through use of a third party vendor (such as DocuSign, AdobeSign and SignNow).

**Digital Signature:** Digital signature means a type of electronic signature that uses asymmetric cryptography.

## III. POLICY

To the fullest extent permitted by law, the University accepts electronic and digital signatures as legally binding and equivalent to handwritten signatures to signify an agreement. However, the University may at any time, for any reason, demand that a handwritten signature be used in lieu of an electronic signature or require a digital signature for specific types of documents in order to provide enhanced document authenticity and integrity.

This policy applies to all units of the University and all members of the University community, including students, employees, prospective students, prospective employees, business partners, and other individuals who are associated with the University.

## IV. STUDENTS

Students may use electronic or digital signatures to authorize all designated internal records and transactions through the students' University account. Examples include but are not limited to registering for courses, accepting financial aid awards, paying student bills, obtaining unofficial transcripts, and completing electronic forms.

## **V. EMPLOYEES**

Employees may use electronic and digital signatures to authorize all designated internal documents by signing in through their official University account. Examples include but are not limited to submitting grades; accessing protected data through the administrative computing system and web applications provided by the unit; signing off on absence and timesheets; and completing forms regarding retirement, benefits, and worker's compensation.

## **VI. CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENTS**

University contracts and legal agreements may be executed by the parties using electronic or digital signatures. Only those employees who have signature authority in accordance with UW Regulation 7-2 (Signature Authority) may execute legal documents on behalf of and bind the University.

Vendors and third parties may execute University contracts by a signature that is a scanned copy of a wet ink signature or a digital signature method that has been approved by the University's Vice President for Information Technology. Examples of approved digital signature methods include DocuSign, AdobeSign and SignNow. Questions regarding specific digital signatures may be directed to the Office of Information Technology.

## **VII. EXCEPTIONS**

Electronic and digital signatures may not be used on the following documents:

- A.** Wills and trusts;
- B.** Promissory notes;
- C.** Notices of the cancelation or termination of health insurance, health benefits, or life insurance benefits;
- D.** Any document required to accompany transportation or handling of hazardous materials, pesticides or other toxic or dangerous materials;
- E.** Documents that require a notary verification;
- F.** When electronic signatures are prohibited by law; and
- G.** When the University determines for any reason and in its sole discretion that the use of an electronic or digital signature with any party or in any transaction will not be accepted.

## **VIII. SANCTIONS**

Students or employees who falsify electronic or digital signatures or otherwise violate this regulation are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or termination, and may be referred for criminal prosecution under federal and state laws.

**Responsible Division/Unit:** Division of Information Technology

**Source:** None

**Links:** <http://www.uwyo.edu/regs-policies>

**Associated Regulations, Policies, and Forms:** None

**Approved:** 5/10/2021